

Norfolk County Council updates

New Norfolk Rural Business Awards

The newly launched Norfolk Rural Business Awards.

Norfolk County Council and the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association have joined forces to launch the new Norfolk Rural Business Awards.

The awards were announced at the recent annual Norfolk Farming Conference and are designed to recognise the essential nature and huge importance of Norfolk's rural communities and businesses to the region. They will highlight the very best of Norfolk from nine sponsored category areas aimed at showcasing a wide range of Norfolk's businesses, community groups and people.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing is the fourth largest sector in Norfolk, accounting for an estimated 8pc of all businesses - with many other businesses closely linked to the sector including those in accommodation, retail, food science, technology and engineering.

The award categories are: Best Rural Community Initiative; Best Farming Innovation Adopter; Best Food Producer; Norfolk's Unsung Hero; Best Drink Maker; Best Farming Champion; Best Emerging Talent; Best High Growth Business; Best Sustainable Land Use / Farming Exemplar.

Winners will receive a trophy, a certificate, and be able to use Norfolk Rural Awards branding in their promotions. They will be announced at the the Royal Norfolk Show in June.

Judging will include a visit to all shortlisted businesses, and each finalist will be asked to participate in a short film.

The entry deadline is 19 April 2024.

The entry form for nominations to each category can be found online [here](#)

New Film Office for Norfolk

Norfolk County Council has awarded a 2-year contract to manage a new Norfolk Film Office to the Norwich based company, Norfolk Screen.

The Norfolk Film Office will proactively promote Norfolk and its assets as a location for TV and film productions, as well as act as the front door for any location enquiries, to ensure our county capitalises on the growth of the UK TV and film sector.

The two-year pilot film office programme aims to generate an increase in economic activity for the county via an increase in filming activity, and to confirm the viability of a stand-alone Film Office.

Large-scale TV or film productions generate an increase in business for a wide range of companies surrounding a filming location, from cafes and coffee shops to taxi companies, accommodation businesses and retail. Such productions also offer opportunities for local film companies to loan equipment or hire out studio space, and for freelance film

professionals from make-up artists to camera and sound technicians who live in Norfolk to have the opportunity to work closer to home.

The Film Office initiative could also benefit local businesses as visitors travel to visit a Norfolk location they have seen on their screens.

The pilot project has been made possible thanks to support from all Norfolk's local authorities and together we hope to achieve great things for the benefit of the local economy, the local screen sector and associated bodies.

Location scouts searching for sites and new locations wishing to register with the film office are encouraged to [contact Norfolk Screen](#).

Save Our Seals – Flying Rings Campaign

Parish Councils are asked to raise awareness and support a campaign to protect seals.

Norfolk County Council are supporting Friends of Horsey Seals with their Flying Rings Campaign.

Sadly, litter from lost or discarded flying rings can harm seals who can get them stuck on their neck causing injuries through infection and starvation, which can prove fatal.

The campaign asks people not to use flying rings on the beach and asks local shops to sell solid frisbees instead of flying rings.

The County Council is raising awareness through its web pages, banners at coastal recycling centres, newsletters and social media.

Further information is available on the County Council webpages [Save our Seals - Flying Rings Campaign](#) and [Sky lanterns and balloon release charter](#).

Norfolk and Waveney ICS – Careers Fair for Healthcare Science

Local school students and university students across Norfolk and Waveney are encouraged to attend a special event during Healthcare Science Week, to find out about careers in healthcare science this March.

The event will showcase a wide selection of healthcare science specialties including physiological sciences (audiology, cardiac physiology, respiratory physiology, neurophysiology), physical sciences (radiation physics, nuclear medicine, biomedical engineering) and life sciences (clinical biochemistry, blood sciences, microbiology, clinical immunology) and many more.

Guidance on interview preparation will also be given to equip individuals with the right information and techniques on how they get into the NHS and progress within clinical and non-clinical job roles.

The event has been developed in partnership between NHS Norfolk and Waveney, Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, James Paget University Hospital and The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn.

The event is open to all, but students are particularly encouraged to attend.

The event takes place on Tuesday 12 March 2024, 10am – 3pm at the Forum, Millennium Plain, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1TF.

To find out more information about this event, contact, Nicola Abel: Nicola.abel@nhs.net
To find out about Healthcare science careers, visit: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles

Public Information Notice

Appeal from Norfolk Coroner's Service for help tracing next-of-kin. The Norfolk Coroner's Service are appealing for help to trace the family of a man who died at his home address.

78-year-old Brian Walker who lived at an address in College Road, Hockwold, Norfolk, died on 8 February 2024.

There were no suspicious circumstances and despite carrying out extensive enquiries, no next-of-kin have been identified.

Anyone with information relating to Brian should contact the Coroner's office in Norwich on 01603 774773.

Government updates

Environment

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs have published updated guidance on biodiversity net gain (BNG) credits as they became mandatory on 12 February 2024.

BNG is an approach to development. It aims to ensure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development.

Under the new rules, all major housing developments will be required to deliver at least a 10% benefit for nature eg If a woodland is destroyed by a road, another needs to be recreated . Developers must do a survey of habitat before development and use the statutory biodiversity metric to explore options. They must deliver the BNG and can do so either on-site or off-site, or as a last resort by buying statutory biodiversity credits.

DEFRA say they are committing £10.6m of new funding to help local planning authorities integrate BNG, eg to help recruit and expand ecologist teams.

Whilst the new guidance is positive for protecting natural assets, there is an increasing potential clash of local priorities for housebuilding and growth with those of protecting nature, wildlife, and green space.

The government has also said that BNG will be implemented for small sites development from 2 April 2024 and for nationally significant infrastructure projects from late 2025.

Further details about BNG and a link to the government's latest guidance available [here](#).

Home Office

National Campaign to fight fraud launched

The Home Office has launched a major campaign to transform the fight against fraudsters.

Stop! Think Fraud, launched on 12 February 2024 is backed by leading counter fraud experts who are uniting under one voice to provide consistent, clear and robust anti-fraud advice to the public.

Fraud accounts for around 40% of all crime in England and Wales, with an estimated 3.2 million offences each year. The latest data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales shows it has reduced by 13% over the past year. The estimated cost of fraud to society is £6.8 billion in England and Wales.

Adverts will be prominently displayed in public settings, from billboards to radio, and from TV screens to social media. It is anticipated the campaign will be seen by 95% of adults in the UK from over the coming weeks.

The campaign also includes an online fraud hub that provides concise, simple to follow advice and signpost victims to relevant organisations for further advice and support.

Norfolk County Council Trading Standards also provide information and updates relating to the latest consumer scams, fraud alerts and how to report scams – more information available [here](#).

A link to the government's new online fraud hub is available [here](#).

Anti-social behaviour funding for police forces

On 15 February the Prime Minister announced that every police force in England will receive at least £1 million to ramp up patrols to tackle violence and disorder. The government funding will be targeted to areas where there is high prevalence of violence, anti-social behaviour, and illegal public drug consumption.

As Norfolk is not in a high prevalence area, it is expected that it will receive £1 million.

The funding is intended to enable each police force to deploy uniformed patrols in “hotspot” areas each year, to help drive down crime and boost public confidence in their local force.

A link to the government announcement is available [here](#).

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

Kind regards

james