

**West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Councillor Update for
Parish Councils / Village Magazines in Hackleton & Grange Park Ward**

June 2021

We're now a few months on from the local elections in May and the inauguration of the new West Northants Council (WNC), and it would be fair to say it's been all go!

Although many recently elected Councillors have been Councillors before, this is a brand new unitary council with a new set up, many new people, new ways of working and new priorities, and so induction sessions between Councillors and WNC teams and individuals have been a priority and a bit like professional 'speed dating' over the last few months, to ensure we build good working relationships quickly.

Steve, Andrew and I are determined that you as our constituents within the Hackleton and Grange Park Ward (H&GP - which incorporates 15 villages within the area), are kept well informed about what's going on in local government and across the area generally, and also, have every opportunity possible to have your say and be involved in shaping the priorities and future of your village, across our Ward and also across West Northants more generally.

There's a lot to update from the first few months but here are a few key items:

- **Your Council** - all key appointments are now made within the new West Northants Council (WNC) and the required positions from within the elected Councillors have now been appointed, so you have a full team at your service which is very much up and running. Steve, Andrew and I have also been appointed to selected groups and committees that govern key areas of practice and conduct and won't be shy in representing your voice and also holding people and organisations to account where needed. To find out who's who visit www.westnorthants.gov.uk.
- **WNC Corporate Plan** – this really is worth a read as the new Corporate Plan sets out the vision for West Northants over the next four years, including key priorities and ambitions so that all residents, businesses and partners are clear on the commitments the organisation is making to them and to the area. It covers six core themes and will be a 'living document', to be reviewed and adapted as new opportunities and challenges emerge for our Council in the years ahead. You can read /download it at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/your-council/corporate-plan.
- **Consultation and Engagement** - it's so important to us that residents, businesses and all stakeholders can have their say on how we develop and deliver our services and, can inform and influence our decision-making. WNC's Consultation and Engagement team works with staff across the Council on various consultation and engagement activities and each month we will receive an update and notification on work taking place and when a new consultation opens (Council's Consultation Hub). We'll keep you informed of any significant consultations that may be of interest to you to participate in and ensure your voice is heard, however you can also find out more at www.westnorthants.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/current-consultations
- **Calling all Farmers / Commercial Land and Farm Owners** – our beautiful and rural H&GP Ward is abundant with farms and commercial land. Defra is undertaking a survey in 2021 that will be a full agricultural and horticultural census. All active commercial farms in England are asked to complete the census in order to help them build the most accurate picture of the agriculture and horticulture sectors. The 2021 census will capture detailed information on land use, crop areas, livestock numbers and farm labour Find out more and take the survey at www.gov.uk/agriculture-survey. NOW CLOSED
- **Litter** – we're delighted to be engaging with Womble groups across the Ward. Everyone involved is doing an extraordinary job with volunteers, and the goodwill and community spirit is to be applauded. We need to look further at how to address and support this issue better within the WNC environmental strategy.
- **Schools' litter animation competition** - to tackle the increasing litter problem. Litter Animation Competition 'Northamptonshire Recycles' is challenging Key Stage 2 pupils across the county to create a short animation of no more than 20 seconds about the issues of litter in their school or across the wider community. Entries should be sent to litterchampions@westnorthants.gov.uk by 4pm on Monday 5 July.

The winning entry will receive £200 for their school. Find out more at www.westnorthants.gov.uk NOW ENDED

- **Fly Tipping** - inexcusable, illegal and a criminal offence. Pallets, tyres, recyclables, cans, bottles (some with dubious content!), household electronics, household furniture, garden waste, building waste, vehicle parts, hazardous waste inc chemicals, asbestos etc... It's not only an eyesore but a public health risk. It also costs local taxpayers almost £50 million a year to clear up, which could be better spent on other vital services in our communities. We as your Councillors, will continue to support initiatives to tackle this, but would also welcome your thoughts about possible solutions as we work together to try and deter and penalise people from spoiling our local environment and wasting your money with the clean up of fly tipping.
- **Highways** – we're aware of numerous issues raised across the Ward by residents about the quality of some parts of our roads, pavements, footpaths and byways. Road infrastructure and improvements is a key priority for WNC and as a first step, we encourage you to report these on fixmystreet.com which can be reached directly at that URL or via the WNC website. We review and monitor fixmystreet.co.uk for matters within our Ward, to keep abreast of local highways concerns and will step in to support where needed.
- **Crime** – we all want to feel safe in our own homes and local areas and tackling crime is fundamental to that. Our Northants Police force is working hard to recruit more officers and develop initiatives to tackle traditional but also more modern crimes to ensure that criminals are not just brought to justice, but also that we try and prevent crime in the first place!
 - **Neighbourhood Policing** - in line with the new electoral Ward areas introduced with the formation of WNC, there is a renewed focus on neighbourhood policing with those areas. We've reached our new Neighbourhood Policing Officer for our H&GP Ward and will meeting with him in the coming weeks to identify priorities to address and then work collaboratively with our Officer and other organisations and community groups to ensure our area is tackling crime together.
 - **"It's probably nothing, but..."** - Northants Police have launched a new campaign to encourage the public to have their eyes and ears open to take action if they suspect somebody may be being exploited with modern slavery. Sadly it is happening all around us, but often goes unnoticed, with ordinary people being exploited by others for personal or commercial gain. Please visit www.northantspolice/modernslavery to find out more or report something you may suspect.
 - **Have your say: police survey** - to help the police tackle crime and disorder in your neighbourhood, we want to know what matters most to you in the area where you live and work. You can help shape local priorities by answering a few questions about your local area at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NorthantsLocalPriorities.
- **Children, Families and Education**
 - Domestic Abuse has risen consistently by 10 per cent over the last 12 months, as reported by Northamptonshire Police. In around 25 per cent of cases children are present. Led by the Police, multi-agency teams are dedicated to identifying those cases to mitigate the impact on children.
 - Mental Health Support Teams are due to be launched in Northants schools in September 2021. This gives children access to access early, evidenced-based support for mild to moderate mental health difficulties which aims increase wellbeing to reduce interruption to their learning.
 - Neglect of children has been found in 25 per cent of assessments undertaken by social care in a study by the University of Northampton. Neglect has also become a more prominent feature of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. They Neglect Strategy is being reviewed with the aim of strengthening the multi-agency work in this area.
 - The Plan a Safe Sleep Every Sleep campaign was launched in December 2020 to combat and national and local rise infant deaths associate with co-sleeping. One Facebook message reached 180,000 people
- **Local Bus Services** – many of you will have felt the effects of the reduction to local bus services over recent times, particularly those within more rural areas of which, which of course is a strong feature with our local area. In March 2021 the government published Bus Back Better, the National Bus Strategy for England, which is backed by £3 billion of funding to transform bus services. The strategy encourages councils to form enhanced partnerships with bus operators to deliver improvements for passengers such as improved timetables and multi-operator ticketing. The timescales are for the council to commit to

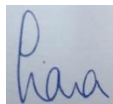
form an enhanced partnership by 30 June, publish a bus service improvement plan in October 2021 and have the enhanced partnership in place by April 2022. In the short term, Government must retain its emergency financial support for public transport networks, so that rural bus and rail routes survive and remain in place whilst passenger confidence remains low. We will be working to ensure that the WNC Bus Strategy has objectives for rural provision, with options to better serve rural communities and their economic needs on a more sustainable basis. *A fair share of the extra resources must reach rural areas to improve existing routes, restore valued lost routes and establish new ones where they exist. This is also where community transport initiatives may help supplement the service provision.*

- **Plant a tree for the Queen's Jubilee** - schools, parishes, community groups, youth and sports clubs across West Northamptonshire are being encouraged to join in a national tree-planting campaign, The Queen's Green Canopy Initiative, to mark and celebrate The Queen's forthcoming Platinum Jubilee of her 70 years on the throne in 2022. You can apply for free saplings from The Woodland Trust, for planting from October to March. Across 2021 and 2022 they have over three million saplings in tree packs, available for free on a first come first served basis. Find out more and apply by visiting www.woodlandtrust.org.uk.
- **Does someone in your community deserve the highest honours?** – many of you and members of your communities may deserve the highest honours in the country, in recognition for an amazing contribution to society. The Queen's Birthday Honours for 2022 is now open. Honours are a great way to recognise the achievements of those who have gone above and beyond in their role, and have made a significant impact on their community, organisation or the country. The deadline is Wednesday 1 September 2021. Find out more at www.local.gov.uk/queens-birthday-2022-honours.

And last but certainly not least...

To ensure we are updating, and canvassing views, about the things that are most important to you, we very much welcome your feedback about our updates and work we are undertaking in general. Please also do get in touch if there is a matter you believe we can support you with.

With warm wishes




Cllr Fiona Cole

To get in touch with us, and also keep up to date about local matters, you can also reach and follow us at:

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 @Hackleton and Grange Park Conservatives