

Appendix 1. District Councillors report November 2024

A change in Government can mean significant changes at District level.

Change in income and grants: a major part of our budget is money received from Government.

Given we are relatively late in the budget process this year is going to be more difficult due to timing and any changes being made to income and policy.

Policy

Service provision can change with new policy and practices.

Planning: one area we know will have significant change for Local Planning authorities like SNDC and residents is the proposed changes to the planning system!

We have just completed our local plan after 4 years of work! This gave us a "5 year land supply" protecting us from speculative development.

We now know that we will have to rewrite our plan because of the required number of completions being raised considerably, and we will therefore not have the protection of the "5 year land supply".

National Planning Policy Framework Consultation

The Government has [released a promised consultation](#) on its updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The consultation seeks views on the government's proposed approach to revising the National Planning Policy Framework in order to achieve sustainable growth in the planning system. They are also seeking views on a series of wider policy proposals in relation to increasing planning fees, local plan intervention criteria and appropriate thresholds for certain Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

The consultation closes on 24 September 2024.

New Housing Targets

In addition to proposals to revise the planning system, the [government has set new targets to deliver 1.5 million more homes](#).

All councils in England are to be given new, mandatory housing targets to deliver new homes by 2029 and the new targets will flow into the development of local plans. Greater Norwich expects to be told to build 700 more per year!

Councils will have to review their green belt land if needed to meet their own target, identifying and prioritising 'grey belt' land, which the government has now defined and includes land on the edge of existing settlements or roads, as well as old petrol stations and car parks. Grey belt sites will only be built on if they meet the Government's 'golden rules' that half of homes are affordable, the plans enhance the local environment and the necessary infrastructure is in place, such as schools and GP surgeries.

Further announcements about the government's plans to invest in social and affordable housing, including support for councils to help them deliver affordable housing, will be made at the Spending Review in October 2024.

Launch of new towns taskforce

The Deputy Prime Minister has asked regeneration expert Sir Michael Lyons to lead [an independent New Towns Taskforce](#) to deliver the government's vision for a new generation of new towns. Sir Michael's team is expected to work 'in lockstep' with mayors, local leaders and communities to advise on the right places for new towns, listening to those who know their areas best. Key principles for the new towns are outlined below.

- The programme of new towns will create largescale communities of at least 10,000 new homes each, with many larger than this.

- The programme will include large-scale new communities that are separate from existing settlements but expect that a far larger number of new towns will be urban extensions and regeneration schemes.
- These new communities will be governed by a 'New Towns Code' - a set of rules that developers will have to meet to make sure new towns are well-connected, well-designed, sustainable and attractive places where people want to live.
- The Government state that new towns will have all the infrastructure and public services necessary to support communities. The towns will also help meet housing need by targeting rates of 40% affordable housing with a focus on affordable social rented homes.

The taskforce will recommend appropriate locations to government within 12 months.

Reuse shops

If you're looking for good quality used items for your home and garden, try your local reuse shop.

🔑 You'll find a treasure trove of items such as furniture, ornaments, pictures, bikes and garden tools.

Everything in the shops has been donated - saving good stuff from going to waste.

Shop stock constantly changes as new items are donated, so you never know what you might find.

👉 Visit us today and uncover your next favourite piece! 🌱❤️ https://orlo.uk/reuse_shops_0QVNx

We're offering grants of up to £20,000 for Parish and Town Councils, as well as community groups, to have electric vehicle charge points and solar panels fitted at their premises 🚗⚡

Find out more and download the application form here - <https://orlo.uk/9waeZ>

I have included details of A joint bottle bank Scheme

Water refill at your library

Affordable homes

After reading an article regarding many affordable homes standing empty in East of England, which some of you may have also seen, it concerned me that SNC was being affected in the same way.

We ask for 33% affordable on developments some to buy and some to let. Once built a "Housing Association takes ownership and administers the scheme.

I asked for some re-assurance, and I attach a response below for your information.

"In response to the recent headline, [Thousands of unused affordable homes sitting empty in new housing 'scandal' \(msn.com\)](#), I thought it would be useful to reassure you and other South Norfolk Members that this isn't currently an issue for SNC".

Despite the East of England being cited in the report as an area where "brand new affordable homes are standing empty", I have spoken to our Housing Enabling Officer who has confirmed that he is not aware of any new affordable homes in South Norfolk standing empty because of Registered Providers (also known as housing associations) being unwilling to acquire them.

We know from recent conversations with various Registered Providers (RPs) including regionally based housing associations and also for-profit RPs, that currently, RPs are still making offers at the point the

housebuilders are marketing the affordable homes they need to deliver under S106 Agreements. We also know that the new affordable homes being offered by private developers in South Norfolk are, in the main, built to a high standard and therefore, acceptable to the RPs.

S106 Agreements are the main source of delivery for new affordable homes in South Norfolk:

Year	Affordable Homes Completed	Of which, S106 Obligations	% S106
2020/21	131	118	90%
2021/22	147	119	81%
2022/23	422	239	57%
2023/24	403	238	59%

During the next few years, we expect s106 completions to be at about the same percentages as in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Housing associations will also deliver on their own 100% affordable housing sites, currently being built at Harleston, Diss and Roydon, with another planning application submitted for Harleston.

What we have noticed however, is that many RPs appear to have revised their business plans to focus on maintaining their existing stock, potentially leading to less money being available for new development opportunities.

This, combined with limited financial capacity, has impacted on RPs ability to acquire new homes via S106 Agreements. The developers are still required to build the affordable homes to comply with S106 Agreements but there is no legal requirement placed on the RPs to purchase them.

Again, this isn't currently a problem in South Norfolk where there is still a healthy supply of RPs actively looking to acquire new affordable homes from developers, but we will keep an eye on the situation.

Nutrient Neutral Development - Norfolk Environmental Credits

I am writing to inform you that South Norfolk Council's grant for Parish and Town Councils and community groups, for electric vehicle chargepoints (EVCP) and solar PV is **open to applications**.

South Norfolk Council are offering funding for one electric vehicle charge point with two sockets, either wall mounted or a pedestal, including any associated electrical infrastructure works **up to the value of £10,000**.

In addition to this, we are also offering **up to £10,000** for solar PV, for those who have applied for a grant for EVCP (either through this grant scheme or Norfolk County Council), or already have EVCP installed.

The grant has two overall objectives: to increase the provision of public electric vehicle charging points across South Norfolk, encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles, across both the urban and rural areas of the district, as well as to enable Town and Parish Councils and community groups to provide EVCP infrastructure to residents whilst providing their usual services, by reducing electricity costs through the provision of solar PV.

If you would like to pass on this information to your Town and Parish Councils, and any community groups that have a permanent building, it would be greatly appreciated. We have already been in contact with the parish clerks, and have advertised the grant on social media, however we appreciate any further promotion of the grant.

Information about the grant, including the grant application form and guidance notes can be found on our website, here: [Electric Vehicle Chargepoints and Solar PV Grants | Broadland and South Norfolk \(southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk\)](https://southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/electric-vehicle-chargepoints-and-solar-pv-grants)

Our team is available for application support. Applicants can contact environmentalstrategy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk if they would like to arrange a one-to-one application support slot.

Applications close on Friday 29th November, however we encourage applicants to send in their applications as soon as possible as projects must be delivered by 31st December 2024.