

Ashwellthorpe & Fundenhall - District Councillors Report 28th July 2026

Member Ward Grants

Requests for support with small projects (typically up to £1,000 per project) to benefit the local community can be made to your District Councillors. Please note funding for 2026/27 is largely allocated.

Communities Action Fund (CAF) and Communities Facilities Grant (CFG)

Much larger grants (potentially up to £40,000) are also available from the District Council through CAF and CFG grants. Applications, via your District Councillor, are now open. The closing date is 16th August.

In Bloom Grant

Applications are being accepted until 15th November 2026 for grants to enhance the visual appeal of their communities, encourage the growing of produce, and promote wildlife and biodiversity. Grants to any parish are limited to a total of £1 per resident and must have matched funding.

Nature Conservation Fund

Applications can be made for grants of up to £10,000 for projects which support nature recovery and improve or help connect residents to accessible greenspaces. The scheme is open to Town and Parish Councils, community groups, charities and schools in South Norfolk. Applications close on Friday 16th September. <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/environment/nature-conservation-fund>

Community & Open Spaces Grant

Up to £2.25 million of funding is available to support larger projects valued at over £200,000 which are led by Parish and Town Councils but support South Norfolk Council's strategic ambitions and wider place shaping ambitions. The local Council is expected to provide some matched funding. Applications are through a 2-stage process. At Stage 1 councils must complete an initial expression of interest. Successful projects for 26/27 are likely to be significantly advanced already.

Food Waste

Some residents will have already received their caddies for collections of food waste in Ashwellthorpe & Fundenhall. This service is being introduced in two stages throughout South Norfolk. Areas of Fundenhall and New Road, fall into phase one and will have received their caddies. The service for the remaining part of the parish will start on 28th Sept on the usual rubbish and recycling day. For Further information:

<https://forms.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/FoodWasteChecker/index.aspx>

County Council Recycling Centres

Norwich South Recycling Centre is now able to accept all electricals for recycling including fridges and freezers. Please note that there is a nationwide shortage of capacity for recycling fridges and freezers.

Local Government Reform and Devolution

Both Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk District Council are submitting applications for a judicial review of the Government's plans for the reorganisation of Norfolk into 3 Unitary Authorities.

While council officers continue to expect LGR to be implemented, with elections to the new authorities in May 2027, there are suggestions that the timetable for the necessary Parliamentary Structural Change Order is delayed until the end of 2026 or early 2027.

Hethel Roundabout Project

Full closure of Wymondham Road in Hethel commenced on 14th July and is due to reopen on 18th September. During this period Bridge Road in Wrenningham will be closed to all traffic apart from deliveries and local residents and businesses. Access to Browick Road from Wymondham Road will be controlled to ensure diversionary traffic does not use this route. There will be further updates if this situation changes.

Apex Data Centre

There was an online consultation regarding a proposal for a large 150MW data centre at the “brown” field site between the A140 and the B1113, opposite Harford Bridge Tesco. The consultation closed on Sunday 12th July. The developer has indicated that it expects to submit a planning application in the summer. There is an existing planning approval for industrial/ commercial use of the site, which includes a new road to alleviate pressure at the existing junction. This is expected to be carried forward into the new application. The proposal is raising many environmental concerns locally. A full planning application is expected later in the summer. The consultation can be found at <https://www.apexnorwichdatacentre.co.uk/> .

EDF Energy Solar Park

EDF submitted limited information to South Norfolk on its proposal for a large solar farm between the A140 and the River Tas, running south of Dunston Hall Golf Course. The Council has responded to the request for an EIA screening opinion, indicating that a full Environment Assessment is required. Consultation events will be held later in the year, but no dates are available yet.

‘Norwich to Tilbury’ Community Fund Consultation

If the Norwich to Tilbury transmission project is granted planning consent, a dedicated Community Fund of over £30 million will be unlocked when construction starts (potentially Q1 2027) construction. The fund would be invested in two ways, a Local Fund, with grants available for grass-roots projects and a Strategic Fund, supporting bigger, longer-term projects.

The consultation is now open, and a final online webinar will be held on 29th July. Further information can be found here: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury/community-fund>

National Grid have stated that a copy of the webinar and webinar slides will be available on the link above. No closing date for the consultation has been announced.

The National Grid’s Development Consent Order continues at the examination phase. This is scheduled to close on 10 August 2026.

Bob McClenning, Ian Spratt & Jim Webber

Councillor Contact Details

Cllr. Jim Webber	jim.webber@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk	07394 323215
Cllr. Ian Spratt	ian.spratt@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk	07554 668337
Cllr. Bob McClenning	bob.mcclenning@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk	07769 030926