

05 September 2024

Norfolk residents encouraged to take up free NHS Health Checks

Norfolk County Council has launched a campaign highlighting to residents that the NHS Health Check is a great opportunity to get their blood pressure checked and receive advice on how to lower their risk of cardiovascular disease and other long-term conditions. The campaign coincides with the national Know Your Numbers blood pressure testing and awareness campaign. It is targeting specific households in the Gt Yarmouth, Norwich, Thetford and Kings Lynn areas where there is a lower take up rate of the NHS Health Check.

The NHS Long Term Plan has identified cardiovascular disease as the single biggest area where the NHS can save lives over the next 10 years. The Plan identifies the NHS Health Check as a priority area for improvement; to improve the effectiveness of the check and identify and treat those at risk earlier.

Prioritising prevention is one of the four strategic priorities for the Norfolk and Waveney ICS, with a priority action to prevent people from becoming ill through promoting healthy lifestyles and improving mental wellbeing.

Anyone aged 40-74 without a long-term health condition is eligible for an NHS Health Check every 5 years. NHS Health Checks assess your risk of serious illness such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, kidney disease and dementia.

Norfolk residents will now be able to carry out an NHS Health Check primarily via their mobile phone, tablet or computer, as part of a pilot scheme by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) that will operate alongside the in-person service. Norfolk, alongside two other local authorities, was selected to test the digital NHS Health Check as part of a national pilot following a competitive expression of interest process.

People who complete the digital NHS Health Check will receive their results and personalised advice on ways to reduce their cardiovascular risk depending on these results. Those with results that fall outside of the normal range will be advised to follow up with their GP.

In Norfolk there are three GP partnerships participating in the pilot:

- Acle Medical Partnership (Acle Medical Centre and Reedham Surgery)
- Drayton Medical Practice (Drayton, Horsford and Horsham St Faiths Surgeries)
- Great Massingham and Bayfield Surgeries

Key information for how you can get involved:

- Residents can check their eligibility for a health check and book one online: [Check if you're eligible](#)

- Please help signpost people you think might be interested to our website www.norfolk.gov.uk/healthchecks
- Councillors and residents are encouraged to display posters in their local areas. (A printed stock of posters will be available on request by emailing marketing@norfolk.gov.uk)
- We are also encouraging residents to spread the word within their communities about the importance of getting an NHS Health Check.

Battery warning after Norfolk house fire

Residents across Norfolk are being reminded of the importance of buying lithium-ion batteries for a range of everyday devices only from reputable and safe retailers, to ensure they meet UK safety standards and aren't a fire risk.

As a Safety Bill about the rechargeable batteries is due to go before the House of Lords on Friday (6 September 2024), Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service and Norfolk County Council's Trading Standards team is investigating a house fire which is believed to have been started by a battery which was charging.

The occupants of the house in Bowthorpe managed to escape the fire last Tuesday evening, and a subsequent fire investigation has concluded that the fire started with the battery, purchased from an online retailer, and charger.

[More details](#)

[Find out more about how to stay safe with lithium batteries.](#)
[Find out more about the national battery safety campaign.](#)
[Read more about the Lithium-ion battery safety bill.](#)

Work to begin on new Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital roundabout

Improvements are due to be made on the main Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital roundabout through an upcoming developer-led scheme.

Work on the £1 million-plus scheme is scheduled to start on Monday 9 September and will last for around six months. The work will see improved pedestrian and cycle access to the hospital and nearby research park, alongside the installation of a new Toucan crossing.

The developer is leading the project, with certain elements delivered in partnership with Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk Council. This partnership approach has enabled the improvements to be delivered as a single scheme, reducing disruption to road users during the work.

The roundabout will remain open during the majority of the scheme. Colney Lane East - which leads to the hospital from Round House Way - will be closed to traffic for four weeks in early 2025. During this closure, alternative access to the hospital will be via Hethersett Lane and Rosalind Franklin Road, which provides a direct route to the multi-storey car park and the hospital access road.

Norfolk joins call for urgent reform to support children with SEND

Tristan Hopper, Strategy & Policy, Norfolk County Council

Norfolk County Council is calling on the government to urgently reform education and funding for children with special educational needs and disabilities, amid national pressures on a "broken system."

A report to Norfolk County Council's Cabinet reveals that despite significant investment and more than 2,000 extra specialist places being developed, the council, schools and academies are struggling to meet unprecedented demand and the ring-fenced schools' budget, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), is continuing to overspend.

The forecast cumulative deficit on the DSG is now estimated to be £115m by March 2025.

Cabinet continues to lobby government for reform and for funding to support a more inclusive education system.

Delivery of Long Stratton Bypass is on track

Senior council leaders and delivery partners visited the site at Long Stratton in July to view progress on construction of the new road first-hand.

Preliminary works have been underway since the start of this year, with the main construction commencing in late May, following the final approval of the council's full business case from government.

The current estimated overall cost of the bypass is approx. £46.9m with funding primarily sourced from The Department for Transport, a £14.5m commitment from the Greater Norwich Growth Board, plus local developer contributions.

The project is expected to be complete by late 2025.

National updates

Levelling up projects to be reviewed by new Government

Local growth Minister Alex Norris [has confirmed that existing projects](#) as part of the Levelling Up Fund will be reviewed by Government before the budget on 30 October.

The Levelling Up Fund has come under fire from the current Government whilst they were still in opposition for being ineffective, both in terms of the administration of the fund (with it being a competitive bidding pot) as well as the slowness of the funding (as of Spring 2024, only 10% of the fund had been spent).

Household support fund extended by 6 months

The Household Support Fund has again been extended for another 6 months, the Government's work and pensions Secretary [has confirmed](#).

The extension will cost the Government £421 million and will go to councils to help them support the most vulnerable who are struggling with household bill costs, such as food and energy.

With over 60% of local authorities considering ending the support they provide to vulnerable households, the funding has allowed for an extra six months of support.

The LGA has reacted positively to the announcement, highlighting the targeted support that local authorities are able to provide, especially for the most vulnerable cohort of people who may fall through the gaps of other support schemes.

Ofsted calls for tighter controls on profiteering within children's homes

Ofsted wants to tackle excessive profit-making by private-equity owned children's homes, [as part of wider efforts](#) to strengthen the regulation and inspection of children's social care.

In response to a major consultation, the inspectorate said new legislation should regulate profit-making by large groups of children's care providers, to "make sure their decisions are made in children's best interests and not solely for profit".

The consultation also highlights a number of other proposed changes, which recognise the growing pressures on the education and social care space and are designed to alleviate rather than add to these pressures where possible.

Government setting up Shadow Great British Railways

The Transport Secretary, the Rt Hon Louise Haigh MP, is instructing the CEO of Network Rail, the Director General for Rail Services in the Department for Transport, and the CEO of DfT OLR Holdings Ltd (DOHL) [to establish a Shadow Great British Railways](#), which will see the main organisations responsible for the operational railway work together in closer collaboration.

This partnership is being established in advance of the official establishment of Great British Railways, which will require primary legislation to be passed through the Houses of Parliament.

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

Kind regards

james