

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

June 2025

COUNCILLOR WENDY FREDERICKS - CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE SERVICES

For the period up to 30th June 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Benefits

North Norfolk District Council Benefits Team Named Finalists for National Award

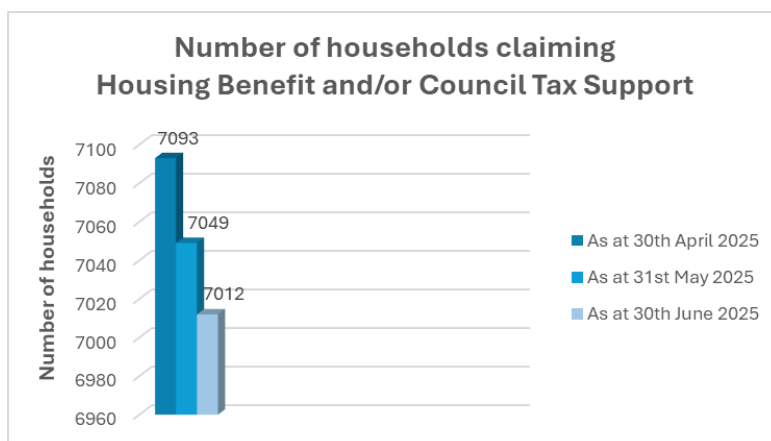
We are proud to announce that our Benefits Team has been shortlisted as a finalist for the IRRV Performance Awards - Benefits Team of the Year 2025.

This national recognition from the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV) highlights the team's commitment to delivering excellent customer service, supporting vulnerable residents, and driving innovation in welfare support.

Being named a finalist is a testament to the dedication and professionalism of the entire team, and we look forward to the results which will be announced in October.

Caseload (Q1/2025)

We see fluctuations in our caseload as cases close due to natural changes in circumstances. In addition to this, the Housing Benefit (HB) caseload making up for 36% of the total caseload, is continuing to decrease due to the managed migration process to Universal Credit.



We are continuing our Financial Inclusion Income maximisation workstream where we are reaching out to households in financial hardship to ensure those in need receive the appropriate support. To date we have realised £171,140.58 in annualised income across 76 households.

Speed of Processing Times – (Q1/2025)

The table below shows our processing times for Q1 (2025). Our targets are:

16 days for processing new claims

10 days for processing changes in circumstances

We prioritise processing changes that affect Housing Benefit to help minimise overpayments. Doing so reduces the financial impact on customers and helps the council avoid potential losses in Housing Benefit subsidy and the need for recovery action.

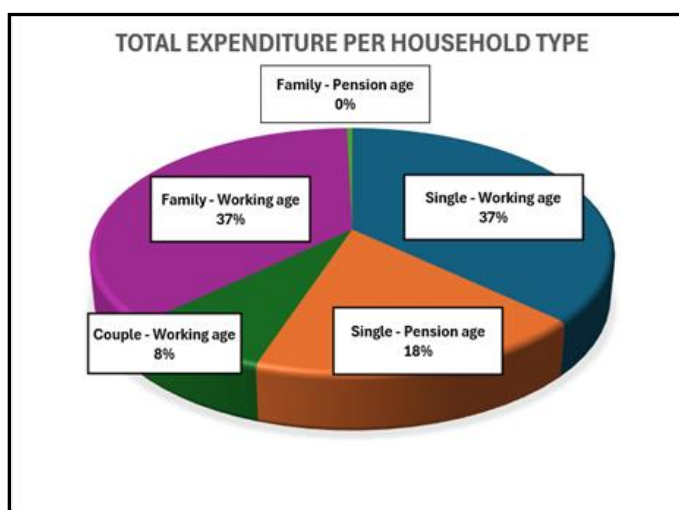
	Number received in the Quarter	NNDC number of days to process (Q1/2025)
New claims HB	452	7.47
New claims CTS		21.33
Changes in circumstances HB	27,217	15.03
Changes in circumstances CTS		5.87

Discretionary Housing Payments

We continue to administer Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to support tenancy sustainment, homelessness, and to support people to stay within the community.

For 2025/26, North Norfolk has been allocated funding of £103,037.00, and up to 30th June 2025 we have spent 34% of our allocation across 35 households.

A breakdown of how the expenditure has been allocated across the 35 households can be seen below.



Household Type	Number of Households paid	Expenditure across households
Single - Working age	17	£ 12,819.78
Single - Pension age	2	£ 6,244.79
Couple - Working age	2	£ 2,673.11
Couple - Pension age	0	£ -
Family - Working age	13	£ 12,742.29
Family - Pension age	1	£ 136.05
Totals	35	£ 34,616.02

Housing Options and Homeless Prevention

Your Choice Your Home

The demand for social and affordable housing options remains high within the district and far exceeds the availability and supply. As at the 30 June 2025 there were 2,123 households on the housing list with (22%) being on the Housing Register – the register contains those qualifying applicants who have the most urgent housing needs, including homeless households and households living in Temporary Accommodation.

The tables below highlight the make up of housing need and the size of property that is required by applicants on the housing list. Although the greatest demand for housing is those with a 1-bedroom need, there are significantly fewer larger properties allocated with a current demand for 4 bed+ properties being 236

	Housing List by Bedroom Need				Homes Let by Property size (Bedrooms)			
	Housing Register	Housing Options	Transfer	Total	Housing Register	Housing Options	Transfer	Total
1 Bed	201	837	154	1192	14			14
2 Bed	96	293	90	479	20			20
3 Bed	64	82	39	185	8			8
4 Bed	97	101	36	234	2			2
5 Bed +	11	12	9	33	0			0
Total	470	1325	328	2123	44			44

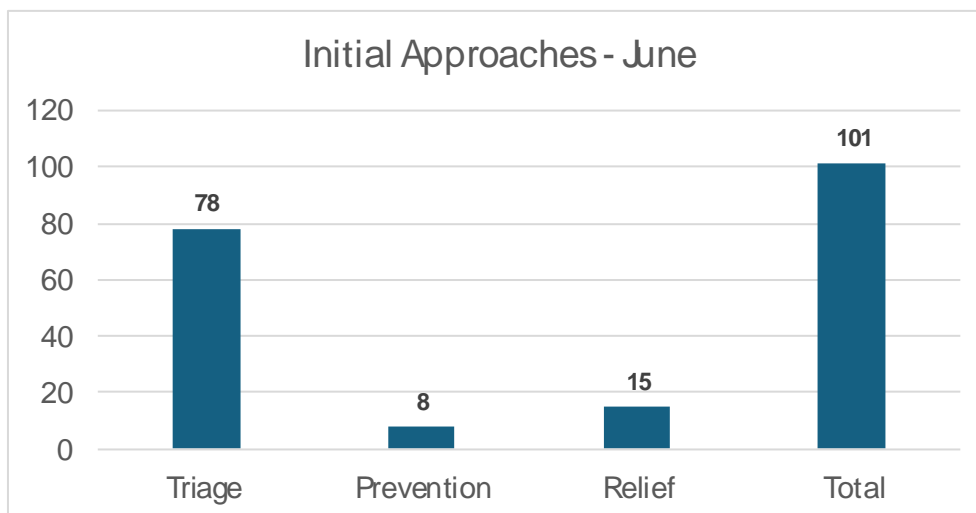
Some properties have a minimum age requirement, for example, in some cases only people over 55 years of age can apply, this applied to 14% of the properties let between 01 April to 30 June 2025

Households Assessed and Duty Owed

Our Housing Options Service offers advice to anyone who has a housing problem, and offers support and assistance if someone is homeless, or threatened with homelessness, within the next 56 days.

Approaches to the service remain high and during the month of June 2025 we have opened 101 new cases with 23 households being assessed as owed a statutory duty to prevent or relieve homelessness.

Year to date we have opened 307 cases with over 22% of households presenting when they are already homeless.



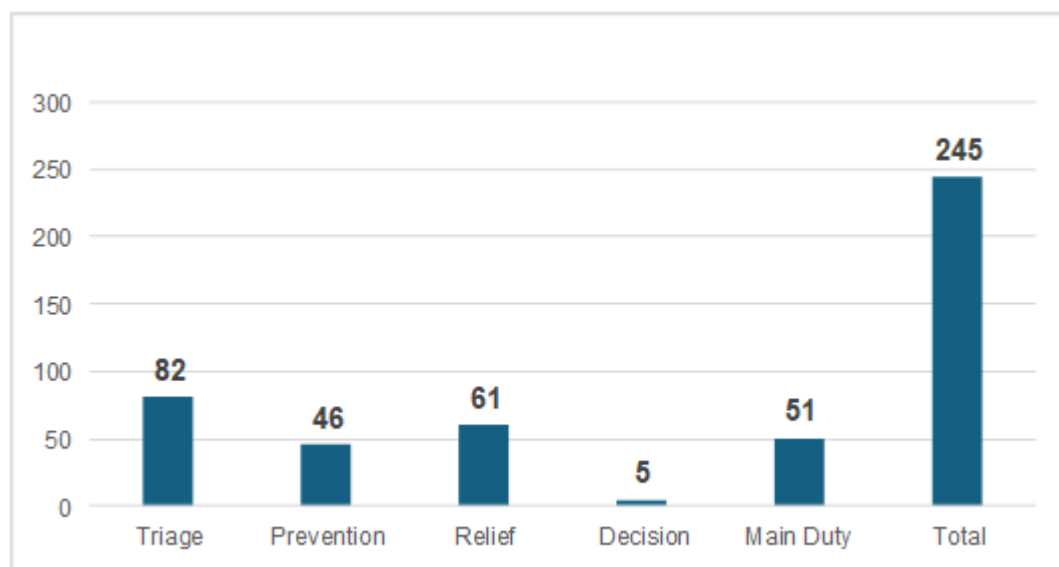
Causes of Homelessness

The three most common triggers of homelessness/loss of last settled home during the month were:

- The loss of a private tenancy
- Domestic Abuse
- Households no longer being able to stay with families and friends

Open Cases

On the 30th June 2025 there were 245 open cases.



Outcomes

Between 01 April and 30 June, we have closed 292 cases, of which 35% were owed a statutory duty.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented or relieved a decision is taken to whether the applicant is owed the Main homelessness duty. This describes the duty a local authority

has towards an applicant who is unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and has a priority need. Households are only owed a main duty if their homelessness has not been successfully prevented or relieved.

Between 01 April to 30 June 2025, 47 main duty decisions have been taken with the following decisions being reached:

01: Not homeless

10: Homeless + no priority need

03: Homeless + priority need + intentionally homeless

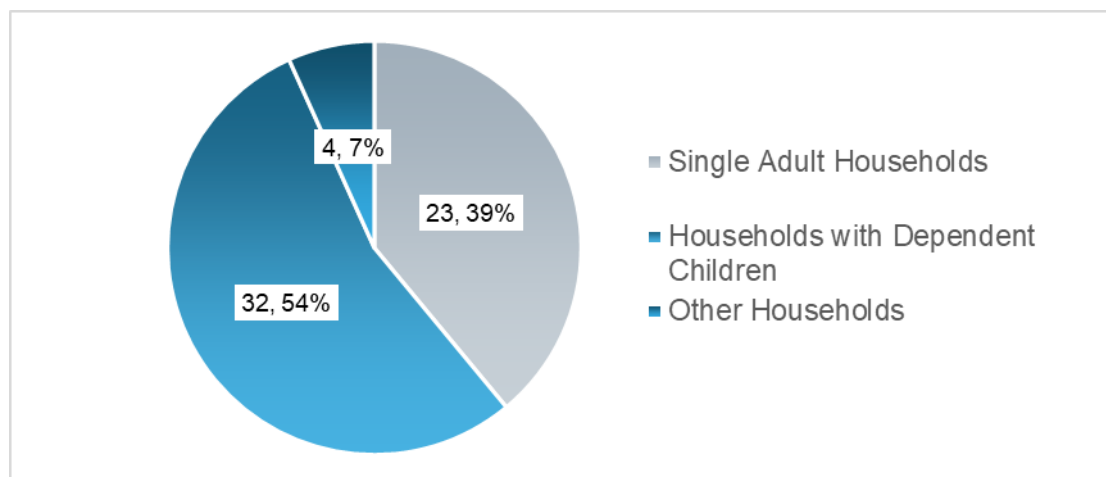
33: Homeless + priority need + intentionally homeless

Where a local authority has accepted a main housing duty to an applicant, Section 193 accommodation duty arises. This requires the local authority to ensure that the applicant has access to suitable temporary accommodation until the applicant is rehoused and the Section 193 duty is discharged.

94% of main duties have been discharged with 94% households accepting an offer of social housing 3% moving into private rented and 3% returned home to family.

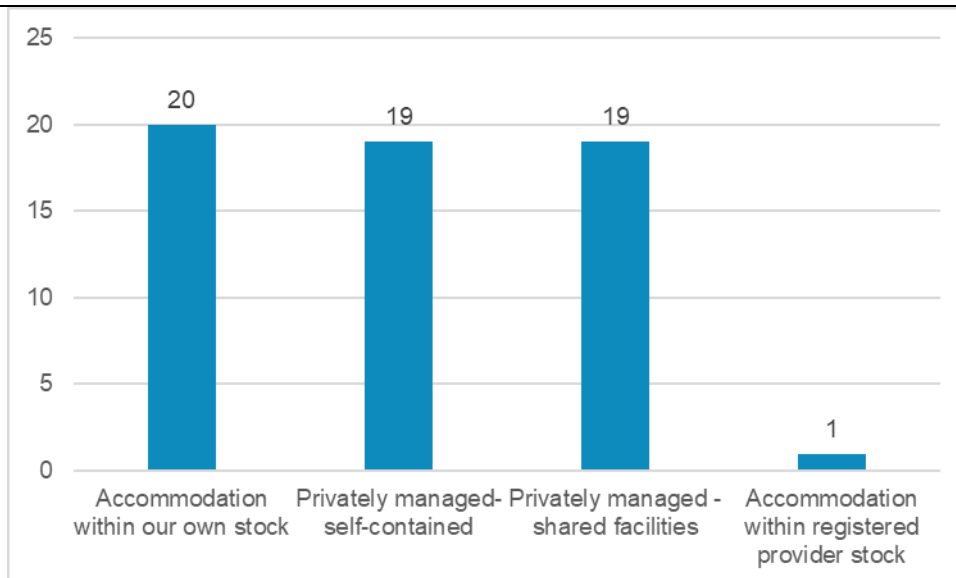
Temporary Accommodation

As at the 30 June 2025 there were 59 households in Temporary Accommodation. Included in the 32 Family Households there were 76 dependent children.



Other, includes Couples and families with Older Children

34% of households were in Temporary Accommodation owed by North Norfolk District Council, and there are currently no families with children in accommodation with share facilities.



Rough Sleeping

During the month of June (at various points in time) 6 people were reported/verified as sleeping rough in North Norfolk. At the end of the month, 3 people remain sleeping rough in the district, 2 people have secured licences and moved into our temporary accommodation for rough sleepers, and 1 person is being accommodated in TA under part 7 of the Housing Act. Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended, outlines the legal framework for how local housing authorities in England address homelessness and the duties they owe to individuals who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. It details the criteria for determining homelessness, the assessments required, and the various duties owed to applicants.

Housing Strategy

Temporary Accommodation

The Council now holds 27 units of Temporary or other homeless accommodation (including five units of move on accommodation for ex-rough sleepers). Value for money analysis of our in-house TA has concluded the homes do provide VFM, especially compared to expensive (and inferior) nightly paid accommodation.

The demand for TA continues and we have recently been successful in our bid for government funding through Local Authority Housing Fund Grant (£588k) which is helping us to purchase a further six units of homeless accommodation. Two of these homes have already been purchased (included in the 27 above) and are now in use. A further three homes (a 1-bed, a 3-bed and a 4-bed) should complete shortly. We aim to secure the remaining home in the next 2-3 months.

New Affordable Homes

We have a healthy affordable housing scheme pipeline, many of which are 'rural exception' housing sites at various points in the development process. There are over twenty developments which will, subject to approvals, deliver more than 550 new affordable homes in the next few years.

In Sheringham (Westwood) 19 affordable homes have been completed, with the remaining 5 to be let in July 2025.

Flagship Housing Association have a current planning application for 9 affordable homes in Pudding Norton at Green Lane.

Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society continue to work in partnership with Broadland Housing Association to deliver 8 affordable homes, with a planning application submission expected in the coming months.

In the last week of June, a planning application has been submitted by Flagship Housing Association, for a proposal to build 26 affordable homes on Catfield Road, Ludham. The proposed homes are a mixture of affordable rent and shared ownership for households with a local connection.

A rural exception housing site has been completed in Salhouse providing 5 affordable homes. In West Beckham, 5 affordable rented homes built by Broadland Housing Association have been completed, with a further 5 to follow shortly. For both parishes, households also with a local connection will be given preference. Members of the Development Committee along with NNDC officers were invited to a development completion event at Salhouse on 4 June. The Broadland Housing Association team were there to offer a tour and answer any questions.

In Holt, Lovells will be delivering 9 of the first affordable homes on the Beresford Road site in June, with 13 homes to follow in the autumn. The remaining 16 affordable homes will be delivered in 2026.

Work continues to seek further land in the district which is suitable for affordable housing with some local landowners making contact following recent publicity. Strategic Housing are currently working on the suitability of ten early-stage sites.

Other

A training session for all Town & Parish councils, explaining how affordable housing is delivered, will take place on 1st July 2025.

A briefing for all councillors on all aspects of housing, and the Council's roles and responsibilities, will take place on 16th July 2025.

Social Prescribing

In June there have been 58 referrals into the Social Prescribing team with 119 issues identified. This includes a total of 35 referrals received from GP surgeries, with 52 issues identified.

There have been 72 referrals into the Financial Inclusion team in May. Statistics for June are still to be finalised, and it is expected that the number of referrals for June will have increased.

Following the recent resignation of a member of the team, we will shortly be advertising for a Financial Inclusion Officer to fill the vacant post of 18.5 hours.

In the week commencing 30/06/2025 some members of the team have been attending some Dementia UK Summer School online events. This will help to enhance and develop their knowledge and skills when working with households dealing with dementia.

IHAT

The Council has a statutory duty to provide financial assistance to those who qualify for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to contribute towards adaptations which help them to safely access their home and the facilities within it.

The funding is provided as a capital grant from government via the Better Care Fund. The government allocation for DFGs for 2025/26 is **£1,680,858**. We also have a contribution from reserves following an underspend during the pandemic, of **£400,000**.

Actual spend as of 30th June 2025 against the budget is **£255,103** in mandatory DFG's. This is represented below.

Year	Month	Sum of Up to £5k	Sum of £5k to £15k	Sum of £15k to £30k	Sum of Total expenditure
2025	April	9,740.00	87,368.84	51,243.36	148,352.20
2025	May	12,552.89	50,409.49	23,263.24	86,226.00
2025	June	0.00	20,525.00	0.00	20,525.00
Total		22,292.89	158,303.33	74,506.60	255,103.20

In addition to this a total of **£16,312.02** was distributed in Discretionary Grants.

The team has been undertaking a process review which is close to completion. Some insights from the review have been acted upon and we are pleased to see an improvement to our performance in the first quarter compared to the previous year.

Assessment Completed	2024	2025
April	5	12
May	7	10
June	6	13
Total	18	35

Recommendation Completed	2024	2025
April	12	16
May	7	16
June	5	13
Total	24	45

A breakdown of the DFG outcomes and demand for Q1 (2025) is explained further below.

However, it should be noted when reading the data that the number of completed Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) can vary month to month due to the complex and multi-stage nature of the process, which depends on factors such as contractor availability, supply chain delays, resident circumstances, and the time lag between approval and completion; a low number in any given month often reflects earlier delays or seasonal factors, rather than a lack of activity or progress.

Additionally, a grant cannot be formally recorded as completed until the final invoice is received and processed, which can further delay reporting even when works have finished.

Number of referrals received

The team received a total of 80 referrals with 75% of referrals being received via Norfolk County Council Adult Social Services.

Year	Month	Sum of NNDC referrals	Sum of Norfolk County Council referrals
2025	April	7	12
2025	May	12	19
2025	June	1	29

Outcomes

During the first quarter, the team approved 24 DFG applications and saw 27 cases where DFG applications were classed as “completed”. When looking at “completed” applications, this means the authority has been invoiced for the works done and the budget allocated from the DFG budget.

A total of 21 applications were either withdrawn or cancelled. As part of the process review work, we will be analysing this area of work in more detail to understand why applicants are not progressing their applications.

Year	Month	Sum of Applications withdrawn/cancelled	Sum of Grants Approved	Sum of Adaptations Completed
2025	April	12	12	14
2025	May	1	2	11
2025	June	8	10	2

Type of adaptation

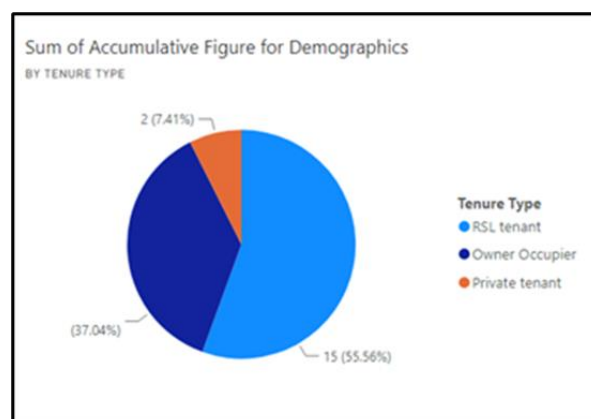
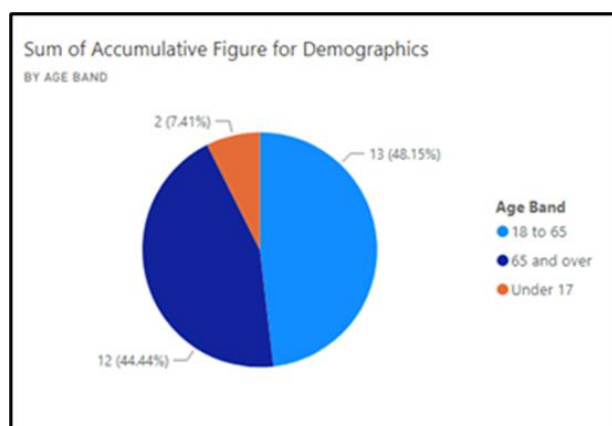
During the first quarter a total of 35 adaptations were installed in residents’ homes. A total of 10 households received improvements to the access in or around their home, 18 households received the installed of low level access shower, or a similar adaptation to their bathroom, 2 households were improved by widening doorways to a main room in the house, such as a kitchen, 4 households saw the installation of a stairlift, and 1 household saw the installation of a wash dry toilet.

Year	Month	Sum of Access	Extension	Sum of Level access: Shower/bathroom adaptation	Other e.g door widening, stepped access, kitchen adaptations etc.	Sum of Stairlift	Wash/dry toilet
2025	April	6	0	8	1	3	1
2025	May	3	0	8	1	1	0
2025	June	1		2			

Demographics of households

During the quarter we saw most households receiving adaptations between the ages of 18 to 65, with households aged under 17 receiving the least adaptations. Most adaptations were concerned with Registered Social Landlord (RSL) properties, followed by people who

own their own home.



Key service updates:

The process mapping project is nearing the end and has been reviewed with the team, including discussion around best practice and better ways of working to improve the service provided by IHAT.

We will be meeting with Flagship Housing Association in July to review collaborative working and potential improvements. Ongoing monthly meetings with Flagship Housing Association will allow for the review of cases to improve completion times, and to find suitable combined solutions using best practice.

Ongoing IHAT weekly meetings including recent visitors N-able to discuss wash dry toilets pros and cons on functionality and financially along streamlining wash dry toilet installation in client's properties.

Six-weekly local delivery group meeting with partners of Norfolk County Council.

Ongoing meetings with architect, Technical Officers and Occupational Therapists (OTs) for extensive DFG projects and reviewing outstanding cases.

3 Meetings attended

EEERG Conference
NNDC Full Council
Cllr Transformation Network Meeting

Mundesley Parish Council Full Council
Cabinet
Business Planning
Assets Meeting
Mental health and Wellbeing Launch of Mindful Norfolk
Salthouse Completion Meeting
Ministerial Meeting with Baroness Taylor
Mundesley WI Award presenting
Overview and Scrutiny

Portfolio Holder for Housing Strategy Meeting
Cabinet Pre-Agenda Meeting

Asset Preservation Discussion
Portfolio for People Services Catch up
Carbon Literacy Leadership Academy Drop in meeting
Regional Accommodation Forum
Town and Parish Council briefing on DEVO and LGR
Meeting with second home owner
Norfolk Leaders Meeting Sub for TA
EEERG Skills Forum
Mundesley Business Venture Meeting
TA in NN discussion with potential provider
Mundesley Parish Council Full Council
Meeting with Zedpods
Rural Affordable Housing Webinar
North Norfolk Apprenticeships and training opportunities
Speaking at the National Housing Federation on Rural Housing Challenges online
Homelessness Prevention Possible Partnership
Catchup with Leader and CEX
Visit to REAGIT Training
Costal Forum sub Chair for HB
Overview and Scrutiny
Member Briefing on Housing
Mundesley Parish Full Council
Joint Staff Consultative Committee
Your Own Place Meeting