

District Council Report to

North Walsham Town Council – January 2022

Drainage

The ditch behind Osborne Close which drains the Lynfield Estate has been cleared of debris by Serco Operatives under a contract issued by NNDC. A twice yearly inspection will also be carried out. NNDC have taken this on after much pressure from local Councillors.

Budget

NNDC will present a balanced budget for 2022/23. All services will be maintained, and an ambitious capital programme will be maintained. A 1.99% NNDC Council Tax rise is proposed in the budget.

Heritage Action Zone

This project has now really started to gain traction. A new bus terminus on new Road car park is being engineered, work may start in Q1 2022.

Plans being prepared for the area between the Shambles and The Hop Inn. The bottom of the slope will be flattened out, more trees and planters. Local members have requested that the Moon-gazer sculpture be maintained in its current location. Temporary relocation to facilitate the works may be necessary.

Tenders are being evaluated for improvement works at the Cedars.

Detailed plans being drawn up for improvement works at Black Swan loke.

2022 will see many projects around the High Street progress.

Draft Local Plan

The draft plan sets out where developments can occur across North Norfolk to the period up to 2036. It sets out the minimum environmental and biodiversity standards on developers. The plan was the subject of a long consultation last year. Hundreds of responses were fed back to the Council and these comments were included into this draft.

The final consultation on the draft plan has now been launched. Known as Section 19, it is the final opportunity to comment before it goes to the Government Inspector for approval. The consultation will run to end of February and can be easily accessed from the NNDC Web pages. Hard copies will be presented to Town and Parish Councils and Libraries. Feedback can be given on the NNDC web pages. Local Members remain united that we can only support the plan, as it pertains to North Walsham, unless minimum infrastructure improvements are approved.

Land South of Norwich Road

Concerns have been raised about a proposal from Hopkins to build on this land. No application has been received yet. Hopkins didn't cover themselves in glory when building on the Smedley's site. They uprooted a number of prime trees without permission or consultation. Local Councillors have therefore requested TPO's be placed on all trees in the development area. Enforcement Officers have been tasked with keeping a close eye on the site to avoid any environmental damage prior to an independent environmental assessment. The area is known to be home for bats.

Trees

Thousands of trees have been planted across the district by NNDC this season already – around 55000 trees in total since project launch.

Tree give away day at Holt Country Park on 29th Jan between 10am and 2pm.

For the arborists opportunities exist to plant trees Supplies at Holt Country Park on 26th January, 2nd and 9th of February and at Pretty Corner on 27th January, 3rd and 10th of February. Details on social media and the web site.

Miyawaki Forests are small clumps of woodland designed to promote maximum environmental benefits. The Miyawaki creation process involves careful soil preparation and densely planting a variety of native trees, shrubs and plants to provide valuable habitat to many different species. Designed for urban areas where space is at a premium, the plots are usually the size of a tennis court and fenced off to deter deer and rabbits. The three sites where Miyawaki Forest will be planted are Warren Avenue in Fakenham, Acorn Road playing field in North Walsham, and Cooper Road play area in Sheringham.

Climate Change

The preparation of Net Zero Action Plan for NNDC is going to Full Council for approval in February. This document quantifies NNDC's carbon footprint whilst pinpointing each asset's carbon contribution and will form the basis of our climate change work over the coming years with a goal of net zero by 2030.

Is it time for North Walsham Council to consider their own carbon footprint or a climate change declaration?