



# Leader's Update

Cllr Jason Smithers  
Leader of the Council



10th September 2021

## Introduction and Welcome!

It's been a busy couple of weeks accompanied by some welcome late Summer sunshine. It's the perfect time to start thinking about planting a tree. I thought it would therefore be a good opportunity to provide a reminder of how you can get involved with The Queen's Green Canopy initiative. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. Find out more below.

On the subject of royalty, this week Kettering and Corby received a special visit from Their Royal Highnesses The Earl and Countess of Wessex. I had the privilege of attending the royal visit to both Corby and Kettering and I had the honour of joining the Countess for lunch. The community initiatives in both Corby and Kettering received the Royal seal of approval and demonstrate the strength of the community in action. It is very moving to say the least.

There has also been a change to the Executive membership since my last newsletter. Cllr David Brackenbury has joined the Council's Executive. David's been appointed as the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration. The appointment follows the recent resignation of Cllr Steven North from the Council's Executive.

Hot off the press today, I have announced that the Council has made a firm commitment to support a minimum of 10 Afghan families to resettle in the North Northamptonshire Area. This follows recent statements I issued in which I made no secret of the fact that I feel we owe a debt of gratitude to those Afghan citizens fleeing their country, many of whom have put their lives in danger to help us and our brave servicemen and women of the armed forces. I am pleased that we are able to make further progress in making a firm pledge to provide support.

We have set up the support page on our website for those who would like to offer help or donate to the local support efforts for the settlement of Afghan families in North Northamptonshire. We will add further information to this as we move forward: [www.northnorthants.gov.uk/afghan](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/afghan)

## Have your say – Consultation launched on the Council's draft Corporate Plan

This last week the Council has launched a four-week public consultation on its draft summary Corporate Plan. The summary plan sets out the Council's draft vision, values, key commitments and priorities.

A summary of the proposed plan along with an online survey is now available on the [Council's Consultation Hub](#).

I really would appreciate it if you could take the time to complete the survey. If you could encourage your friends, family and contacts living or working in the North Northamptonshire area to complete it too that would be very much appreciated. We want to hear from as many people as we can to help shape the future of the area and the public services provided. The closing date for responses is midnight, 3 October 2021.

## Corporate Plan - Sets out the future vision and priorities

The draft Corporate Plan, currently in summary form, sets out the Council's draft vision, values, key commitments and priorities for the future. We have set these out below. You can help shape them by taking part in the consultation. Why not tell us what you think?



### 1. Active, fulfilled lives

- Greater access to better quality adult social care
- Value and support our carers and volunteers
- Improve the accessibility and use of leisure, culture and sport
- Provide enhanced support to improve mental health and wellbeing
- Tackle the causes of complex problems such as homelessness

### 2. Better, brighter futures:

- Ensure every child has equal access to a high standard of education
- Assist the Children's Trust to provide higher standards of support
- Promote better training, further education and employment opportunities for young people

### 3. Safe and thriving places:

- Strengthen the cultural identity of towns, villages and rural communities
- Help town centres and villages respond to changing trends
- Attract tourism, visitors and inward investment
- Support the creation of high-quality, better-skilled jobs
- Improve the standard of new and existing homes and ensure housing supply meets demand
- Tackle the causes of difficult issues leading to nuisance, crime and anti-social behaviour
- Promote sustainable, active travel
- Maintain our highways infrastructure to keep people moving safely around North Northamptonshire
- Enable people to travel across North Northamptonshire, and beyond
- Ensure everyone has access to high-speed internet connectivity

### 4. Greener, sustainable environment:

- Work with communities and businesses to tackle climate change and improve air quality
- As an exemplar to other organisations, demonstrate clear leadership on tackling sustainability
- Embed low carbon technology, sustained and improved green infrastructure, and sustainable forms of transport fit for the future
- Protect and further enhance the natural environment and ecology
- Ensure we all throw away less, reuse more, and recycle as much as we can
- Protect the countryside and ensure it is accessible for everyone to enjoy

### 5. Connected communities:

- Inform and listen to our communities, giving them a greater say in their future
- Respect and engage our local communities
- Empower a thriving voluntary and community sector

### 6. Modern public services:

- Provide good quality and efficient services valued by our customers
- Enhance the services provided at our community hubs
- Value our staff and become an employer of choice
- Use our assets, skills, knowledge and technology to make a real difference
- Robust financial and performance management

## Communities urged to plant a tree for the Jubilee

Schools, parishes, community groups, youth and sports clubs across North Northamptonshire are being encouraged to join in a national tree-planting campaign to mark and celebrate The Queen's forthcoming Platinum Jubilee.

The **Queen's Green Canopy** Initiative is inviting people to plant a tree to mark the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne in 2022.

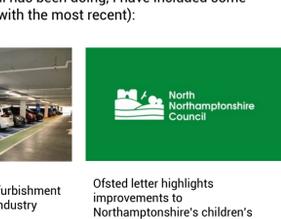
North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) is supporting the initiative, with town and parish councils encouraged to plant trees, whilst schools, community groups and clubs are invited to apply for free saplings from the Woodland Trust for planting from October to March. They are urged to find out more and apply by visiting the [Woodland Trust website](#). The Woodland Trust have over three million saplings in tree packs, available on a first come, first served basis.

As well as inviting the planting of new trees, The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.



## Ofsted

This week, Ofsted has written to both North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Council. In their letter they highlight the 'relentless commitment' made by us and Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) in making ongoing improvements to the services, which were previously judged inadequate. I would like to congratulate all those involved for their continued endeavours in helping to improve these vital services. You can [read the full report online](#).

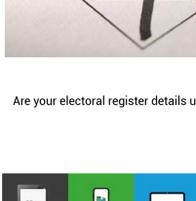
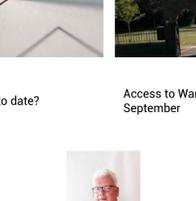
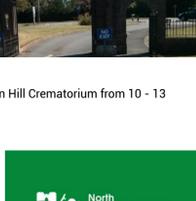
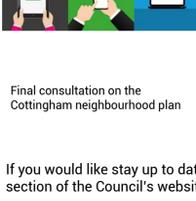
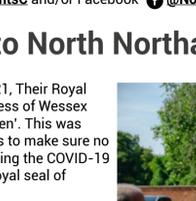


## Sunday Community Garden

The Green Patch in Kettering would like to invite you to their community garden on the last Sunday of every month for a spot of community gardening and a cup of tea. Be part of a valued group of volunteer gardeners working together to develop and maintain the vibrant community space at The Green Patch. Use your skills, develop new ones and build friendships with like-minded people. Everyone welcome and it's absolutely free! Voluntary donations welcome. For more information call 01536 521555 or visit <http://greenpatch.org.uk>.

## Media Releases

To help you stay abreast of the key things the Council has been doing, I have included some links to the Council's press releases below (starting with the most recent):

 Inquest opening: Benjamin Peter Green	 Swansgate carpark refurbishment works shortlisted for industry award	 Ofsted letter highlights improvements to Northamptonshire's children's services
 Royal seal of approval for Kettering's 'Corona Kitchen'	 Officials urge caution as Corby's Covid-19 case rates are amongst the highest in England	 Pub landlady fined after Covid rules flouted
 Public consultation starts for North Northamptonshire Council's first corporate plan	 Inquest opening: Maddie Rose Durdant-Hollamby	 Landlord pleads guilty to unlawful eviction of tenants
 Are your electoral register details up to date?	 Access to Warren Hill Crematorium from 10 - 13 September	
 Final consultation on the Cottingham neighbourhood plan	 Council appoints new Executive member	 Council Leader offers congratulations to world-beating Paralympian

If you would like stay up to date with the Council's media releases, you can visit the news section of the Council's website: [www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news)

Or follow Twitter [@NNorthants](#) and/or Facebook [@NorthNorthants](#)

## Royal visit to North Northamptonshire

On Wednesday 8 September 2021, Their Royal Highnesses, The Earl and Countess of Wessex visited Kettering's 'Corona Kitchens'. This was operated by a team of volunteers to make sure no one in the town went hungry during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has received the Royal seal of approval.

Their Royal Highnesses, The Earl and Countess of Wessex visited Kettering to say thank you to those who helped make a big difference during the past 18 months.

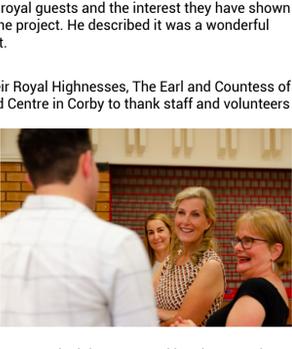
Corona Kitchen was set up in March 2020 when the lockdown forced the closure of all but one of the soup kitchens and places where those in need could get help.

Initially it started with handing out hot meals and sandwiches from outside the Eden Centre in Montagu Street, before moving to the Cornmarket Hall and then Fuller Baptist Church Cafe. Dr Frank Rodgers, who, along with his wife, Hilary and restaurant owner, Shaun Sedani, set up Corona Kitchens, said he was honoured to receive the royal gifts and the interest they have shown in the project. He described it as a wonderful visit.

Their Royal Highnesses, The Earl and Countess of Wessex then visited the Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre in Corby to thank staff and volunteers from the Kingswood Community Support Group.

The group was established in November 2020, to support residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, Kingswood Community Support Group has been preparing food parcels, packed lunches for children, personal hygiene and cleaning parcels, personal protection equipment packs for the children returning to school, recipe boxes, and support with providing furniture / soft furnishings to those on the estate in need.

Staff and volunteers also carried out welfare checks on residents in the area and provided any additional support needed. The group has also set up a youth club, sponsored by Kingswood Primary Academy, for children aged 5 – 18 yrs. This creates a safe, fun, environment for the young people on the estate.



## Help shape the Council's Scrutiny Programme

Next week the Council will be launching a consultation on 'Scrutiny' which will be located on the [Council's Consultation Hub: Space Northamptonshire Council - Citizen Space](#). The consultation aims to find out more about the things people would like to put under the microscope in the area. The areas do not have to be restricted to council services. They could be issues such as knife crime, local employment opportunities and the local housing market for example. The results of the survey will help our members involved in the Scrutiny of services develop a future scrutiny work plan.



## Are your electoral register details up to date?

Canvass forms are now hitting doormats so that North Northamptonshire residents can check their voter details are up to date.

The annual canvass helps North Northamptonshire Council to update your household information on the Electoral Register. This means you will be eligible to vote in any future elections. It's also used for jury service selection and can have a big impact on your credit score, so being on the register is useful when you apply for a mortgage, take out a loan, or even open a new mobile phone contract.

The Government has changed the way the canvass is conducted which means that every household will receive some form of communication, but unlike in previous years, you may not have to make a return to the form sent to the property.

Data from the electoral roll will be matched with central Government records and North Northamptonshire Council's databases to confirm elector details.

A letter will be delivered to every property in North Northamptonshire where everyone in the household who has matched with our records. Anyone already registered at the address will be listed on the form, and if everything on the letter is correct, you don't have to do anything or take any further action.

You can find out more [here](#).



## Social media: Top stories

Week commencing 10th September

Facebook: (Measured by Impressions and Engagements)

- Message about closure of A45 between Wellingborough and Northampton.
- North Northamptonshire Consultation Hub – draft Corporate Plan.
- #NNStay survey.

Twitter: (Measured by Reach and Post Clicks)

- Prison Custody Officer recruitment drive for HMP Five Wells in Wellingborough.
- Highways England message about closure of Chowns Mill roundabout - September and October.
- Wellingborough Health and Wellbeing Festival – First day of festival.



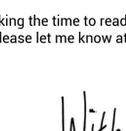
## The Council's Executive Members

North Northamptonshire Council's Executive make key decisions relating to the Council, it's services and on matters relating to important local issues.

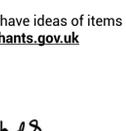
The Executive Members have been listed below. You can find the contact details for all the Council's members on the Council's website here:

**Find Councillor - North Northamptonshire Council** ([modern.gov.co.uk](http://modern.gov.co.uk))

In future editions of the Leader's Update I will provide a more information about the areas of responsibility of the Executive Members as well as some more information about them.



**CLLR JASON SMITHERS**  
Leader of the Council



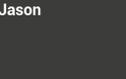
**CLLR HELEN HOWELL**  
Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism (Deputy Leader)



**CLLR SCOTT EDWARDS**  
Children, Families, Education and Skills



**CLLR HELEN HARRISON**  
Adults, Health and Wellbeing



**CLLR LLOYD BUNDAY**  
Finance and Transformation



**CLLR DAVID BRACKENBURY**  
Growth and Regeneration



**CLLR GRAHAM LAWMAN**  
Highways, Travel and Assets



**CLLR ANDY MERCER**  
Housing and Community



**CLLR DAVID HOWES**  
Rural Communities and Localism



**CLLR HARRIET PENTLAND**  
Climate and Green Environment

## Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. If you have ideas of items to include in future updates please let me know at: [executive@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:executive@northnorthants.gov.uk)

With Best Wishes,  
Jason

Follow me on Twitter

[@SmithersJason](#)

Contacting North Northamptonshire Council

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[www.northnorthants.gov.uk](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk)