

Loddon George Lane and A146 junction roundabout

As many of you will know, this is a project I have worked to deliver for over 2 years. I am pleased to say that the work has finally started, and I'm told, should take approximately 22 weeks, provided we have no problems, like bad weather. I ask that local residents bear with the inevitable delays and increase in traffic during this time. It will be worth it.

Covid Update

I am pleased to report that the latest figures for Coronavirus infections in South Norfolk are now down to 4 per 100,000 people, that's a reduction of 33% from the previous week. This data was accurate as at 30/05/2021.

Website

The new website for both South Norfolk and Broadland councils has now gone live. It can be viewed at www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk The aim of the new website is to make it easier for residents to find information and to book services, also to report issues such as fly tipping or missed bins. We would welcome any feedback on ease of use or suggestions on how we can improve it. There is an online feedback form for this purpose. As a result of this change, my email address has also changed, although I will continue to receive emails from the old address for the next six months. My new email address is:

kay.billig@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plans

in the Loddon and Chedgrave ward this affects the villages of:
Hales, Heckingham, Raveningham, Sisland, Norton Subcourse

We have now published our plans for housing allocation in smaller villages in South Norfolk, this is in addition to the Greater Norwich Local Plan that has already been published. The idea behind the village cluster plan is to identify smaller sites that could take 12-25 houses in some of our smaller villages. In the past most housing has been allocated to larger villages and towns and this is an opportunity for other places to identify sites that they would like to see develop. Any identified sites still have to be assessed and go through the full planning process. Sites that have come forward are identified on maps and planners have suggested which might be acceptable and why. This is the consultation stage, so now is your opportunity to comment on these sites and to suggest others which you feel may be more appropriate. You can see which villages are affected and take part in the consultation at:

www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/emerging-local-plan/south-norfolk-village-clusters-housing-allocations-plan

Empty Homes

South Norfolk is adopting a new policy aimed at bringing empty homes back into use. This includes those that appear to have been abandoned or are seriously neglected. Neglected properties cause problems for owners and neighbours alike, with the potential for vandalism, vermin and a general lowering of the environment of neighbourhood. We want to help. Money has now been set aside which can be used either in conjunction with the owner, as a loan to tidy up the property or as a last result, for compulsory purchase. If you know of a property in your area which may fall into this category, please let me know.

Q4 Outturn – the financial health of the Council

We have just received the final figures for the last year for South Norfolk and the total overall position is that we have an underspend of £212,000.

We have been fortunate to receive major government funding during the Covid crisis, which has helped us to keep our services going despite increased demand.

Some of the notable changes and figures this year have been:

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- A slight increase in fly tipping, although we still have a low incidence of this crime compared to other districts. Please report any you see via the website.
- An increase in the amount of rubbish being put in the bins, this may be down to more people having a clear out whilst being at home due to restrictions.
- 95% of planning applications determined within statutory timescales or agreed extensions, this despite an increase in planning applications for the year.
- 645 new homes delivered. 393 affordable homes built.
- We have seen a 74% increase in benefit claims but we are consistently processing these within 7 days.
- 127 residents assisted with grants to enable them to live independently.
- We have managed to collect over 98% of council tax and 97% of the business rates due.
- We are currently supporting 11 apprenticeships.

For the future we have set aside monies to further aid victims of the Covid crisis, money to restart our leisure centres and get people back to fitness and also a reserve for future changes to the waste service, which may come as a result of the Governments white paper.

Considering your council has faced a large increase in demand for services with many more people coming to us for support from both residents and businesses, with the government funding available and prudent financial action taken at an early stage, I am pleased to report that South Norfolk's budget is looking healthy.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Kay