

## Norfolk's Covid Winter Support Scheme

Norfolk County Council, alongside local councils across Norfolk, is aiming to support as many residents as possible this winter to access financial and other support if they are facing hardship. The scheme is particularly aimed at families and will provide support for those suffering financial hardship over the winter months due to Covid-19. Support is available with food and utility bills. Applications to the new support scheme can be made online, via the existing Norfolk Assistance Scheme pages at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/NAS](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/NAS) or applicants can call 0334 800 8020, assistance in applying online will also be available through Norfolk Libraries.

In addition to this scheme we are working with food voucher company Edenred to provide support for those eligible for free school meals, children in the early years who receive pupil premium and all of the council's care leavers during the Christmas holidays. We are encouraging eligible families to register and apply for free school meals through their school, so that they begin to receive support in time for the school holidays.

The Covid winter Support scheme can help with

- Day to day living costs, including food and energy bills
- Daily essentials such as toiletries, sanitary products and nappies
- Food vouchers for the school holidays

As part of the wider package of support for families this winter, the council is also extending the Norfolk Assistance Scheme, which already provides support for food, fuel, clothes and other essential household items to Norfolk's residents experiencing hardship.

More information is available online at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/covidwintersupport](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/covidwintersupport) or [www.norfolk.gov.uk/NAS](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/NAS)

For the second year running NCC has come first among its peers in a national highways and transport survey. Over 3,300 people in Norfolk were asked for their views on topics such as road safety, highway maintenance, congestion and public transport as part of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey 2020. The results are ranked against other participating councils from across the country to give a nationwide picture of how Norfolk is performing. Out of the 29 county councils and larger unitaries in the peer group, Norfolk secured the top spot for overall satisfaction and saw the highest above average scores in both satisfaction with 'traffic levels and congestion' and condition of highways. This achievement is testament to the hard work and dedication of all the highway and transport team – particularly as the 'professionalism of staff responding to enquiries' was one of the areas we were ranked in.

## **1 million trees for Norfolk: County's ambitious planting project gets underway.**

Thousands of trees and hedge plants will be going into the ground as the first planting season in the five-year project gets underway. The goal is for Norfolk to achieve a net gain of 1 million trees helping towards the county council's wider ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030. This represents more than one tree per resident in the county. (population of 908,000 in 2019) A key focus of the project will be to get right trees in the right place as trees, woodlands and hegerows in both urban and rural enviroments can help improve wellbeing and support wildlife. A mix of species will be planted as this will help Norfolk adapt to future climate change, pests and diseases. Once the trees are in the ground aftercare will also be crucial, so this project will be coordinated with all aspects in mind. More than 6,300 tree and hedge plants will be going in the ground at Bacton, Thorpe Market, and Rollesby on parts of the county council's County Farms estate over the coming month. This planting will include Elm trees resistant to Dutch Elm disease. The hedging plants will be planted in biodegradable spiral guards into jute matting to reduce plastic and herbicide use.

Best Wishes  
Martin