

[NCC Update](#)

[12/09/24](#)

Norfolk County Council on track to meet net zero targets by 2030

Norfolk County Council is on course to hit its 2030 carbon emissions savings target, according to the latest data.

The council has reduced its emissions by 61% compared to the baseline from 2016/17. This impressive result has been achieved by implementing a range of measures, such as improving energy efficiency in its buildings, switching from gas to electric heating, and installing energy-efficient LED street lighting.

The council's project to replace Norfolk's streetlights with energy-efficient LEDs has been a resounding success. To date, it has saved £16.5 million, 88.75 million kWh in energy and more than 26,000 tonnes of carbon. The project is now in its final phases, with the remaining 5% of streetlights to be converted by April 2025.

In June 2023, Norfolk County Council launched its Climate Strategy setting out the council's approach to addressing its own emissions and also how it can support Norfolk's development as a low carbon and climate resilient place to live, visit and do business. The climate strategy also considers the close relationship between climate action and nature recovery, the jobs and growth opportunities from the expanding green economy, and how adaptation is needed to protect local services and communities. The council have published over 130 actions outlining the practical steps being taken to meet their climate ambitions.

Norfolk County Council's climate approach was recognised in the 2023 Council Climate Action Scorecards which saw the authority ranked second among England's County Councils for its climate action approach.

Progress to date and the next steps needed to reach net zero for the council's own estate by 2030 are set out in a [report to the council's Infrastructure and Development Committee](#).

County Deal update

More than £600m of investment to create jobs, homes and infrastructure has been scrapped, after the Government halted Norfolk's devolution deal.

Further details are available on the county council news pages [here](#).

Championing Norfolk's market towns

Norfolk County Council wants to highlight the crucial role market towns such as Aylsham, Downham Market, and Fakenham play as service centres for local communities and bring together people to share best practice around revitalising them, encouraging pride in place and increasing footfall.

Champions of Norfolk's market towns will come together at a conference next month aimed at showcasing their strengths and developing plans to maximise their future potential. The conference will build on the engagement work the county council has completed through its Norfolk Economic Strategy workshops and Love Your Market Town initiative.

Businesses, organisations and councils from market towns across the county will take part in the event at Swaffham Assembly Rooms on 1 October, exploring placemaking, business

and skills support and transport. There will be a networking lunch from 12.45pm, followed by a series of talks and panel discussions highlighting best practice in placemaking, business and skills support and transport. The event will conclude with networking drinks until 5.45pm.

Businesses in Norfolk's market towns interested in attending are asked to RSVP to econdev@norfolk.gov.uk as soon as possible. Tickets are free but numbers are limited so will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis.

Norfolk Rail Prospectus - have your say

Norfolk County Council's rail prospectus sets out what they feel is required to make sure that rail can serve the needs and expectations of passengers, and to ensure that it continues to support Norfolk's economy and helps deliver the housing and jobs growth planned. The prospectus is currently being updated and we want it to reflect the views of local people and stakeholders.

Ambitions for improvements on routes to London and Cambridge, new stations, decarbonisation of the network, and making stations accessible for all, are part the new rail prospectus that people who live, work and study in Norfolk can now help to shape.

Although the county council does not have any direct say in how the railways are run and invested in, having an up-to-date prospectus in place, that's aligned with Norfolk's Local Transport Plan and Better Together for Norfolk strategy, means Norfolk will be well placed to secure improvements for the county.

The prospectus will be used in the county council's dealings with the government, and organisations including train companies and Network Rail, to get the best for the people and businesses of Norfolk.

The consultation will close on 21 October 2024. Find out more and have your say [here](#).

Next of kin appeal

The Norfolk Coroners Service is trying to trace the next of kin of Tamara MINNS, aged 87, who resided on Chaucer Road, Great Yarmouth area and died on 20/08/2024. There were no suspicious circumstances that led to the death. Despite carrying out extensive enquiries, no next-of-kin have been identified by the Coroner's Office nor Police. Anyone with information should contact the Coroner's Office in Norwich on 01603 774773

National updates

Independent investigation of the NHS in England

In July 2024, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care commissioned Lord Darzi to conduct an immediate and independent investigation of the NHS in England.

[Lord Darzi's report](#), published on 12 September, sets out the problems in the NHS and themes for the government to incorporate into a 10-year plan for reforming the health service.

It finds that the health of the nation has deteriorated, with more years spent in ill health, and that contributing factors include poor quality housing, low income and insecure employment.

The report says that increased NHS waiting times and delays in getting vital treatment in A&E and cancer care is harming health and costing lives. It also identifies a lack of capital investment, too little automation and widespread problems for people accessing services.

It notes that the NHS budget is not being spent where it should be, saying too great a share is being spent in hospitals, too little in the community, that productivity is too low and too many hospital beds are taken up with people needing social care.

Whilst critical of NHS management structures and systems it notes that the 2022 Health and Care Act putting integrated care systems on a statutory basis has the makings of a sensible management structure to tackle inequalities, and to improve population health. (eg our [Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System](#)).

Social Care was not part of the remit of the report but Lord Darzi says that it is impossible to understand what has been happening in the NHS without understanding what has happened to social care. He notes that rising demand from a society where people have become older and sicker, alongside a social care system that is far from supporting the scale of needs of the population, are the crucial context in which NHS performance must be understood. He says that social care has not been valued or resourced sufficiently, which has both a profound human cost and economic consequences.

The report concludes that the NHS is in critical condition but its vital signs are strong, saying that many of the solutions can be found in parts of the NHS today and that the vast array of good practice that already exists in the health service should be the starting point for the government's plan to reform it.

Addressing economic inactivity - Labour Market Advisory Board

A new [Labour Market Advisory Board has been launched](#) to advise government on addressing economic inactivity and 'getting Britain working again'.

The board was appointed by Work and Pensions Secretary Liz Kendall MP and is made up of labour market experts from across business, industrial relations and academia.

The focus of their first meeting was the impact of ill-health on inactivity and how the Government can support more people into good work.

The board will shape the content of a White Paper, expected in Autumn of this year, for how the Government can realise its ambitions of getting more individuals back into work, and increasing the nation's productivity.

Bus franchising

The Minister for Local Transport, Simon Lightwood MP [brought a statement to Parliament](#) in which he reaffirmed the Government's plans to return control of bus franchising services to local transport authorities. The statement introduced a statutory instrument which changes the legal framework, allowing bus franchising to be available to local authorities to choose the model of how it will operate

Bus franchising involves local authorities granting private companies the right to operate in a specific area but retaining control over key aspects of the service such as routes, timetables and fares. It may not be a suitable model for all authorities or rural areas.

The government says that this initiative helps to pave the way for the new bus Bill later in the current parliamentary session—a Bill intended to reform funding, to allow franchises to be rolled out to more places more quickly and cheaply, and to support councils that choose not to franchise but still want the flexibility to deliver on local transport priorities.

Council leaders have tasked officers with drawing up a report into how the government's plans to give local leaders powers over buses could work in Norfolk.

Children's wellbeing bill update

Janey Daby MP, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education, [responded to oral questions on Children's Social Care](#), confirmed the Government's plan to bring forward the Children's Wellbeing Bill to address the issue of children's social care.

The Minister's response did not give a date for the introduction of the Children's Wellbeing Bill to Parliament, which will create the legislation to give Ofsted more powers to crack down on poor quality children's homes and profiteering. However she indicated that the bill could be expected following the spending review and budget, as many of the measures will need to be backed by Government funding.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

james