



Loddon Town Council

The Old School | Church Plain | Loddon | NR14 6EX

www.loddontowncouncil.gov.uk

The Annual Parish Meeting of Loddon will be held in the Hollies Rear Hall on Wednesday 8 April 2026 at 7.00pm

Members of the public are welcome to attend in person and will be provided an opportunity for public participation under *Public Forum*.

Mervyn Pointer, Chairman, Loddon Town Council

18 March 2026

Agenda

- 1. To receive and consider accepting apologies**
- 2. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 9 April 2025**
- 3. To receive LTC's Annual Reports:**
 - 3.1: Chairman's Annual Report
 - 3.2: Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer's Annual Report
 - 3.3: Loddon & Chedgrave Playing Field Committee (incl Tennis Club Subcommittee) Annual Report
 - 3.4: Love Loddon Community Group Annual Report
 - 3.5: Chet Valley Community Larder Annual Report
 - 3.6: Loddon Traffic Review Working Party
- 4. Parish Annual Reports:**
 - 4.1: County Councillor – Cllr Kay Mason Billig
 - 4.2: District Councillors – Cllr Kay Mason Billig & Jeremy Rowe
 - 4.3: Loddon Town Estate Charity
 - 4.4: Jubilee Hall Management Committee
 - 4.5: Church Council
 - 4.6: Loddon Building Preservation Trust
 - 4.7: Loddon Community Gym
 - 4.8: Other reports as received
- 5. Public Forum**
- 6. To discuss whether to have 2027 Annual Parish Meeting**
- 7. If applicable, set the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 14 April 2027**

Loddon's Annual Parish Meeting 2026

Loddon Town Council Chairmans Report

Firstly, I would like to pass on my thanks to all the Town Council Councillors for the support they have all given me in my first year in the chair with a special mention to my Vice Chair Andy. We must remember that the role of councillor is voluntary and as such the time given by them is valuable.

I would like to give special thanks to Jane Hale for her time and commitment to the community larder which has gone from strength to strength this year. Special thanks to Julie Appleby for her work and organising of the Love Loddon Group who throughout the year have worked to make Loddon a brighter and tidier place to live. Also, to our new councillor Terry Simmons for his work on Traffic Review working party.

Not councillors, but people who have given time and commitment to the town:

- Carol Webb with her work on the placing of blue plaques on important structures in the town and her work as the biodiversity officer.
- Rik Balfour for his commitment to the development and the promotion of Loddon Tennis Club.
- Jonathon and Roy for their tireless efforts with the Love Loddon Community Group, maintaining the orchard and tending the flower displays.
- To all the managers, trainers and support volunteers who give up their valuable time for the Loddon United football teams.
- My thanks go to District Councillor Jeremy Rowe who has attended regular meetings with the council at which he takes forward questions and requests to SNC.
- And finally, Kay's continued support in her multiple county roles

Environment and Public Spaces

- In 2025/2026 Loddon Town Council have applied for and received a grant of £10,000 from South Norfolk Council's Conservation Fund to open and improve the biodiversity at Warren Hills Woodland and the Woodland Trust has donated several hundred tree whips that have been planted.
- The town has also benefitted from a new notice board being erected at Church Plain and numerous flower towers being planted up in various locations throughout the town with sponsorship funds from Cecil Amey.
- A new community orchard was planted with the assistance of sponsorship from Bussey's Tree fund.
- To keep the town looking clean and welcoming, the town has an annual Big Litter Pick, and much appreciated help was provided by the Community Payback Teams to re-paint the railings around the Church.

Transport, Highways and Safety

- A new Traffic Review Working Party has been formed to consider ways to improve the congestion on the High Street.
- The SAM2 speed device was regularly rotated.
- Two new grit bins installed to replace broken bins.
- New and upgraded bus shelters were agreed on Church Plain, High Bungay Road and the A146, primarily funded by Norfolk County Council.
- Via a Parish partnership fund, a pedestrian access was installed for the Jubilee Hall to ensure there is a safe crossing point for people accessing the fields and the hall.

Planning and Community Facilities

- The Chet Neighbourhood Plan continues to guide planning applications to meet local needs.
- The Library Annexe refurbishment was completed and now includes new toilets, shower facilities and a kitchen.
- The Staithe toilets were further improved, and the freehold of the toilet block is being transferred to Loddon Town Council.

Supporting our Community

- Our Community Larder now supports 59 households.
- Small grants were awarded to the Holy Trinity Church, the Loddon and District Royal British Legion, Chet Contact and the Loddon & Chedgrave Arts Festival.
- The allotments remain fully let and well managed.

Heritage, Events and Civic Pride

- Historic blue plaques were installed
- The Christmas lights were as wonderful as ever with the welcome addition of a Christmas tree at the Staithe
- Remembrance Sunday and VE Day events were held
- A memorial bench was installed in memory of Cllr Colin Binfield on the Loddon and Chedgrave Playing Field.

Sport, Access and Partnerships

- New LED floodlights were installed for the tennis courts.
- An agreement at Hobart High School Sports Hall Car Park was arranged to reduce the impact of the football and Jubilee Hall parking on George Lane on Sundays
- Last year a request was made by the tennis club to have the tennis court resurfaced. The Loddon and Chedgrave Playing Field Committee and Council staff have made huge efforts to raise the funds required. The RFO gained a £14,000 grant from Sports England and has compiled the tender document.

Thanks to the Loddon Players and the Tennis Club, £3,000 has been crowdfunded, which will be further match funded by £2,500 from County Cllr Kay Mason Billig.

- A defibrillator was donated and installed at the Staithe toilets, and donations were received to purchase a replacement defib at the Jubilee Hall.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed in 2025/26 especially to all the council staff.

If you are inspired and want to make a difference in Loddon, please consider becoming a Councillor.

Do keep an eye out for more exciting projects in 2026/27.

Loddon Town Council Annual Report

Over the past year, Loddon Town Council has continued to deliver a wide range of projects and services for the benefit of our community. We remain committed to maintaining and improving local facilities while supporting residents and community organisations.

This year, the Council has successfully delivered several key initiatives, including:

- Installation of a new defibrillator at the Staithe, alongside ongoing custodianship of the Jubilee Hall defibrillator
- Continued development of Warren Hills Woodland
- Improvements at Kitten's Lane Play Area, including new swing matting
- Support for the Community Larder, now assisting 59 households across the Chet Valley
- Enhancement of the town centre through the Love Loddon Community Group initiatives
- Refurbishment of the Library Annexe toilets and kitchen
- Creation of a new pedestrian entrance at Jubilee Hall
- Installation of LED floodlights at the tennis courts
- Expansion of local heritage recognition through blue plaques
- Awarding of small grants to support local organisations and community groups
- Installation of a new heritage noticeboard on Church Plain
- Replacement and installation of new bus shelters, heavily subsidised by Norfolk County Council

In addition to these projects, the Council continues to provide and maintain a wide range of essential services and amenities, including:

- Christmas lights
- Street lighting
- The annual Remembrance event
- Play areas, skate park, and tennis courts
- Litter picking, and providing litter and dog bins
- Public toilets
- Allotments
- Grit bins, noticeboards and town sign
- Playing fields and open spaces

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all Town Councillors, our hardworking staff, dedicated volunteers, and trusted contractors. Their commitment and contribution are vital in making these projects and services possible, and in helping Loddon remain a vibrant and welcoming community.

Loddon Town Council – Finance Report – Annual Parish Meeting - April 2026

Kerry Sturman, RFO

Loddon Town Council's budget for 2025/26 is £220,895, funded primarily through the precept collected on our behalf by South Norfolk Council.

The Council manages and supports a wide range of services and assets for the benefit of residents, including community facilities, open spaces, recreational areas, and local initiatives.

Since joining the Council in January 2025, I have been focused on strengthening financial processes and supporting the delivery of Council projects. Over the past year, I have helped secure over £26,000 in external grant funding, providing valuable additional income to support key initiatives.

We are now entering the year-end period, our busiest time financially, which includes preparation of the annual accounts and audit. Following this, the Council will transition to new accounting software to improve efficiency, streamline processes, and enhance financial reporting.

I look forward to continuing to support the Council in delivering its objectives and ensuring robust financial management in the year ahead.

Kerry Sturman

Love Loddon Community Group – Annual report 2024/2025

April/May

- The new benches were installed at Farthing Green.
- Tendered local nurseries for our bedding plant order. Most competitive and helpful were Homestead Nurseries.
- Planting took place and watering rota implemented

September

- Planning and review meeting in The Swan
- Stripping out of the summer bedding and Winter violas were planted

October

- Bulb planting Farthing Green and Church Plain
- Bulb planting with the Brownies, along the Beccles Road

November

- Clearing leaves from Church Plain Car Park.
- Sponsorship confirmed for the 2025 Planters from Cecil Amey, opticians

2025

January

- Planning and review meeting in The Swan

February

- Tidied Church Plain. Introduction of 'Leaf Mould Pile' for leaf composting in Holy Trinity Churchyard

March

- Tidied Farthing Green

April

- Tidied the 'B-Line' bed and paths around The Staithe

Plans:

- Stripping out violas and replanting with summer bedding at the end of May
- Watering rota to be implemented
- A new noticeboard ordered and will be installed on Church Plain
- The Community Payback team, are due to begin projects such as painting the railings imminently

The success of the LLCG is thanks to around 30 volunteers from the local community, with approximately ten attending each event.

Grateful thanks, in particular, to Cllr Mervyn Pointer for his hands-on help and support. Also, to Chair Andy Woodman and the office team for help with admin, social media and supplies.

Julie Appleby
7th April 2025

Loddon Community Gym continues to welcome new members. We are very grateful for the support we have received from Loddon Town Council, including the Pride in Place grant, which has enabled us to run successful marketing campaigns on social media (with the expertise of our Committee member, Stephanie Brown). Our sign outside the Co Op, which was provided by the Council, is also doing an excellent job - for people who are new to the area it raises awareness and it also reminds those who have been here a while where we are.

We currently have over 120 members with an average age of 65. We have had some success in attracting younger members but our core membership represents the demographic of the Loddon and Chedgrave area we aim to support. We are proud to be able to offer a place where our members are able to exercise to maintain their fitness and wellbeing, supporting both their physical and mental health. Our trainer, Louise Proctor, is highly valued by the Committee and the membership not only for the training and rehabilitation programmes she provides, but also the chats and personal assistance, which are invaluable.

We are delighted to be able to report that we have been awarded a Community Action Fund grant by South Norfolk Council. Together with other funds we have raised, this will enable us to replace a number of pieces of equipment and also acquire some new pieces. This is much needed and will enable us to support our existing membership as well as continue to seek new members. As a Committee our overriding priority is to do our best to ensure that the Gym has a sustainable future so that it can continue to serve the local community.

We would like to thank you for your continued support.

Lynne Pearson 26/3/26

Norfolk County Council – Annual Parish Report 2025-26

Our Promises	What Was Delivered	Impact
Libraries & Culture	Built new libraries, invested £3m+ , and transformed Norwich Castle into a world-class attraction	Stronger cultural offer and a major boost for tourism
Better Care	Invested £40m+ in care homes and supported living	More residents able to live independently for longer
Backing Our Children	GOOD-rated services, £2.5m+ for care leavers, £5m for jobs, and 600+ opportunities created	Better life chances and stronger futures for young people
Better Roads	Major infrastructure projects completed and £10m extra invested in maintenance	One of the best-performing highways services in the country
Improved Buses	£50m+ invested , more electric buses, and 26% growth in passenger numbers	Cleaner travel and better public transport access
Protecting the Environment	850,000+ trees planted and emissions cut by 50%	Protecting Norfolk’s countryside and tackling climate change
Growing the Economy	Investment in high streets, improved connectivity, and hundreds of new homes built	Stronger local economy and thriving communities

Norfolk County Council, under a Conservative administration, has a strong record of delivering on its promises and investing in the county’s future. From new libraries and major road schemes to over £40 million in care and significant improvements in children’s services, we have focused on the priorities that matter most to residents. We have strengthened local transport, supported businesses and high streets, expanded opportunities for young people, and taken meaningful action to protect Norfolk’s environment. This is a council that combines experience with action backing communities, improving services, and driving sustainable growth, while continuing to stand up for Norfolk and secure the investment it deserves.

Norfolk County Council delivers a balanced and responsible budget for 2026–27

Norfolk County Council approved a balanced £613.8m budget for 2026–27, demonstrating strong financial leadership and prudent management in what remains one of the toughest funding climates in decades.

The administration has once again delivered stability and certainty for residents, setting a balanced financial position while identifying £42.3 million in savings and efficiencies and committing £76.3 million in targeted investment to protect vital services and strengthen Norfolk's economy.

Despite significant national financial pressures and ongoing constraints in central government funding, we have ensured the county remains on a firm financial footing, without resorting to emergency measures. This stands in stark contrast to a growing number of upper-tier authorities across the country that have issued Section 114 notices or are facing effective bankruptcy.

The budget enables the council to continue:

- Protecting frontline services
- Investing heavily in adults and children's services
- Delivering new libraries and modern learning hubs in key towns
- Supporting for heritage, culture, and tourism
- Driving transformative reforms to improve efficiency and outcomes
- Backing economic growth and infrastructure
- Maintaining long-term financial sustainability

In line with national funding assumptions a 4.998% increase in council tax was implemented due to the government's continued reliance on placing the burden on local taxpayers to safeguard core services. This decision reflects the financial realities facing councils nationwide, while ensuring essential services remain protected for Norfolk residents.

This budget reinforces Norfolk's Conservative administration's commitment to careful stewardship of taxpayers' money, strong local services, and a resilient future for the county.

Norfolk County Council invests in community led highway improvements across the county

Norfolk County Council has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting local communities with the approval of 99 new highway improvement schemes for 2026-27, delivered in partnership with town and parish councils across Norfolk.

Papers highlight how the Parish Partnership Programme, now entering its fifteenth year, gave local communities a voice in shaping the highways enhancements that matter most to them, whether that's improving pedestrian safety, slowing vehicle speeds, or making it easier to walk, cycle or access local services.

This year's programme represented a total investment of £769,034, made possible through the longstanding 50/50 funding model. Town and parish councils will collectively contribute £384,517, matched by £384,517 from Norfolk County Council, enabling more than twice as many small-scale schemes to be delivered than could be funded by the council alone.

In total local councils submitted 99 bids for 2026/27 and all were approved as viable schemes after being carefully assessed against value for money, community outcomes, safety benefits and compliance.

Norfolk's bus service improvements deliver record growth and faster journeys

Norfolk County Council's ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) has transformed public transport across the county, driving a 26% increase in passenger numbers since 2022 and making Norfolk a leading national example for sustainable travel.

A paper discussed at the council's Infrastructure and Development Committee on 22nd January highlighted what has been delivered thanks to the £65.45 million secured for Norfolk from the Department for Transport. That includes;

- New and enhanced bus services on more than 44 routes across Norfolk, including more evening and Sunday services
- Affordable fares: capped single fares in key towns and multi-operator ticketing
- Greener fleet: 75 zero-emission buses in Norwich and 24 more electric buses coming in 2026
- Improved passenger experience: real-time information, safer waiting areas, next-stop announcements and real-time information on more buses.

Not only are we seeing record-setting and increasing numbers of passengers, but customer satisfaction has also risen to 87%, bucking national trends and reinforcing Norfolk's approach to improvements in bus travel across the county.

Norfolk gritting vehicles headed out over the winter season

Norfolk County Council's winter gritting got underway during the recent winter, with gritters active on A/B roads, key bus routes, and village access roads, using new tech for efficiency. The first runs of the recent winter season (late 2025/early 2026) started as temperatures dropped, utilizing the 58-strong fleet with automated salting to cover 2,200 miles of routes, supported by stocked salt barns and public grit bins.

Norfolk County Council took first place in the Eastern region in annual Highways and Transport Satisfaction Survey

Norfolk County Council has once again demonstrated strong performance in the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey, taking the top spot in the Eastern region for overall satisfaction and second out of 29 county councils across England.

The annual survey, which gathers public views on highways and transport services, saw Norfolk achieve an overall satisfaction score of 48%, well above the national average of 40%.

This marks the 15th consecutive year Norfolk has participated in the survey, and the 7th year in a row that we have come either first or second overall.

Key highlights from this year's results include:

- Top Regional Performer: Norfolk ranked 1st in the Eastern Region for overall satisfaction.
- Some of the best above average score were in our bus services thanks to improvements that have been made as part of our Bus Service Improvement Plan. The 'local bus services' overall category we were 10% above the group average with sub indicators as follows:
 - Public Transport Information (11% above group average)
 - Frequency of bus services (9% above group average)
 - Ease of access to school / work (6% above group average)
- Condition of highways (8% above group average)

Norfolk County Council's Deep Disappointment at Government Decision to Halt Mayoral Election and Slash Devolution Funding

Norfolk County Council expressed serious concern following the Labour Government's announcement that the planned 2026 mayoral election for the Norfolk & Suffolk Combined County Authority will be deferred until 2028. The sudden decision meant that Norfolk would now receive only around one-third of the investment previously promised under the devolution programme.

Norfolk County Councils astonishment at the Minded To decision of the government to create 3 Unitaries for Norfolk under Local Government Reorganisation

Norfolk County Council made a robust bid for a Single Unitary council for Norfolk under the proposals for LGR. This bid was based on sound financial information with the primary purpose of protecting front line services, whilst ensuring value for money. NCC already deliver 85% of local services in Norfolk, a single unitary was the easiest to implement, would ultimately save money for taxpayers and was the most obvious choice for the county. It was also backed by key stakeholders like the NHS and the Police. None of the other proposals, which would split services and cost more to implement and run, stacked up. It is therefore disappointing that despite the 3 unitary proposal not meeting the government's own criteria, that this is the option chosen. This may be more a political decision than a practical one and seems irrational. The council will consider the details of the decision and may choose to challenge this.

Norwich Castle Keep reopens following £27m redevelopment

Norwich Castle Keep reopened to visitors following a comprehensive five-year redevelopment project that introduced new accessibility features alongside new galleries and interpretive displays.

Funded by £12 million from Norfolk County Council and over £13 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, all five floors of the newly named People's Palace were opened to the public for the first time ever.

The Grade I listed castle, originally commissioned by William the Conqueror 900 years ago and completed by his son Henry I in 1121, retained its historic significance while embracing modern improvements.

A new light-filled atrium adjacent to the Keep was unveiled in the first phase of the redevelopment in July 2024. Visitors also benefited from a new café, gift shop, and additional toilet facilities to enhance the visitor experience.

Importantly, a lift was installed to provide full wheelchair accessibility throughout the Keep, allowing access from the basement all the way up to the battlements, where visitors could enjoy panoramic views across Norwich.

Nationally recognised 'AI programme to be rolled out across Norfolk to prevent falls

A new, nationally recognised proactive intervention scheme is rolled out across the whole of Norfolk. The initiative was delivered in collaboration with local partners including Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE), city, district and borough Councils and NHS organisations, aims to reduce falls in vulnerable and older adults.

Following a successful pilot with 1250 residents, the programme, which uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify residents at risk of escalating needs, enhances the safety and wellbeing of those at risk of falls. The latest Artificial Intelligence technology, natural language processing is used to 'read' case notes and automatically extract meaningful insight about our residents. This technology enables the council to identify and prioritise individuals in Norfolk most at risk of falling, allows for proactive intervention before they fall.

AI is a rapidly developing technology with the potential to improve the delivery of services. The council is using AI to benefit the people of Norfolk in a safe, ethical and transparent way.

Falls are a major concern, particularly among older or vulnerable adults, and can lead to severe injuries and a decline in quality of life. Through this programme, the council will be able to predict people who are at higher risk and offer timely and targeted interventions to support them.

For more information about preventing falls visit [Preventing and dealing with falls](#).

Norfolk County Council Approved £500k Community Fund to Boost Local Projects

Norfolk County Council approved the launch of a new £500k Norfolk Community Fund for 2025/26, aimed at supporting grassroots projects that strengthen communities and improve local wellbeing.

The fund will empower local voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) groups to apply for grants between £200 and £2,500 to deliver small-scale initiatives that bring people together, promote inclusion, and enhance quality of life. Each of the county's 84 councillors will be allocated £5,000 to distribute within their divisions, ensuring funding reaches every corner of Norfolk

Parish Council Report – AGM – April 2026

Loddon Town Estate Trust

Last year was another busy one for the Trust, receiving numerous applications for assistance from Loddon residents. As in previous years, the Trust could not offer help to everyone who contacted it. Our Secretary, Julie Ponsford, did a great job once again of dealing with applications, both successful and not, offering alternative contacts of potential support to the unsuccessful applicants. On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to thank her for her diligent work.

From an income perspective, the Trust once again received a number of generous donations from members of the community during the year. However, due to increased expenses, the surplus available for distribution was lower than in 2024.

As we head into what could continue to be a financially challenging time, I hope the Trust can reach those in the community in need of support and can continue the wonderful work it has done for many years now.

Finally, in March we welcomed our new incumbent, Miriam Fife, as a fellow Trustee and I look forward to working with her and handing over the position of Chair. I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees for their support of not only the Trust but myself in the role of Acting Chair.

Val Counter