

County Councillor Report for August 2026

Norfolk County Council Chief Executive

Following a recruitment process that began early last month, Norfolk County Council has announced Dennis Bacon as its preferred appointment for chief executive. The appointment is subject to normal pre-employment checks and approval by full council. The full council meeting to consider the appointment will take place at County Hall on Friday 14 August. Further details are available in the county council news release [here](#).

Changes to fridge and freezer collections due to national capacity issues

A national shortage of specialist recycling and treatment capacity is affecting fridge and freezer collections across the UK. From Thursday 6 August, Norfolk County Council will only accept unwanted fridges, freezers and other cooling appliances at the county's largest recycling centres.

Full details of the affected sites and what is accepted are available on the council's website: [Changes to fridge and freezer collections at Norfolk's recycling centres](#).

The recycling centres that are still accepting fridge, freezers and other cooling appliances are:

- Caister Recycling Centre
- Dereham Recycling Centre
- Hempton Recycling Centre
- King's Lynn Recycling Centre
- Norwich North Recycling Centre
- Norwich South Recycling Centre
- Thetford Recycling Centre

Where possible, residents are asked to:

- Use retailer take-back or recycling services when buying a replacement appliance.
- Keep using appliances that remain safe and in working order.
- Consider reuse, repair or donation options for working appliances.
- Delay disposal, where safe and practical, until national treatment capacity improves.

Residents should only take fridges, freezers and other cooling appliances for disposal if it is absolutely necessary. If safe to do so, they are encouraged to hold on to unwanted appliances temporarily to help ease pressure on the national system.

Why is this happening?

This is a national problem. Councils across the country are having difficulty dealing with fridges, freezers and other cooling appliances*. To dispose of these items, they must be taken to specialist facilities. They cannot easily be sent somewhere else when those facilities are full or closed. Fridges and freezers can contain harmful gases and insulating foams. These must be removed safely under controlled conditions.

Recently, there has been a spate of incidents which have seen these specialist processing plants put out of operation, including the recent fire at a treatment facility in Thetford. This has created excess pressure on the entire system, throughout the country. Norfolk County Council is following other authorities in limiting where we are accepting these types of items.

Norfolk County Council is working closely with the government and the Environment Agency to try and find a solution, and in the meantime has secured temporary storage arrangements to house these items while we wait for them to be collected.

** Cooling appliances include any appliance containing refrigerant gases or cooling circuits, such as refrigerators, fridge freezers, freezers, wine coolers, air conditioning units, dehumidifiers, water coolers and similar equipment.*

Fire & Rescue Service continuing to respond to high summer demand

Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service is continuing to raise awareness to the public around the threat of wildfires this summer, with more hot and dry weather in Norfolk. Demand has been especially high on Norfolk's firefighters this summer, with 1,270 emergencies attended in July. Resources continue to be stretched, and activity levels are commensurate with 2022. The Service has shared posters with parish councils across the county with advice on how to prevent outdoor fires, and worked with Norfolk Trails and the Norfolk Resilience Forum to produce signage on the county's trail posts on what to do in the event of fire. You can request these via norfolkresilienceforum@norfolk.gov.uk.

They are continuing to work with other groups including local wildlife trusts, Forestry England, and Heritage Railways to discuss the increased risks of the hot and dry weather. Further fire safety advice, including safety both inside and outside the home, is available on the county council webpages: www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/43732/Safety-advice-and-guidance

Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library reopens

The Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library has reopened after a £1.3 million refurbishment. The library welcomes around one million visitors a year and is one of the country's busiest public buildings. Improvements include a new entrance, more study space, refreshed children and teenage areas, better accessibility, charging points and a new events space.

Police & Crime Commissioner Norfolk

On 16 July 2026, Reform candidate Colin Sutton was elected Norfolk's Police and Crime Commissioner. One of his first tasks will be to consult the public, partners and Norfolk Constabulary on a new Police and Crime Plan. More information about the PCC is available [here](#). The PCC is scrutinised by Norfolk's Police and Crime Panel, with more information on the county council webpages [here](#). [www.norfolk.gov.uk/39215]

NHS Norfolk and Suffolk Mental Health Plan

NHS Norfolk and Suffolk Integrated Care Board has [unveiled its Mental Health Strategic Plan 2026-2031](#), including a planned £20 million expansion of Mental Health Support Teams to every school and college in Norfolk and Suffolk by 2030.

The plan draws on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments developed with Norfolk and Suffolk County councils and highlights links between poor mental health, deprivation and wider health inequalities, including diagnosed depression among around 15% of adults locally. This is relevant to Norfolk County Council because mental health affects demand across children's services, adult social care, education, community safety and prevention. The plan aligns with the council's focus on early help, reducing inequalities and managing demand on acute services.

Redundancy support for job losses at British Sugar, Cantley

The council's Redundancy Support Service is helping employees affected by British Sugar's proposal to stop beet processing at Cantley from the end of February 2027. The proposal, subject to consultation, puts around 104 jobs at risk at a site important to the local economy and farming supply chain. British Sugar has said it intends to concentrate beet processing at Wissington, Bury St Edmunds and Newark.

The council's support offer can help affected workers find new employment or self-employment opportunities, access benefits and wellbeing advice, develop skills, and get practical help with CVs, applications, interviews and mentoring.