

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT FOR CORPUSTY & SAXTHORPE PC - JANUARY 2023

1. MISSED BIN COLLECTIONS

The number of missed collections has reduced significantly over the last month. The Council continues to monitor the performance daily and we are intent on eliminating missed bins. Please let me know if you experience any problems with the service delivered by Serco on behalf of the Council.

2. SHANNOCKS HOTEL

The Council have resolved to proceed with a compulsory purchase of the site on the seafront in Sheringham following a failure by the landowner to commence development in accordance with a grant of planning permission. The ownership will be vested in the Council under this process and a decision will be taken either to develop or market the site for an alternative developer to deliver the scheme.

3. NET ZERO CARBON STRATEGY

The Council are considering options for installing solar carports over some public car parks and extend public provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in locations where there is most demand.

4. PUBLIC TOILETS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

The new toilets at Stearman's Yard in Wells have opened and work will begin on the new toilets at Queens Road Fakenham and Vicarage Street carpark at North Walsham in the New Year.

5. AFFORDABLE HOMES PROVISION

One key objective of this Council's delivery plan was to increase local housing for local need. I am pleased to report that the Council is placed in the top 5 councils nationally for delivering affordable homes in the last municipal year. We are determined to improve our plans to deliver much more affordable housing if this administration is to retain control after the May elections.

6. TREE PLANTING PROMISE

It's pleasing to report that 90,000 trees have been planted since the start of this Council in 2019. The promise was to plant one for every resident in the district numbering 110,000 during this 4-year term. By the end of May we expect the number to reach the target because several landowners have committed to plant enough to enable our target to be delivered.

7. ELECTIONS AND CALL FOR VOTER IDENTIFICATION DELAY

The Elections Act 2022 passed through Parliament recently. A completely unnecessary interference with the voting process by the Government will require production of photo identification at polling stations starting next May. Of the 1556 allegations of voter fraud nationwide between 2017-22 just 2 resulted in prosecutions. The independent Electoral Commission have called for the new rules to be delayed because there is insufficient time, given local elections are only 4 months away, to train staff about the new requirements and to manage the public's reaction.

8. NUTRIENT NEUTRALITY

We expect to be passing delayed applications for new build development in late February, early March following the Government's injunction issued in March last year imposing an embargo. The requirement to satisfy the Habitats Regulations which limit nitrate and phosphate discharges into our natural watercourses is being met. Most Councils in Norfolk are affected and to resolve the problem we have invested in land which will be offered to developers to buy credits and create mitigation measures to improve the area.

9. PLANNING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The public consultation on aspects of how the delivery of the planning service by the Council has closed. The responses are being assessed but some aspects are notable such as easier access to advice, more reporting on progress and a better designed website. More will be announced in the future.

10. SECTION 106 PLANNING RECEIPTS

Following the upgrade of the planning website with new software two years ago we can now offer online access to track how much is received and on which matters and in which areas the funds can be invested. Section 106 funds are used to increase affordable housing, create more school places and in public benefit schemes without which schemes would be refused. Use the words "Section 106 planning obligations" in the search field of the Home Page and you can access by using area or type of funding.

11. GLAVEN VALLEY RURAL CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

The public consultation on the second conservation appraisal affecting the rural landscape in the Glaven Valley is ongoing. This will enable planning officers to rule whether development affects heritage assets, like listed buildings for example or heritage landscapes. For more information enter Glaven Valley Conservation Area Review in the Council Home Page search field. Due to close on 20 January but may be extended if there is a significant level of interest registered.

Thank you for reading this report and I wish you and your families a happy and more peaceful New Year.

Kind regards

Cllr Andrew Brown
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Portfolio holder for Planning and Enforcement
Chair of Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party
Member of Standards and Development Committees
Corpusty and Saxthorpe Parish Councillor

Serving the parishes of Briningham, Brinton with Sharrington, Corpusty with Saxthorpe, Edgefield, Melton Constable, Stody with Hunworth and Thornage with Little Thornage.