

**Latest Information, Advice, Useful Links and Service Updates**

**Updated 31 March 2022**

This weekly briefing is intended as a resource to keep you up to date with the latest information and advice.

**COVID-19 Trusted sources of information**

The most recent **verified data on cases in the UK and Norfolk** is available from [Public Health England](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-track-coronavirus-cases) and [Norfolk Insights](https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/coronavirus/).

Everyone has a key role in promoting [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) and [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) as trusted sources of information to the public. It is important to ensure people go to the right sources of information and keep up to date with how to look after themselves.

**Keep up to date**: We have [a dedicated webpage for coronavirus updates](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/care-support-and-health/health-and-wellbeing/adults-health/coronavirus/) in Norfolk and impact on Norfolk County Council services. This is updated regularly so please do re-visit this page.

**Service updates:** The most up to date information on council services can be found at [Norfolk County Council services disruptions](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/service-disruptions). The council will continue to monitor its services and, if regulations and circumstances change, it will review its current plans.

**National announcements**

**COVID-19 tests**

Updated government guidance says free COVID-19 tests will continue to be available to help protect specific groups once free testing for the general public ends on 1 April 2022. Further details and information [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-next-steps-for-living-with-covid)

**Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership**

**Eligible residents urged to come forward for their Spring Booster**

Health leaders in Norfolk and Waveney are urging [**those that are eligible for the Spring Booster to come forward and book an appointment**](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftracking.vuelio.co.uk%2Ftracking%2Fclick%3Fd%3D3TIHanc71HO6-1nYx7nXF9fP0z5XFeIRRbmYNcgvs7Vfdccv9qJl65CD-21DjcD3mREfBqFe-r0mHM6SUk8JGLNvN204AP9UrItWLpbf-25Dc5l9_WgWzNpPe5eRaOqQzQfu58AdkwF2H2qm9B31wZuFEut1gmiueRvY5TBWSaa33UYradbMVxuR2iAzaXAwgnTR90uqIIAWqfG-7eEn-sgNTFl29eSS1RIAMiwiY3J09shU3mn7dYfRIdeaoLUn_g2&data=04%7C01%7Csue.boden%40norfolk.gov.uk%7C2296afa626f041e205c308da11653c33%7C1419177e57e04f0faff0fd61b549d10e%7C0%7C0%7C637841423738608214%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=dw2azHv0UNCjP0MjCUqf6w6OzNKxrTuLBZYYBPX7LMU%3D&reserved=0), following last week’s announcement of the programme launch for the over 75s and those aged 12+ who are immunosuppressed.

The Spring Booster programme is designed to boost protection for those that were the first during the Autumn to get their jab, to ensure that their vaccine protection remains topped up over the spring and summer months.

Eligible people are being contacted by the NHS to make a Spring Booster appointment either by letter, text message, or from a phone call from their GP practice. However, anyone that is eligible can also go ahead and make an appointment via the [**National Booking Service**](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftracking.vuelio.co.uk%2Ftracking%2Fclick%3Fd%3DbUcfUSRcpw35IH1kfku8yKBJKRlQ3h2fRQAIZO7rQFe0NmtWIAub6ZYpSeMhxra4jWO3KeOzZJ2FC46jxigq7EbtYhn8KtvXAqINfLccragv3ebbX7hRukTXDPH8lsjA7b_bEER6BmQqntjcYHXhC1Fm4uZie4YYUM2usNSvUB7tGnVAEAtJsp4SBt1Xg5W9_vu0va7g_X1nzwdh_e3aywjMGEocRSIygphRF34_5RWf8Raospb5tvszaRIcq4rHUw2&data=04%7C01%7Csue.boden%40norfolk.gov.uk%7C2296afa626f041e205c308da11653c33%7C1419177e57e04f0faff0fd61b549d10e%7C0%7C0%7C637841423738608214%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=V4vtYhgzp4p5PQZVTf9zwsqJejzbeBCNkXu1STtPIP8%3D&reserved=0)**.**

People are advised to wait until around six months since their last dose to receive maximum effectiveness from the Spring Booster but will be able to receive it from a minimum of three months since their last dose.

**Information for refugees from Ukraine**

The NHS is starting to welcome citizens from Ukraine to Norfolk and Waveney, including refugees.

All Ukrainians arriving in England will be able to access NHS healthcare free of charge**,** including GP and nurse consultations, hospital services, and urgent care centres. Ukrainians coming to the UK will also be offered COVID-19 vaccines and medical screenings. [**More information and support can be found here.**](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftracking.vuelio.co.uk%2Ftracking%2Fclick%3Fd%3D6STqbI0j3hQuAQYoKbuChui1qViUHr7rrtmzXFOGj_rsU5D8zXIXt7zNMsF_K62kr1BCo71X-QfqNvsyfmIB00xSWyK5SeM3J2XP3hyjsFEq77v3IsdNqQYDqHfYpICKp6o2yLrgfWlc0-fev8Az9bKXn9NLkCF3qOX97Vu9Q7IEJ0n5eQTyrsCYJlB5qthsuktjJHkkFt-D0BFmcMK0OfE1&data=04%7C01%7Csue.boden%40norfolk.gov.uk%7C2296afa626f041e205c308da11653c33%7C1419177e57e04f0faff0fd61b549d10e%7C0%7C0%7C637841423738608214%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=%2BALLJVBWDSSsWCkDb28pQvZegrljQ60Ix3bMukXNZqU%3D&reserved=0)

**Adult Social Services**

**Home Care receives funding boost in the face of rising fuel costs**

In the face of rising fuel prices, care providers across Norfolk reported that the extra cost was having a real impact on their and their staff’s ability to keep providing reliable home care, a decision was taken by Norfolk County Council to increase its’ hourly payments to £21, representing an increase of £301,000 across the county. This will be met by the Council’s Adult Social Services Provider Support Fund.

**Plans take shape for five 'essential' Changing Places in Norfolk**

Ambitious plans to increase the number of Changing Places in Norfolk have been revealed in proposals going to Norfolk County Council’s cabinet on 4 April. There are currently just 17 Changing Places across Norfolk.

The plans have identified the first five locations for new facilities as part of the authority’s efforts to make Norfolk more accessible to everyone.

Changing Places facilities are larger accessible toilets for people with complex needs and disabilities with additional equipment like hoists, curtains, adult sized changing bench, and space for carers.

The proposals would see Changing Places established at:

* Acle Library
* Wroxham Library
* Either Brancaster Staithe, Brancaster Beach or Morston Quay
* Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse
* Dereham Library

Cabinet will consider the report when it meets at 10am on Monday, 4 April. [**Watch the meeting, live or afterwards and read the report.**](https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1801/Committee/169/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx)

**Norfolk County Council Local Transport Plan Consultation**

The transport plan describes the council’s strategy and policy framework for transport and is used as a guide for investment priorities as well as being considered by other agencies when determining their planning or delivery decisions. The Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) is set to drive the county’s transport strategy until 2036. The LTP4 Strategy was adopted at Full Council in November 2021. Since then, work has been underway to develop the implementation plan to achieve a number of goals, including net zero carbon.

The Local Transport Plan must be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal which assesses the environmental, social and economic impacts of the plan, and factors that can mitigate any negative impacts Norfolk. The County Council is currently undertaking a consultation on the Implementation Plan and Sustainability Appraisal.

Your feedback will be used to help make sure the Implementation Plan has chosen actions that best achieve the county’s priorities for transport and to help shape future transport provision in Norfolk.

The Consultation is open to the public until Monday 2 May.

Consultation link and further information[**here**](https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/local-transport-implementation-plan-4/)

**Electric buses into Norwich after £3.2million funding is secured**

In a major boost to Norfolk’s ambitions to run a net zero transport system £3.2million in funding has been secured to introduce electric buses to the network in Norwich.

Norfolk County Council secured the funding after a joint bid with First Bus was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) for funding from the ‘Zero Emission Bus Regional Access’ (ZEBRA) scheme.

This bid is matched by £3.6m of local investment from First Bus and will deliver 15 battery electric buses which will be in operation by March 2024.

The new vehicles will operate on four existing bus routes, all of which operate through the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) and Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Norwich City Centre. The routes are:

* Green Line: Bus routes 15 / 15A / 15B
* Yellow Line: Bus route 29
* Purple Line: Bus route 39
* Charcoal Line: Bus routes 40 / 40A

**Norfolk County Council progress towards net zero carbon**

The county council’s environmental policy that was agreed by Full Council in November 2019 commits the authority to an ambitious target of achieving net zero carbon by 2030.

Since then officers have been working on a wide range of carbon cutting and environmentally friendly improvements including progress towards decarbonising council owned buildings, installation of a further 44 electric vehicle charge-points at County Hall, and development of strategies to boost cycling and walking in King’s Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Norwich.

Now councillors will also be considering a proposal to commission a Climate Action Plan to help make sure residents, businesses and county councillors can get involved and help shape this broad programme of activity in the months and years ahead.

As part of work already underway more Roadside Nature Reserves will be created, and a Pollinator Action Plan has seen a new pollinator-friendly verge cutting approach adopted as part of the countywide Natural Norfolk programme.  
  
The wide ranging report also highlights that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is planning to move parts of its fleet across to electric and hybrid vehicles this year as part of Norfolk County Council’s commitment to reduce carbon emissions.  
  
Cabinet will consider the report when it meets at 10am on Monday 4 April. [**Watch the meeting, live or afterwards**](https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1801/Committee/169/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx)**.**

**Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service**

**Norfolk Water Safety Forum launches Spring/Summer safety campaign**

This week Norfolk Fire and Rescue and their partners at the Norfolk Water Safety Forum, launched their Spring/Summer season safety campaign to local media. This was to ask for their support in spreading the word about how the public can enjoy Norfolk’s waterways and beaches in a safe way.

A safety event was at Sea Palling beach, with talks held by the RNLI as well as the fire service.

Attendees were shown key safety priorities for the upcoming warmer seasons including how the public can swim safely in open water, how to spot safe swimming spots, the importance of tide times and being prepared for what to do in an emergency. Experts also gave talks on safe paddleboarding.

The campaign will also see social media activity focusing on how people can enjoy Norfolk’s waters safely.

**Firefighter taster sessions**

There are still spaces on upcoming firefighter taster sessions. If you know someone who could be a great firefighter, please point them towards the taster sessions.

The sessions below still have spaces available and will be held at the Bowthorpe training centre.

Saturday, 9 April - 2-5pm

Sunday, 10 April - 9am - noon and 2-5pm

Tuesday, 12 April - 6-9pm

To book a space, applicants need to email [taster-sessions@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:taster-sessions@norfolk.gov.uk).