

Stoke Holy Cross - District Councillors Report 5th March 2026

Member Ward Grants

Requests for support with small projects (typically up to £1,000 per project) to benefit the local community can be made to your District Councillors. Member Ward Grants for 2026/27 have been doubled to £2,000 per councillor, meaning that a total of £6,000 is available across Mulbarton & Stoke Holy Cross ward. Grants will be available from April.

Council Tax

The average rate of increase in Council Tax across the district will be 4.9%. The increase is driven by the County Council increase of 5%. The district council element, which accounts for about 7% of the Council Tax bill, increased 2.85% (£5 per month for a Band D property).

South Norfolk Grants for Towns, Parishes and Community Groups in 2026/27

For the forthcoming year, SNC has been able to fund grants totalling £1.25 million to towns, villages and community groups. The four key grants are:

- £500,000 for the Communities Action Fund (CAF) grants;
- £500,000 for a new Parish Facilities Grant;
- £150,000 for an In Bloom grant targeted at encouraging investment in formal and informal planting and biodiversity schemes; and
- £100,000 for a Street Cleaners for Parishes grant to help fund new capital equipment that might be required in the larger towns and settlements.

We have been told that both the In Bloom and the Street Cleaners grants will require matched funding from the parish.

CAF Grants

For 2026/27 only, grant applications of up to £40,000 will be accepted. Grants of more than £15,000 will require an absolute minimum of 25% matched funding already secured. We understand that the definition of qualifying projects will be tightened this year, with the intention of focusing on genuinely new projects. Applications for the new fund are expected to open in April/May.

We have been told that the Community Facilities Grants will be available for improvements to existing facilities. The terms of this new grant are not yet known.

Local Government Reform and Devolution

There have been no new announcements regarding the timetable for LGR and devolution. The Government's decision on the shape of LGR in Norfolk is expected in March (ie 1, 2 or 3 new Unitary Authorities). Elections to the new shadow authorities are expected in May 2027.

Following a change of heart from Government, County Council elections are now back on for 7 May this year. If the LGR timetable is achieved, the next council will sit for only 2 years.

Food Waste Collection

There has been a delay in the planned delivery of food waste collections due to delays in the delivery of the new collection trucks. The service in Stoke Holy Cross is now expected to start in September. More information will be available nearer the time.

South Norfolk Big Litter Pick

The 2026 big litter pick is now open. All participating organisations will receive a £50 thank you and 5 participating organisations, chosen at random, will receive £500. More information from: [Big South Norfolk Litter Pick | Broadland and South Norfolk](#)

Call for Sites – Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) Review

The Greater Norwich authorities are preparing to review the Greater Norwich Local Plan GNLP which was adopted in March 2024. As part of the early preparation stage before the review of the GNLP begins, the Greater Norwich authorities have opened a 'Call for Sites' for housing, employment or other uses. This excludes sites of less than 10 dwellings or 0.5 hectares. The Call for Sites is open until 23rd March 2026. The councils note that the call for sites may reopen later in the year.

Collections for Small Electricals and Batteries

South Norfolk has recently introduced a kerbside collection service for small electrical items and batteries. All items must be bagged and left outside by 7am on the day of collection. To book an appointment call 01508 533830 or use the online form: <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling/bin-collections-and-app/south-norfolk-small-electrical-items-and-battery-recycling> .

South Norfolk Handyperson Service

This service was recently named Handyperson Service of the Year at the National Healthy Housing Awards. The service is available to help with small repairs and changes that help make homes safer and secure. This is offered to older residents or those who are at higher risk. The usual rate is £23.50 per hour. Individuals aged over 65 or having a disability or long-term condition can receive 2 hours of help at £11.65 per hour, or without charge if on means-tested benefits. Call 01508 505284 or use the online option: [South Norfolk handyperson service | Broadland and South Norfolk](#).

South Norfolk Community Awards

Nominations can be made for these awards until 15 May 2026. Full details of the 9 different categories and the nomination form can be found at: [South Norfolk Community Awards | Broadland and South Norfolk](#) .

South Norfolk + Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)

Both South Norfolk Council and Broadland District Council are seeing a large number of NSIPs approved and proposed (eg Hornsea 3, Norwich to Tilbury, East Pye). To ensure resilience and that correspondence, documents and complaints or concerns get to the right officers and dealt with in a timely manner, the councils have a dedicated NSIP email address: NSIPS@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk. Please use this for future communications.

East Pye Solar Farm

This solar proposal has received a Gate 2 offer meaning it has a firm offer (date and place) for connection to the Grid. The developer states that it plans to submit its application to the Planning Inspectorate in February 2026. At the time of writing, we are not aware of any application having been made. The Inspectorate has 28 days to decide on whether to accept the application.

'Norwich to Tilbury' Update

The National Grid's Development Consent Order is now at the examination phase. This is scheduled to close on 10 August 2026, although an earlier close is possible. The initial public hearings have been completed and can be viewed online: [Examination timetable - Norwich to Tilbury - Find a National Infrastructure Project](#). Further hearings may be required in April and June.

PylonsEastAnglia are continuing to campaign against the pylon proposals and are fundraising. For further information visit: <https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk/actions>.

Bob McClenning, Ian Spratt & Jim Webber

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