

Broadland District Councillor Report for Brundall Parish Council Meeting – 15 December 2025

The Viking Centre in Sprowston was awarded this year's BDC Enhancement Award following the building's recent extensive refurbishment and extension to create a modern, multi-purpose community hub.

BDC Cabinet endorsed the Local Nature Recovery Strategy on 21 October. This is a new statutory document introduced as part of the Environment Act in 2021 and identifies opportunities for habitat connectivity and restoration. Norfolk County Council is the adopting authority, and the district councils have a supporting role as local planning authorities.

The 2nd Brundall Rainbows Group has been awarded a BDC Keep it Going Grant. The grant of £300 will go towards rent, badges, awards and equipment. Congratulations!

The 1st Brundall Brownies have also been awarded a BDC Keep it Going Grant. The grant of £297 will go towards badges, awards and equipment. Congratulations!

The SNC and BDC Handy Person Scheme has been shortlisted for the National Healthy Housing Awards 2025. This recognition celebrates the impact the scheme has in improving residents' safety, comfort, and wellbeing at home. The awards ceremony takes place in Manchester on Wednesday 17 December 2025. For more information about the Handy Person Scheme go to:
<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice-support/handyperson>

BDC is consulting on a draft revised policy document entitled the Sex Establishment and Sexual Entertainment Venue policy. The consultation ends on 25 February 2026 and the link to the documents is here:
<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/licensing/licences/licensing-policies/sex-establishment-and-sexual-entertainment-venues-legislation-and-policy>
At present BDC does not have any affected premises located within the district and is not aware of any pending applications.

The BDC Seasonal Toy Appeal has been amazing with over 1500 toys collected! Please contact the BDC Help Hub if you know of families who could do with toys, help or assistance at this time of year.
<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/community-safety/help-hub>

BDC and SNC have launched a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2025-2030. This outlines a plan to tackle the challenges faced through increasing support for the in-house rough sleeper team and introducing greater housing support for care leavers. More temporary accommodation and affordable housing will be provided in the context of increasing need. Council-owned temporary accommodation units provide good quality secure housing and reduce the reliance on expensive bed and breakfast accommodation.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

The government has postponed the Mayoral Elections for Norfolk and Suffolk which were due in 2026 and said they will now be held in May 2028. This will have an impact on planning for the Strategic Development Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk and probably on funding.

There have been no changes to the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme and a public consultation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on LGR proposals for Norfolk is currently ongoing.

The consultation includes:

- BDC's and other districts proposal for a three-council model
- Norfolk County Council's proposal for a single unitary authority
- South Norfolk District Council's proposal for a two-council model

The views of all residents are important in shaping the future of local government in Norfolk. The consultation is open until Sunday 11 January 2026. To respond click here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-norfolk-and-suffolk/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-norfolk-and-suffolk>

The decision by the government on the number of Unitary Authorities is expected in March 2026. A Structural Change Order will then be enacted, which will inform how the process progresses and is delivered.

The Shadow Unitary Authority elections will be held in May 2027. Those councillors elected will be responsible for overseeing the change over to the new authorities and there will be finances made available to oversee the whole process. As a result, during that year, there could be some very busy councillors who will be members of a parish council, a district council, the county council and a shadow unitary authority council.

The District Council elections due in May 2027 are very unlikely to happen, so district councillors are likely to be expected to stay on for another year.

We are expecting the Norfolk County Council elections due in May 2026 to be going ahead. The election decision has to be made 35 days before the Notice of Election, but in practice costs will be incurred by councils from the beginning of January 2026, due to the cost of booking venues for polling stations etc. If they do go ahead, those elected as County Councillors will be expected to serve for 2 years.

Once Unitary Authorities are in place, it is expected there will be a bigger focus on neighbourhood working with town and parish councils.

At BDC Main Council on 11 December 2025 the following were approved:

It was agreed to adopt the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme with no changes for the financial year 2026 to 2027. Council Tax Reduction is a discount scheme which reduces council tax bills to a more affordable level for low-income households.

It was agreed to adopt the Broadland Biodiversity Strategy for 2025-2030. The strategy builds on the Climate Change, Environment and Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2025-2028 to outline how it will achieve its core biodiversity objectives and meet its statutory duties under the Environment Act 2021.

There are 3 key priorities:

- Enhancing biodiversity on the land managed by BDC
- Supporting biodiversity beyond BDC boundaries
- Inspiring and Influencing wider action.

Baseline ecological surveys will be done on 10 council owned sites to produce 5-year enhancement plans for each site. Nature recovery projects in the district will be supported, and the planning system will ensure Biodiversity Net Gain is implemented.

BDC agreed the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy required under the Licensing Act 2003. This went out for consultation for a 6-week period from July to September 2025 and some amendments were made as a result. The final statement will come into effect from January 2026.

The BDC response to the current consultation on the proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk and Suffolk was approved.

It was noted that the Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer will be taking up a new position at the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk. It was agreed to appoint Sinead Carey as the Monitoring Officer for BDC from 5 January 2026.

(Submitted by Cllr Jan Davis and Cllr Eleanor Laming on 12/12/25)