

Member of Norfolk County Council (NCC) for **Henstead** Division
Parish areas within the Division: **Bixley, Bramerton, Caistor St Edmund, Framingham Earl, Framingham Pigot, Kirby Bedon, Poringland, Stoke Holy Cross, Surlingham, Trowse with Newton**

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S NEWSLETTER 20th February 2017. CURRENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

1. [Norfolk County Council have voted to agree a budget](#) for the year ahead which invests an additional £25 million net to support adult social care and children's services as part of a package designed to put the authority on a secure footing for the future. The decision, with 41 councillors voting in favour, 33 against and 3 abstentions, means the county council's share of the council tax increases by 4.8% to £1,247.94 – a rise of £57.15 for a Band D property. This includes a 3% adult social care precept permitted by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with a further 1.8% to fund the recommendations of service committees. Last year the rise was 3.99%, with no rises in the five years prior to that.
2. [An extension to Norfolk County Council's and BT's Better Broadband](#) for Norfolk (BBfN) programme is now underway. More than £11 million of new funding is being invested in the latest tranche of BBfN's rollout of superfast broadband in the county, and as a result the availability of high-speed broadband is set to be extended to more than 95% of Norfolk's premises by 2020. Five of Norfolk's district councils including South Norfolk have committed over £3m which has been match funded by central government The rest of the funding is from BT.
3. PC Stuart Sansbury is now the new Poringland Beat Manager, based at Poringland Police Station, NR14 7WB, tel: 01603 276207.
4. Markshall Farm Road (C189) from its junction with Stoke Road (C201) is scheduled to be closed from 20th February to 2nd April 2017 because of the installation of new water mains.
5. Last year Norfolk County Council agreed to accept 50 vulnerable [Syrian refugees](#) into the County through the Government's Syrian Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme. At the beginning of February the first five Syrian families will arrive in Norwich to begin their new life in Norfolk. In preparation extensive preparatory work has been carried out with district councils, health authorities, schools and voluntary groups. Also the County Council has been inundated with offers of help and support from Norfolk residents and local faith and voluntary groups. In addition the County Council is welcoming up

- to 10 child refugees already in England under a transfer scheme to relieve the pressure of those concentrated at English southern ports.
6. Norfolk County Council has secured the services of Matt Dunkley, a highly experienced former Director of Children's Services in East Sussex, who was made a CBE in 2014 for his services to children and families, to become interim [Executive Director of Children's Services](#). He will be in the post to see the council through its next full Ofsted Inspection of children's social care, where it aims create a clear path towards a solid 'good' rating. He is also a past President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services.
 7. The number of children taken into care by the County Council ("Looked after Children") many through neglect or abuse, has reached 1,113. Most of these children are looked after by foster carers. This situation has added emphasis to our concentrating greater efforts on those families in crisis and children on the edge of care.
 8. [Two major Transport for Norwich projects](#) have started continuing work to deliver the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy. From 3 January, All Saints Street and part of All Saints Green in the city centre have been permanently closed to all traffic as work begins to complete improvements to the area around Golden Ball Street. The project as a whole started January 2016. Work in this third and final phase includes restoring All Saints Green as an attractive traffic-free open space. Phases 1 and 2 were about improving pedestrian and cycle connection with the rest of the city centre by removing traffic from Westlegate, and giving motorists easier access to car parks in the area by making Golden Ball Street two-way.
 9. Police are investigating an armed robbery at Surlingham Post Office at approximately 4pm on Thursday 2nd February 2017. Anyone who has information concerning this incident should contact Sgt Matt Jenkins at Norwich CID on 101.
 10. Remember that Poringland Library is hosting "Just a Cuppa!" coffee/tea morning every Saturday morning 10am to 11:30am for anyone who would like to come and talk to others or just read.
 11. Construction of [Norwich Northern Distributor Road](#) (A1270) is ahead of schedule in many areas. The main surfacing effort will be in 2017.
 12. In the eight months ended 30th November 386 drivers have been issued with speeding notices for speeding offences passed the speed camera near Framingham Earl High School on the B1332 which is of deep concern.