

Funding of £394,637 for 133 small scale highway projects across Norfolk has been approved by Norfolk County Council's Environment, Development and Transport committee through the popular Parish Partnership scheme. The money will be matched by parish and town councils across Norfolk who were invited in June 2018 to put in bids to fund schemes important to their local area. This year the most popular schemes are again for the mobile SAM2 speed awareness signs that flash the driver's actual speed, and for village gateways and bus shelters. The 133 successful schemes this year now means that in total 609 of these locally identified schemes have received approval over the past eight years.

Recently three people have been found guilty of Blue Badge misuse. The successful prosecutions all involved people using a blue badge that was not their own to park either on yellow lines or in disabled bays without the badge holder being present or part of the journey. Each instance is looked at on a case-by-case basis with many people being given written or verbal advice to correct misunderstandings about how the blue badge should be used, and to prevent future misuse. Thankfully the vast majority of people do use a Blue badge correctly but if you believe you have seen someone using a blue badge fraudulently please do let us know.

NCC are to expand it's popular re-use shops at their recycling centres. Two new ones are to be opened this year, making a total of eleven shops and two others are to double in size so that they can have more open plan space for larger items. The larger shops will help to increase the reuse of many items as possible including sofas, bikes, tools and garden ornaments. In 2017/18 the network of reuse shops made a £184,210 contribution towards the £6.5million annual cost of Norfolk's 20 Recycling Centres. In the same year 833 tonnes of items passed through the reuse shops, an increase of 93 tonnes on the previous year. Since April 2018 Norfolk's reuse shops have been donating a proportion of their income to the current chosen charity, the East Anglian Air Ambulance.

For the walkers amongst us our Trails Team at county hall have created four new walks along the Boudicca Way. Named after the legendary warrior and Queen of the Iceni whose tribes once inhabited the area, Boudicca Way runs 36 miles between Norwich and Diss, roughly parallel with the A140. The four new walks are in Poringland, Caister Roman Town, Morningthorpe and Pulham Market. For all details go to www.norfolk.gov.uk/boudiccaway

South Norfolk Community Awards

Every community has an unsung hero, someone who is always leading the way, organising events and getting things done. This is your opportunity to say thank you by nominating them for a Community Award and, at the same time, help to celebrate the valuable contribution volunteers make to our district and our lives. Nominations close on 28th April, for all details visit www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

Martin Wilby.