**Mulbarton District Councillors Report 6th March 2025**

**Member Ward Grants**

Member Ward Grants for 2024/25 have been fully spent. Requests for future support with small projects (up to £1,000 usually) to benefit the local community can be made to your District Councillors.

**Community Action Fund Grants**

Another round of CAF grants is expected to open in April. Applications for grants of up to £20,000 are made by District Councillors on behalf of local organisations. Please contact us if you would like more information. Grants are expected to be heavily oversubscribed once again.

**Bleed Kits**

Last year SNC agreed to encourage more Bleed Control Kits in public spaces across the District – possibly in or alongside defibrillator units. Your Councillors will be pleased to support applications for funding.

**Government Consultation on Norfolk & Suffolk Devolution**

Norfolk and Suffolk have been accepted onto the priority programme for devolution. This will mean that elections for a Mayor to lead the Mayoral County Combined Authority could be as early as next May. Elections for Norfolk County Council have been suspended for at least one year.

The Government has published a consultation paper on its proposals for devolution in Norfolk and Suffolk. The consultation is open until 13 April 2025. All residents are encouraged to respond.

Link to consultation paper: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation#establishing-a-mayoral-combined-authority-across-norfolk-county-council-and-suffolk-county-council>

Consultation form: <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/lggc/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation/>

**Local Government Reorganisation**

The County, District and City Councils are developing their plans for the reorganisation of local government in the area with the current two-tier approach replaced by a number of unitary authorities. Final proposals need to be submitted in September 2025, with initial plans in late March. Early signs are that it may be difficult to reach agreement across all the councils affected.

**Local Development Scheme – Housing Targets**

A review of the local development scheme (the Greater Norwich Local Plan and other documents) will start later this year. This is a result of the new national planning framework which increases the number of new houses required across Greater Norwich by 28%, from 1,929 per year to 2,590.

The focus is likely to be on developing one or more new settlements as the previous iteration of the Local Plan indicated limited capacity for growth in existing settlements. Sites previously considered include Hethel, Silfield and Honingham Thorpe in Broadland.

**Big South Norfolk Litter Pick**

Parish councils, schools and community groups are encouraged to join the annual SNC litter pick – which runs until end May. Every group that participates receives a £20 voucher, and groups can enter a prize draw with 20 prizes of £200 available to the group. The Council can provide equipment and posters.

**VE Day Commemorative Events**

South Norfolk Council has agreed to recognise the 80th anniversary of VE Day by awarding up to £300 to each parish for qualifying commemorative events. Funding is initially offered to Parish Councils, but other local organisations can apply if the PC is not making an application.

**New Nature Conservation Fund**

In April, a pilot scheme for a Nature Conservation Fund will be launched. Five grants of up to £10,000 will be available to Parish Councils and Community Groups. Projects must deliver benefits in one of three areas by April 2026: public accessibility to greenspace, biodiversity benefit, and carbon sequestration.

**Ketteringham Recycling Depot**

Following the launch of South Norfolk’s Recycling Action Plan, your District Councillors recently visited Ketteringham Recycling Depot. We asked the team heading the proposed development of the site to supply us and the nearby parishes with updates. Additional land will need to be acquired to extend the facilities, but most of the existing land will be redeveloped. Once complete this will improve facilities and safety for staff and allow for the extra traffic created by the introduction of food waste collection.

**Planning Consultation – Self-Build and Custom Build SPD**

This consultation on a proposed Supplementary Planning Document on Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing in now open and runs until 21st March.

<https://southnorfolkandbroadland.oc2.uk/document/23>

**More Funding for Play Parks**

In the 2025/26 South Norfolk budget, £134,000 of additional funding is available to support play park repair and improvement. It is expected that funds will be spent on SNC managed facilities.

**‘Norwich to Tilbury’ Update**

National Grid has recently announced a “targeted consultation” involving minor changes to the proposed scheme. Locally, the proposal is to move the construction laydown area from the North of the current substation to the Southwest of it – nearer to Swardeston and Mulbarton. The consultation closes on March 3rd. Details can be found at: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury/public-consultation-and-programme>

The 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](https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions%20)

**Bob McClenning, Ian Spratt & Jim Webber**

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