

Broadland District Councillor Report for Cantley, Limpenhoe and Southwood Parish Council Meeting – 19 February 2026

The Broadland Biodiversity Strategy for 2025-2030 is now on the BDC website. The link to the Strategy is here:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/environment/trees-biodiversity/south-norfolk-council-and-broadland-district-council-biodiversity-strategies-2025-30>

The BDC Customer Experience Project continues to progress, and an update was provided to the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 20 January. The project aims to improve customer service, modernise service delivery and reduce operational costs through a new digital platform. The procurement exercise has been completed, and the new service is being developed. It is expected the service will be in use by the end of March 2026.

The finalists for the 2026 Broadland and South Norfolk Business Awards have been announced. The winners will be revealed at an awards evening on the 18 March. The categories include Business Growth, Business Innovation, Employer of the Year, Environmental Impact, Food and Drink producer of the Year, Insurance Financial or Professional Services, Manufacturing and Engineering Business of the Year, New Business, Small Business, Tourism, Pub of the Year, Retailer of the Year, and Business Builder exemplar. For more information see:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/news/finalists-announced-for-the-2026-broadland-and-south-norfolk-business-awards>

The BDC Community Links Network brings together people involved with community groups to foster communication and collaboration between them and to provide support. For more information generally on the Community Links Network go to:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-safety/help-hub/support-community-groups>

BDC is looking to see whether residents are interested in hands-on workshops teaching sewing, mending and upcycling skills. If you would be interested, please do fill in this questionnaire:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=ikQbvZ9SBEqIb1K4febsFeZBRiBRMFIkOZZBN8TOH1UNdVLR1daUlc5ODAyWVhHOIJWQ0k2VFI2RS4u&route=shorturl>

The next elections for the principal authorities in Norfolk will now be in May 2027 for Councillors to sit on the Shadow Unitary Authorities. The Structural Change Order (SCO) creates the legislation needed to form the Shadow Authorities and is expected in Autumn 2026. One matter in the SCO is the Schedule of Elections, and Broadland DC is asking for the shadow authority elections to be at the same time as the town/parish elections in 2027 in order to simplify and streamline the process and reduce election costs. The government decision on the number of unitary authorities is expected to be announced on or before 25 March 2026. The aim is to get this announcement out in Norfolk and Suffolk before the pre-election period for those areas that are having elections. The result will then lead to the formation of the structure of the new Mayoral Combined Authority. When the Shadow Authorities

come in there will be a Section 24 notice enacted to control what the existing authorities can do.

UNICEF has declared 2026 as the Year of the Volunteer. There is a drive across the County to promote this and host a festival of volunteering in June 2026. There will be an event at the Forum in Norwich and other links and publicity involved.

The next Neighbourhood Policing Meeting for the Acle area will be held on Tuesday 17 March from 6.00 pm. The location is to be confirmed.

The Greater Norwich authorities (Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council, working with Norfolk County Council) are preparing to review the Greater Norwich Local Plan which was adopted in March 2024. The review is prompted by national planning reform and the government's new method for calculating housing need. In addition, the government has introduced a new plan-making system, which changes the way local plans are prepared. As part of the early preparation stage of reviewing the GNLP, the Greater Norwich authorities have opened a Call for Sites. Landowners, developers, and other interested parties have been invited to submit sites that may be suitable for housing, employment or other uses. The Greater Norwich authorities will then assess submissions to identify which sites may be suitable to allocate in the reviewed local plan. This will form the basis of a future public consultation. The Call for sites ends on 23 March 2026.

For more information see <https://gnlp.oc2.uk/>

BDC has increased its stock of temporary accommodation. This is saving the council money as temporary accommodation provides income from rent as well as reducing bills for bed and breakfast accommodation. The council has 53 temporary accommodation units with more coming online in March 2026.

The BDC business regulatory support hub team offers assistance and advice to newly registered businesses in the district.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/business/business-regulatory-support-hub>

Cllr Davis has funded repairs and improvements to the community telephone box in Postwick. The box is used as a community library offering books, puzzles and games to residents of all ages.

BDC celebrated and supported National Apprenticeship Week 2026 by interviewing some of the apprentices at BDC and SNC who explained how their skills have developed and their careers have been shaped. For more information on opportunities at the councils go to:

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/work-skills/apprenticeships>

The Government has abandoned plans to cancel the County Council elections and so they will proceed as originally planned on the 7th May.

(Submitted by Cllr Jan Davis and Cllr Eleanor Laming on 16/02/26)