

Cllr Jason Smithers
Leader of the Council

Introduction and Welcome!

I am sure you are all as shocked and appalled as I am by the images we see and the stories we hear coming from Ukraine. It is beyond me how anyone could be so barbaric. To help with the response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, North Northamptonshire Council has created a page on its website, clearly accessible from the Council's homepage, entitled 'Our response to Ukraine'. This links to information on the Government's new 'Homes for Ukraine' sponsorship programme, as well as information on how donations can be made safely to help those in Ukraine. We will continue to update this page as the national and local approach develops. See: www.northnorthants.gov.uk/ukraine

Hopefully, you will have seen that earlier this week the Council launched a public consultation on the future of kerbside garden waste collections. It may not surprise you that this looks like it will be one of the Council's most popular consultations in terms of response rate. If you have not yet taken part, please do! I have provided more information further below.

Yesterday, the Executive met and considered reports on a range of important local matters, including: an update on Kettering's Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Museum improvements works; a report on the voluntary sectors grants agreements and programme of works; an annual inflationary uplift in adult social care and support; a business case for a sixth-form college as part of the Corby Town Fund; and reports on the funding for the highways network and War and War Widow(er)'s Pension benefit. You can [view the reports and associated material](#) for the meeting online.

I am sure I will not be alone when I say that the last year feels like it has gone quickly. In a couple of weeks' time, North Northamptonshire Council will be celebrating its first birthday! I am sure I join fellow council members and staff in saying that I am proud to have served the local community, and despite the obvious challenges, we can all be proud of what the Council has achieved. I would also like to say a special thank you to the parish and town councils in North Northamptonshire. I know that the changes that have taken place at the county and district level to create the unitary authority had a wider impact. My colleagues and I are committed to continuing to build relations and work more closely with parish and town councils in the year ahead.

Ukraine response

As mentioned above, the Council has created a 'Our response to Ukraine' page, accessible from a prominent link on the Council's website homepage that provides information on:

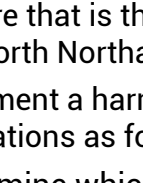
- The Council's response to the Ukraine crisis.
- Information on what people can do to provide support and make donations safely. The 'Support Ukraine' section includes links to important topics such as how people can donate to the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine Appeal.
- Details of the Government's 'Homes for Ukraine' sponsorship programme.
- Information on other ways people can provide support.

The new 'Our response to Ukraine' page links in directly to the information provided on the Government's www.gov.uk pages and it will be kept up-to-date as the situation develops. The Council has set up a specific web address to use to signpost advisory information on Ukraine: www.northnorthants.gov.uk/ukraine

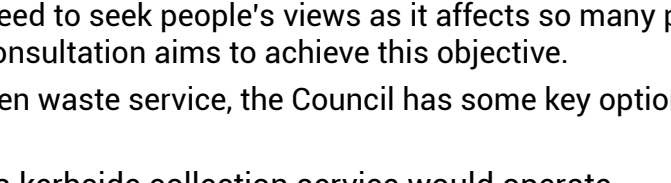


Marking the Council's first birthday

It's nearly been one year already since North Northamptonshire Council came into being. A lot has happened over the last 12 months and although it's been a challenge delivering change whilst tackling the COVID pandemic, I believe that we have a lot to celebrate.



North Northamptonshire Council

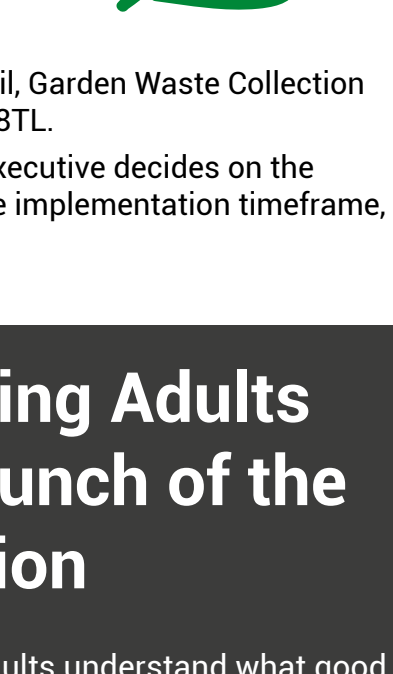


During the month of April, we will be marking the first year with a digital marketing campaign entitled 'We are one'. The celebration will be low cost with all material being created by our staff. However, the occasion provides the opportunity to say how proud we are as a Council to have served the residents and businesses of North Northamptonshire for a whole year. I am sure you will all join me in marking the relevance of the occasion.

Social Care Day of Remembrance and Reflection

Thank you to those who took part in the Social Care Day of Remembrance and Reflection yesterday to remember those working in social care, and I know colleagues we lost during the pandemic.

I know many of you came along to the service at Abington Park and many others joined the one-minute silence from their homes or work desks. Thank you for showing your support to those working across social care and who continue to show incredible dedication in their roles.



Have your say on the future of kerbside garden waste collections in North Northamptonshire

Local residents are being asked for their views on the harmonisation on kerbside garden waste collections in North Northamptonshire. At our Executive meeting last month, a proposal was approved to go out to consultation on providing a consistent kerbside garden waste collection service across the area.

Following local government reorganisation last year, the new unitary Council inherited the different approaches to the kerbside garden waste collections from the previous local authorities. In Corby and Kettering, the service is currently provided all year at no extra charge, whilst in Wellingborough, it operates between March and November with no additional cost for users of the service. In East Northamptonshire, the year-round scheme has a £55 annual subscription charge, paid by users of the service.

It is our belief that it is important that we provide a consistent service for everyone and this project will ensure that is the case. Naturally we need to seek people's views as it affects so many people across North Northamptonshire and the consultation aims to achieve this objective.

To implement a harmonised kerbside garden waste service, the Council has some key options and considerations as follows:

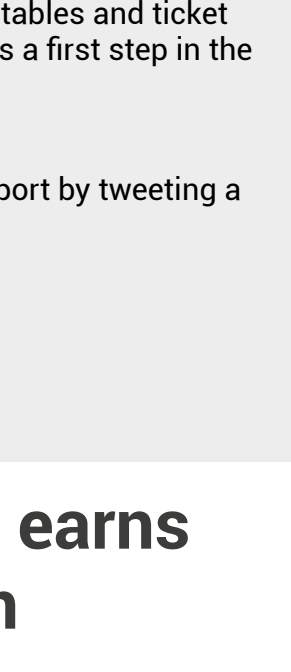
- Determine which months of the year a kerbside collection service would operate.
- Establish whether a universal garden waste service would be provided to all residents without an additional charge.
- To establish whether a subscription-based garden waste service would be provided to residents who wish to subscribe to the service and pay a subscription charge.
- And, if a subscription charge was to be levied, the level of this charge.

You can have your say!

You can have your say by [completing the online questionnaire](#).

Comments can also be made by post at: North Northamptonshire Council, Garden Waste Collection Service Consultation, Sheerness House, Meadow Road, Kettering, NN16 8TL.

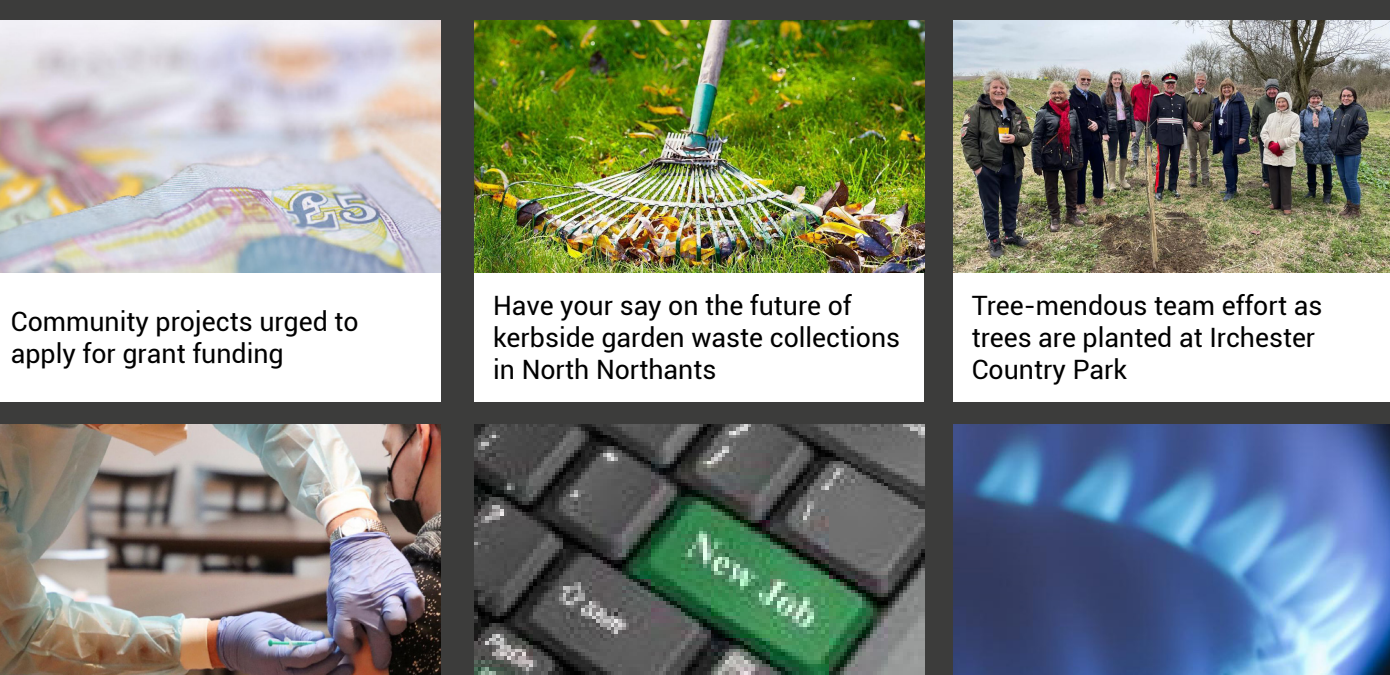
This consultation will run until midnight on Sunday, 17 April. When the Executive decides on the future service delivery (expected to be in July), they will also consider the implementation timeframe, which could be as early as this autumn.



Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) announce the launch of the Tricky Friends Animation

The animation has been developed with the aim to help vulnerable adults understand what good friendships are and when they might be harmful.

It is important that adults with learning disabilities and autism, those who have cognitive difficulties, or young adults, have positive opportunities to make and maintain friendships. The animation shows what good friendships should look like to vulnerable adults who may be less able to recognise the intentions of others and can be used as a tool to start conversations as to what good friendships look like, and keep vulnerable adults safe whilst enjoying friendships.



The video is less than 4 minutes long and can be accessed via the [NSAB website](#). A signed version is also available. Special thanks to Norfolk SAB for allowing NSAB to adapt their content.

New members organisation launches with great success

I was very pleased to be able to join over 100 people who attended the official launch of the North Northamptonshire Business Network (NNBN) as the new and exciting business membership organisation for North Northamptonshire was unveiled.

Founding Members joined the event at the beautiful venue of Chester House Estate where attendees heard from the visionaries behind the new organisation, Simon Cox and Marie Baker, about their story behind the NNBN, why they introduced the NNBN to the area and the membership benefits.

Superbly hosted by Jessica Pilkington from Pilkington Communications, attendees included those from local businesses, business support organisations, charities, town councils, community groups and Executive Members of North Northamptonshire Council.

NNBN provides support for businesses in the North Northamptonshire area. Membership provides local support, engagement, an advertising platform and exclusive membership discounts and events for businesses, charities and organisations. If you would like to learn more about the NNBN, please visit <https://nnbn.co.uk>

You can help with our bid to make North Northamptonshire the new Head Quarters for Great British Railways

This week, North Northamptonshire Council submitted a bid to Government to become the new national home of railways. The Council wants the area to host the headquarters of Great British Railways (GBR), a new public body in charge of the UK's train services.

As part of the Government's commitment to level-up the UK, the new GBR HQ will be based outside of London and bring a number of high-skilled jobs to the successful location. More details of the operation will be confirmed at a later date. North Northamptonshire, with its well-connected central location, railway heritage and commitment to the levelling up agenda, is thought by the Council to be a strong candidate.



After assessing the options, the Council has put forward the Station Island site adjacent to Wellingborough Station on the Midland Mainline as the location for the Head Quarters.

Strengths of the site include its strategic scale, its availability with many services already in place and its close proximity to the new Stanton Cross development, which offers excellent leisure and other facilities. There is also potential to reuse the former 'Roundhouse' engine shed which has a strong rail heritage. Discussions to put forward the bid were supported by Stanton Cross Developments LLP which is the key landowner and principal developer of Stanton Cross.

Being host to the headquarters of this new organisation would be a tremendous boost to the area and the Council is committed to working to make this vision a reality. Not only would North Northamptonshire benefit from such a project but equally our area has a tremendous amount to offer GBR.

The Government recently launched the competition to find a location based outside of London for GBR. The organisation will manage the country's rail infrastructure and set timetables and ticket prices. The Council has submitted an expression of interest to Government by as a first step in the selection process.

You can help!

Public support is important to help back-up the bid. People can show their support by tweeting a message and using the tags:

- #backtheNNbidGBRHQ
- #DestinationGBR

Please also email your support for the bid to luf@northnorthants.gov.uk

Electric vehicle charging project earns councils award nomination

An innovative scheme to install electric vehicle charging points in residential streets has earned both North and West Northamptonshire Councils a nomination for a national award.

The councils have been shortlisted in Public/Private Partnership category at the Local Government Chronicle's LGC Awards for the Virgin Media Park and Charge scheme, which saw 56 new charging bays installed across the area.

Owned and operated by Liberty Charge, and delivered using its strategic partner Virgin Media O2, the charge points are located in residential streets in Higham Ferrers, Kettering, Northampton, Rushden, Thrapston and Wellingborough.

Two charging points have been installed at each site, to serve up to four vehicles at a time. The 22kW Fast Chargers can fully charge a single car from empty in three hours and aim to address the charging needs of those who do not have access to a driveway, or any other means of privately charging electric vehicles.

Funded by Innovate UK and the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles, the project saw the two Councils act as facilitators and enablers.

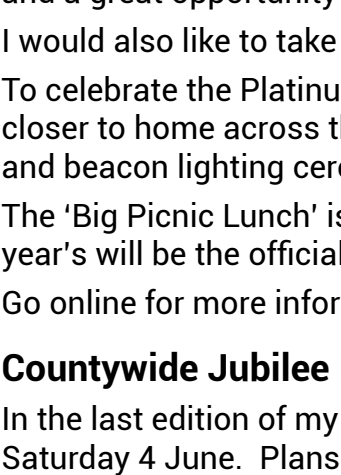
Liberty Charge is entirely responsible for the charging infrastructure's operation and maintenance, leaving the Councils with no liabilities associated with infrastructure, power or maintenance. The award will be announced at the LGC Awards 2022, which are taking place at London's Grosvenor House Hotel on Wednesday 20 July 2022.

Press releases

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

If you would like stay up to date with the Council's media releases, you can visit the news section of the Council's website: www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news

Or follow Twitter [@NNorthantsC](https://twitter.com/NNorthantsC) and/or Facebook [@NNorthants](https://www.facebook.com/NNorthants)



Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Update from Cllr Helen Howell

Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism

I am delighted to say that North Northamptonshire Council will host a 'Big Picnic Lunch' event at Wicksteed Park to commemorate Her Majesty the Queen's 70 years of Service.

Families and community groups are all invited to join the celebrations which will take place on Sunday 5 June at the park in Kettering.

Our teams are working hard on plans for our 'Big Picnic Lunch' at Wicksteed Park and we'll be making more announcements in the coming weeks and months. It certainly will be an event not to be missed and a great opportunity for families and friends to come together to celebrate..

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the team at Wicksteed Park for their support.

To celebrate the Platinum Jubilee, events will take place across the Commonwealth as well as closer to home across the four-day weekend, with a pageant due to take place in Northampton and beacon lighting ceremonies in towns and parishes across the county.

The 'Big Picnic Lunch' is an annual event which encourages communities to come together. This year's will be the official community celebration for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Go online for more information about the [Platinum Jubilee in North Northants](#).

Countywide Jubilee Pageant

In the last edition of my Update, I set out that there will be a Countywide Jubilee pageant on Saturday 4 June. Plans are under way to organise the countywide Jubilee pageant through Northampton town centre, involving military personnel and community groups. As reported last time, North Northamptonshire Council is looking for up to 400 community representatives from the voluntary sector to take part. If you are interested in getting involved, please do get in touch and let me know by emailing: Jubilee.pageant@northnorthants.gov.uk

Tree-mendous team effort as trees are planted at Irchester Country Park

North Northamptonshire Council's Councillors and the Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire joined local school children and Northamptonshire Carers to plant trees as part of the 'Queen's Green Canopy' initiative.

A group of pupils from Irchester Primary School took part in the planting on 11 March, alongside Northamptonshire Carers and local dignitaries.

Across the day, native and fruit trees were planted to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, including 70 trees (one for each year of Her Majesty's reign) on the Royal Meadow.

The trees that were planted at Irchester Country Park, as well as those across North Northamptonshire, will have a long-lasting impact on our communities now and for future generations. Although the planting season is coming to an end, there will be a further opportunity at the end of the year for people to 'Plant a Tree for the Jubilee' and I would encourage everyone to take part and help improve our natural environment.

Cllr Harriet Pentland, the Council's Executive Member for Climate and Environment' said at the event:

"It was great to be able to join Irchester Primary School and Northamptonshire Carers for our last, big planting event of the planting season. Since October 2021, trees have been planted across North Northamptonshire by our teams, as well as community groups and volunteers, to commemorate Her Majesty's 70 years of service and they will be a legacy for years to come. Thank you to everyone, so far, who has taken part in this fantastic initiative."

I would like to reiterate Harriet's thanks and we look forward to planting more trees when the tree planting season starts again later this year.

Since the start of the planting season and up to the end of March (the end of the planting season) trees have been planted at locations across North Northamptonshire and officially recorded as part of the 'Queen's Green Canopy' initiative. The Council continues to work closely with the Northamptonshire Lord-Lieutenant's office and local community groups to encourage tree planting activities across the area.

For more information and how to get involved, visit [Queen's Green Canopy](#). You can also find out more details about [tree planting and permissions](#).

Social media: Top stories

Follow our social media accounts on [Facebook](#) and/or [Twitter](#).

Top Twitter posts so far this week (14-16 March 2022)

- If you frequently visit our Country Parks and have a season ticket for all parks, please note that after 1 April, when you renew your ticket, Brixworth Country Park will no longer be included.
Impressions - 691, Engagements - 92

- We want your views - should kerbside garden waste collection be paid for by only those households who use the service via a subscription charge? Have your say
Impressions - 626, Engagements - 56

- Yesterday the Government launched the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. Any individual, groups or business who would like to support the scheme should only record their interest only online via the official website: <https://t.co/Zq4cbgojfg> and not via any other routes
Impressions - 609, Engagements - 9

Top Facebook posts so far this week (14-16 March 2022)

- We want your views - should kerbside garden waste collection be paid for by only those households who use the service via a subscription charge? Have your say at: <http://ow.ly/un9q50iIRmg> Comments on this post won't be considered as part of the consultation, please complete the survey to give us your views.
Post reach - 31,939, Post clicks - 8,062

- Have your say on the future of kerbside garden waste collections in North Northants
Post reach - 8513, Post clicks - 793

- Every day, 6 children are killed or seriously hurt on roads in Britain. That's why we're supporting Beep Beep! Day (Weds). Schools, nurseries, playgroups or childminders, sign-up and get your FREE action pack to teach road safety basics to children age 2-7
Post reach - 4924, Post clicks - 246

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. If you have ideas of items to include in future updates please let me know at: executive@northnorthants.gov.uk

With Best Wishes,
Jason

Follow me on Twitter [@SmithersJason](https://twitter.com/SmithersJason)

Contacting North Northamptonshire Council

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www.northnorthants.gov.uk