



Leader's update

17 May 2024

Issue: 76

Introduction and welcome

Welcome to my latest update.

This issue includes:

- Election results: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday 2 May 2024.
- More than £2 million investment in schools across North Northamptonshire to be considered at next week's Executive meeting.
- Green energy funding boost helps North Northamptonshire Council move towards low carbon target.
- New gas and electrical contracts secured across North Northamptonshire to keep tenants safe in their homes.
- Historically important archives return to the county.
- People in North Northamptonshire clock up 2 million miles on Voi e-scooters.
- Northamptonshire's largest 'barking' mad festival 'even bigger and better' for 2024.
- Northamptonshire Children's Trust: Action for Children to run future Short Breaks services.
- Roar-some discovery made at Irchester Country Park!

In addition, you will find below some useful information about forthcoming meetings, Your Voice Matters (our consultation and engagement hub) and all the latest press releases.

Whatever your plans are, I hope you have a great weekend!

Latest news

Election results: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday 2 May 2024

Following the election on Thursday 2 May, the results of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire, Crime Commissioner have been published on the [Election results by constituencies](#) section of our website.

For the North Northamptonshire Police Area, Danielle Stone (Labour and Co-operative Party) was elected with 43,684 votes.

More than £2 million investment in schools across North Northamptonshire approved at May's Executive meeting

Two papers were considered at yesterday's [Executive](#) meeting, approving a combined investment of £2,027,560 in school buildings across North Northamptonshire. The money will pay for further refurbishment at Alfred Lord Tennyson Primary School and the fit out of the relocated Wilby Primary School, to the site at Glenvale Park.

The total sum for the work at Alfred Lord Tennyson Primary School will be a maximum of £749,300. This project is the final phase of adaptations to enable the school to function as a one form entry primary school following the amalgamation of Tennyson Road and Alfred Street Schools.

The money will reconfigure and refurbish current classrooms to meet current standards, create break out groups space, improve toilet provision and a play area for Reception and Year 1 to 6 classes. The project will be delivered in two consecutive phases with the final phase completing in August 2025.

The funding for the fit out of the Glenvale new school in readiness for Wilby School to relocate was also considered. The Executive approved the proposal to relocate Wilby Primary School to the Glenvale Park site for September 2024 use on Thursday 16 November 2023, following a statutory process and consultation.

Executive was asked to approve a budget of £1,278,260.10 to ensure the school is fully fitted out to enable the opening of the new school in September 2024.

Green energy funding boost helps North Northamptonshire Council move towards low carbon target

Vital energy efficiency works will take place at three key North Northamptonshire Council buildings thanks to a funding injection of more than £3.8million.

The projects which will focus on Corby Cube, Corby International Pool and Desborough Leisure Centre will help the authority [move towards being carbon neutral](#) by 2030.

Following the completion of energy surveys of council buildings, the authority made a grant bid under the Public Services Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) for energy improvement works at the three properties.

The council has been awarded a grant of £3,858,419 against a total project cost of £4,384,568.08 under the scheme which is run by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and delivered by Salix.

As part of the council's commitment to becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030, it developed its carbon management plan, which was published in December 2022 and set out intentions to tackle climate change and reduce CO2 emissions.

Significant progress has been made in reducing council's emissions but with about 30% of measured emissions coming from electricity and gas usage at council owned and operated buildings and sites, more needed to be done.

The buildings that will benefit from the grant were identified based on their energy consumption, condition of plant, and the most carbon impact. The council remains committed to decarbonising its estate and will continue to actively pursue opportunities to do so.

Works will take place to replace fossil fuel boilers with air source heat pumps and the installation of photovoltaic panels at the properties along with other energy efficiency measures. Works need to be completed by March 2026.

The project team will be working with operators and users of these buildings to minimise the impact wherever possible.

More details of when the works will be taking place will be published in due course.

New gas and electrical contracts secured across North Northamptonshire to keep tenants safe in their homes

Following a competitive tendering process, North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) has chosen Aaron Services to deliver essential gas and electrical checks, maintenance, and repairs to around 8,000 properties across the area.

To be delivered largely across Corby and Kettering, the company has secured the £4.9m contract over the next four-years to carry out annual gas servicing (Landlord Gas Safety Record – LGSR), repairs and breakdown cover. This will also include an out-of-hours, evenings and weekends service. Oil and other forms of heating checks, repairs and breakdown are also included.

The company has also won the five-year £3.5m contract to deliver Electrical Installation Condition Reports, which is essentially the wiring and sockets which are part of a property. Both contracts will start on 3 June this year.

A phased start will occur for the annual Gas Servicing over the summer, with NNC Operatives completing pre booked services during this time, alongside Aaron Services for new appointments.

NNC Operatives will also continue to install new boilers to tenants' homes and tenants will still be contacted by NNC to make appointments for this. The installation service will continue to be delivered by NNC.

Historically important archives return to the county

The Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre (ARC) has recently completed the move of archaeological archives from a major Roman villa, as well as prehistoric and iron age finds, into state-of-the-art facilities at the Chester House Estate.

The archives were excavated between 1984 and 1991 from Stanwick Lakes and had been stored by Historic England in Portsmouth.

The archives consisted of over 3,000 boxes of archaeological material including 2.5 tonnes of Roman pottery and 3,750 Roman coins. The team also received 16 partially reconstructed pieces of Roman mosaic and 280 large pieces of Roman sculpture. Highlights also include a Roman pot with a gladiator painted on it and a figurine of a frog.

Also found during the excavations at Stanwick were prehistoric finds including beaker pots, jets and a pristine example of a flint dagger which research has shown was unused before it was buried within a grave.

This is the first time the objects have returned to the county since they were excavated and are now publicly accessible to researchers. It is intended that selected objects will be loaned to Stanwick Lakes for a display in their museum in early 2025.

It is also anticipated that objects will go on display at the Discover Northamptonshire hub at Rushden Lakes.

The move of the artefacts was funded by a grant from Historic England and is the result of a three-year project with teams from both the ARC and Historic England involved. The ARC is run by North Northamptonshire Council in partnership with West Northamptonshire Council.

The ARC offer weekly, free tours so visitors can see some of the exciting objects from Stanwick alongside the rest of the archive. For more information, please visit the [Chester House Estate](#) website.

People in North Northamptonshire clock up 2 million miles on Voi e-scooters

People in North Northamptonshire have clocked up over 2 million miles on Voi rental e-scooters - the equivalent of going to the moon and back four times.

The e-scooter trial was launched in Kettering in December 2020 and then extended across North Northamptonshire in early 2021. Since then, public hire e-scooters have become an important addition to transport in Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and Rushden and Higham Ferrers, with just over 48,000 people now signed up to Voi, using them to commute to work and education.

E-scooters are a much greener way to travel. Since their introduction in North Northamptonshire they have replaced an estimated 600,000 car journeys, clocking up over 2 million miles and reducing CO2 emissions by an estimated 233 tonnes.

As part of Voi's mission to provide safe, sustainable and reliable micromobility for all, Voi riders can take advantage of '[Voi for All](#)' discounts which provide discounted travel to people on low incomes, disabled people and people over 65, to help with the cost of living.

Northamptonshire's largest 'barking' mad festival 'even bigger and better' for 2024

Hay bale racing, dog trainer talks, artisan and craft dog market, Puppuccino bar and dog competitions - the popular Woof Fest is back, and bigger than ever!

The festival will take place at The Chester House Estate in partnership with Trinkety Paws, a leading UK manufacturer and supplier for high quality Dog Collars and Dog Leads, who has a full-time shop based at the estate. The one-day festival will take place on Sunday 12 May, from 10am to 4pm.

The Trinkety Paws shop will be open to visit, offering natural treats, a Pawtisserie Counter, Puppuccinos and deals on their waterproof dog collars and leads for your four-legged friend. You can also explore more shops at the Estate which will be open on the day, including florist Eden Wild, History Book Corner located in the Hay Barn bar. The Farmhouse Cafe will be open as usual.

Tickets are £5 for over 12's, under 12's and dogs go free. Book your tickets on the [Chester House Estate](#) website today.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust: Action for Children to run future Short Breaks services.

Over the last few years, Northamptonshire Children's Trust has been working to redesign short break services for children with disabilities.

The team engaged with people including parents, carers and practitioners during this process, including 284 people in the last phase of consultation.

This helped to shape the final model of a joined-up service offering daytime activities, overnight breaks and respite for children with disabilities. After listening to feedback the Sleep Service was taken out of the final model and will now be delivered as a separate service.

The contract was advertised to organisations giving them the opportunity to bid to run the services. Eight organisations put in a bid and these were checked and scored by eight evaluators. This included three parent representatives who evaluated a question on co-production. There was one viable bid that met the criteria and this was Action for Children.

On Thursday 25 April, Action for Children were notified that they had been the successful bidder for the services.

Action for Children currently deliver non-residential short breaks across Northamptonshire and will now start to prepare to deliver the new service which is due to start on Friday 1 November.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust want to ensure the smoothest of changeovers to avoid any disruption to children, young people and their families.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (NHFT) for running the Residential Short Breaks service for over 12 years. Parents and carers have felt reassured that their children and young people have been well cared for during their stays at John Greenwood Shipman and Squirrels. The aim is to make sure that the care of the children and young people will continue at the same high level.

Change can be a worrying time for all of those involved in the services so there will be an opportunity for parents, carers and staff within the services to meet with Action for Children and the commissioners to ask any questions they may have.

If you have any comments or questions, please email sufficiency@nctrust.co.uk.

Roar-some discovery made at Irchester Country Park!

Physical evidence that dinosaurs once walked through North Northants has been discovered at Irchester Country Park by a grandad and his 3-year-old grandson.

Keen fossil hunter Steve Pulley was exploring with his grandson, Cody, when he spotted a large and unusually shaped rock lying partially buried on the ground.

Having spent hours searching the shores of the Isle of Wight for dinosaur fossils, Steve instantly recognised the dinosaur footprint cast, but was cautious and carried out some more research.

'These casts formed as a result of a dinosaur making a footprint in soft ground, which then gradually filled in with local sediment. It then solidified over eons, eventually leaving a cast of the footprint long after the actual footprint disappeared.

We left the rock, which was 55 cm in length, where it was after visually examining it to confirm it was a sedimentary rock, an essential requirement if we were to prove that we had found evidence of dinosaurs.

The next piece of detective work that had to be done was to research what the local geology was in order to confirm that it was viable that a footprint cast could have been laid down in the area. After all, if the local geology showed that the area was pre-historically covered in a massive ocean, then it would have been impossible for dinosaurs to have walked on the land' - *Steve Pulley*

But studies of maps from the British Geological Survey clearly showed that the spot in Irchester sat right on an ancient shoreline - overlooking a large inlet.

The Natural History Museum in London were contacted with details of the find and two experts very quickly came back confirming the find was indeed a dinosaur footprint cast and, in their opinion, from a Theropod (meat-eating) dinosaur. Although impossible to say for sure, it is believed that the Theropod concerned was probably a Megalosaurus, a creature that stood at 6 m in length and weighed around 1 tonne.

It is hoped that the find will be able to go on display at Irchester Country Park. In the meantime, visitors to the Park can take the Ironstone Heritage trail, which tells the story of Ironstone quarrying at the park and the Jurassic geology and fossils this uncovered.

Your Voice Matters

Please find below details of our other current consultations and engagement activities. Please use the links below to provide your feedback and inform council decisions and share with family and friends who may be interested in shaping future plans.

Details of all open and closed consultation and engagement activities are available on the North Northamptonshire Consultation and Engagement Hub, [Your Voice Matters](#).

- [Wellingborough and Rushden Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#). North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) is working with consultants Pell Frischmann, Kier and Brightwayz social enterprise to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Wellingborough, Rushden and other towns nearby. Closes 31 May 2024.
- [Proposed Change to Charging Policy for Appointeeship Service](#). North Northamptonshire Council (the Council) is seeking your views to help guide our decisions regarding the continued provision of an Appointeeship service for customers who lack capacity to manage their money and other financial affairs. Closes 2 June 2024.

Forthcoming meetings

Full Council (Annual)

- Thursday 23 May from 6pm.

Executive

- Thursday 13 June from 10am.

The agenda and papers will be published on the [Council meetings](#) section of our website in the week before the meeting.

These meetings will be live streamed on our [YouTube](#) channel.

Press releases

To help you stay abreast of the key things the council has been doing, I have included some links to the latest press releases below (starting with the most recent):

- [Election results: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday 2 May 2024](#)
- [More than £2 million investment in schools across North Northamptonshire to be considered in next week's Executive meeting](#)
- [Green energy funding boost helps North Northamptonshire Council move towards low carbon target](#)
- [New gas and electrical contracts secured across North Northamptonshire to keep tenants safe in their homes](#)
- [Historically important archives return to the county](#)
- [People in North Northamptonshire clock up 2 million miles on Voi e-scooters](#)
- [Northamptonshire's largest 'barking' mad festival 'even bigger and better' for 2024](#)
- [Roar-some discovery made at Irchester Country Park](#)

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. If you have any ideas for items to include in future updates, please email me at executive@northnorthants.gov.uk.

With Best Wishes,
