

Update from NCC, 05/04/24

Local Enterprise Partnership integration into Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils

Key functions and employees of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) transferred to Norfolk and Suffolk on 1 April 2024 as part of the Government's devolution process. LEP functions include business representation, strategic economic planning, and responsibility for the delivery of government programmes.

Business support will continue to be provided by New Anglia Growth Hub – which delivers the LEP's business growth programme, including the administration of grant schemes.

The Growth Hub has supported businesses and the region's economy, with the economic impact of its Business Growth Programme measured over a 10-year period at £1,032,797,741, creating new jobs and safeguarding existing employment.

Major construction and infrastructure projects across Norfolk have received significant funding thanks to the LEP's Growth Deal with Government, which secured £223.5m for the region to 2021. These include the recently opened Herring Bridge in Great Yarmouth, the Digi-Tech Factory at City College Norwich, and Productivity East, the centre for engineering, technology and management at the University of East Anglia.

Great Yarmouth's Operations & Maintenance Campus for the offshore industry, and the North Walsham Town Centre improvements were among the shovel-ready schemes for which the LEP secured £32.1m from the Government's Getting Building Fund.

The LEP's work can also be seen in the projects supported via its Growing Places Fund, such as Broadland Food Innovation Centre at the Food Enterprise Park at Honingham, and the power upgrade for businesses at Snetterton Park in west Norfolk.

Both councils have worked closely in the run-up to the transition and are keen to build on the LEP's 13-year legacy.

Health Checks - Norfolk cited as a good practice case study

The Local Government Association have recently published a report, [Getting Under the Bonnet](#), highlighting how councils are working with the NHS to deliver health checks for their communities. Norfolk County Council is cited as a good practice case study as it has progressed to being one of the best in England in terms of the percentage of the eligible population receiving a Health Check.

The success of the NHS Health Checks improvement programme is down to a structured review approach, the hard work of the NHS Health Check improvement group and the relationships that have been built with Primary Care and Providers. Norfolk has replicated this structured review approach across other public health topics such as smoking, physical activity and healthy weight.

Information about eligibility and how to get a free health check is available on the Norfolk County Council website [here](#).

Norfolk Autism Acceptance Week

Norfolk Autism Acceptance Week is taking place from 2 April to 8 April 2024. This aligns with World Autism Acceptance Week which aims to increase awareness and acceptance of autism, helping to build a more inclusive world.

There are many autism-friendly events going on across Norfolk for families to enjoy and activities to raise awareness and increase acceptance of autism. Support and guidance is also available.

Further information and links to support, guidance, events and activities are available on the Norfolk County Council website [here](#).

Government updates

New powers for dental and pharmacy staff to free up appointments

On 28 March, [the government announced](#) new powers for pharmacy technicians, dental hygienists and dental therapists to supply and administer medicines,

Dental hygienists and therapists will be able to give patients certain types of medicines – including pain relief and fluoride – without sign off from a dentist. Pharmacy technicians will be able to administer and supply specified medicines to certain groups of patients, without those patients having to see a prescriber.

The government says that the move will streamline processes within dental and pharmacy settings and improve patient experiences.

The announcement is part of the latest series of measures the government has brought forward to cut waiting lists and improve access to primary care, which includes the publication of the [dental recovery plan](#), and the expansion of the [Pharmacy First](#) scheme.

Avian flu update

The UK has self-declared zonal freedom from highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) for Great Britain with effect from 29 March 2024. This is in line with World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) rules. The declaration is being reviewed and will be published by WOAH shortly.

The UK does not currently have outbreaks of HPAI in poultry or other captive birds. The current risk to poultry from HPAI H5 in Great Britain is low. However, HPAI H5N1 continues to be found in wild birds in Great Britain and across Europe with outbreaks occurring in poultry and other captive birds in several countries in Europe.

Keepers should remain vigilant and practice [stringent biosecurity](#) to protect the health and welfare of their birds.

Reminder - new registration requirements for bird keepers

On 19 March the government announced [new measures to help protect the poultry sector from bird flu](#) which say that all bird keepers must register their birds and update records annually. The new rules cover owners of backyard flocks, birds of prey and pigeon fanciers, but do not affect caged pet birds (excluding any poultry species) kept entirely inside a

domestic dwellings. Keepers are encouraged to register their birds ahead of the legal deadline on 1 October 2024.

Rural proofing – government update

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has published "[Delivering Rural Opportunity - The Third Report on Rural Proofing](#)" which provides an overview of the Government's progress to address the needs and challenges of rural areas.

It is structured around four themes: growing the rural economy, enhancing connectivity, improving homes and energy, and strengthening communities.

The report provides an update against key funding, policy and delivery commitments, using data and information gathered from across government and from the Statistical Digest of Rural England. The data illustrates rural challenges around productivity, connectivity, accessibility, lower earnings and higher house prices.

The report is a follow-up to the policy statement "[Unleashing Rural Opportunity](#)" published in June 2023, detailing the Government's plan to level up rural areas by supporting people and businesses in achieving their potential.

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

Kind regards

james