

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

25 March 2026

**COUNCILLOR LIZ WITHINGTON - CABINET MEMBER FOR
COMMUNITY, LEISURE & OUTREACH**

For the period February to March 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Town of Culture

Government has launched the first ever 'Town of Culture' competition, with Expressions of Interest invited by 31st March 2026. The competition delivers on the Government's Plan for Change, driving local economic growth and opportunity and is open to small, medium and large towns, with the winner delivering a £3m vibrant cultural programme in 2028. The Council is not taking a lead on this, but local towns that are bidding have been asked to liaise with the Council about any role they wish it to play. There is thought to be a good deal of interest in this from local towns.

Cultural Partnership

The Cultural Partnership's next networking meeting will take place on 17th March and will include:

- Update and training on the new digital communications platform – SLACK
- Update on the Cultural Ambassadors framework
- Networking lunch
- CPD – social media training by Limitless Media Inc and a Q&A session.

Visit North Norfolk

VNN is beginning the promotion of its Easter campaigns, starting with 'nip back to North Norfolk' video promotion. They also feature two free to enter prize draws.

Promotional campaigns and training continue. January session was fully booked. Next session will be on employment law.



Deep History Coast (DHC)

A new DHC gallery at Sheringham Museum will be officially opening this month, re-housing the items previously on show at the North Norfolk Information Centre in Cromer. More work is also planned for the Geology Gallery at Cromer Museum as well as updates to other DHC assets. These all link closely with the coastal literacy work of Coastwise, providing information on the dynamic coastal landscape of north Norfolk, curated by the Norfolk Museums team.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Homelessness Prevention

During January, the team received **18** new referrals to support residents threatened by, at risk of, or experiencing homelessness.

These came from a number of sources, including the NNDC Housing Options team, The North Norfolk Foodbank, DWP, Housing Associations, Community groups and settings and self-referrals.

Homelessness Prevention Case Study

Mrs B is an older single lady living in rented accommodation. She is partially sighted and has respiratory issues.

The property that Mrs B has been renting has no heating installed and this has meant she has had to provide her own portable heaters in an attempt to keep the property warm. There have been substantial issues with mould and damp and although the landlord had been notified multiple times, no action had been taken.

The flat has also become challenging due to Mrs B's failing eyesight. The property has a curved flight of stairs with the bathroom directly at the top, which is a safety concern, particularly at night. There is no lighting at the access to the building and the pathway is unmade and muddy, which makes Mrs B reluctant to leave and her friends find it hard to visit, resulting in Mrs B feeling isolated.

The Outreach Officer made a referral into Environmental protection to visit and evaluate the property. Environmental protection then contacted the landlord by letter to explain their findings and concerns for the wellbeing of Mrs B. The landlord is now obligated to carry out the improvements required. Sadly, the landlord responded by immediately issuing an eviction notice.

A homeless application was made with support and reassurance from the Outreach Officer. This has resulted in Mrs B being offered a one bedroom property where she can live safely. Mrs B said 'I can now live out the rest of my life in comfort and safety.'

The Outreach Officer continues to support Mrs B as she settles into her new home. A referral to Vision Norfolk has been made for support with her eyesight, and an application for Attendance Allowance is underway, to maximise her income.

New Connections and collaborations

This month, Officers have made a number of new connections and worked collaboratively with services that help to create a supportive network around those facing or at risk of homelessness.

These connections and collaborations include Environmental Protection officers, Local Police, West Raynham Veterans Centre, Library Volunteers, Housing Options, Financial Inclusion, Benefits, Coastwise, Nelson's Journey, The Giving Wardrobe, and local landlords.

Falls & Frailty

Data from the NNUH continues to be received on a weekly basis.

In February, we processed **37** referrals for North Norfolk residents. **5** were duplicates and **9** referrals went on to decline the service.

66 calls were made during February.

This support empowers residents to:

- Stay safer in their homes for longer

- Become stronger and more active
 - Connect with others
 - Improve their income
- Improve their wellbeing

Falls & Frailty Case Study

Mrs W fell whilst out shopping resulting in some minor injuries and her referral into the service.

Mrs W has multiple health issues and previous injuries which impact upon her mobility. She is profoundly deaf, wears two hearing aids and is a lip reader. She finds it difficult to hear on the phone and has no adaptations to assist with this.

She uses a stick to mobilise and finds this sufficient as long as she takes her time. Mrs W describes her balance as poor and does not shower unless there is someone in the home at the time, relying on strip washes the rest of the time. She has a care alarm and a key safe in place.

She explained to the officer that she can feel lonely and this is exacerbated by her mobility issues.

She has a computer and a smart phone but is not confident in using them and would like support with this so that she can send emails and receive pictures from her family.

The Officer made referrals for Mrs W to Active Now for gentle exercise, the sensory support team and Tech Skills for Life, as well as signposting her to Hear for Norfolk and a number of coffee mornings and social events in the local area that she could access.

On follow up, Mrs W reported that she was working with Tech Skills for Life to learn computer skills and they are also supporting her to link her hearing aids to her phone, which will make this easier for her.

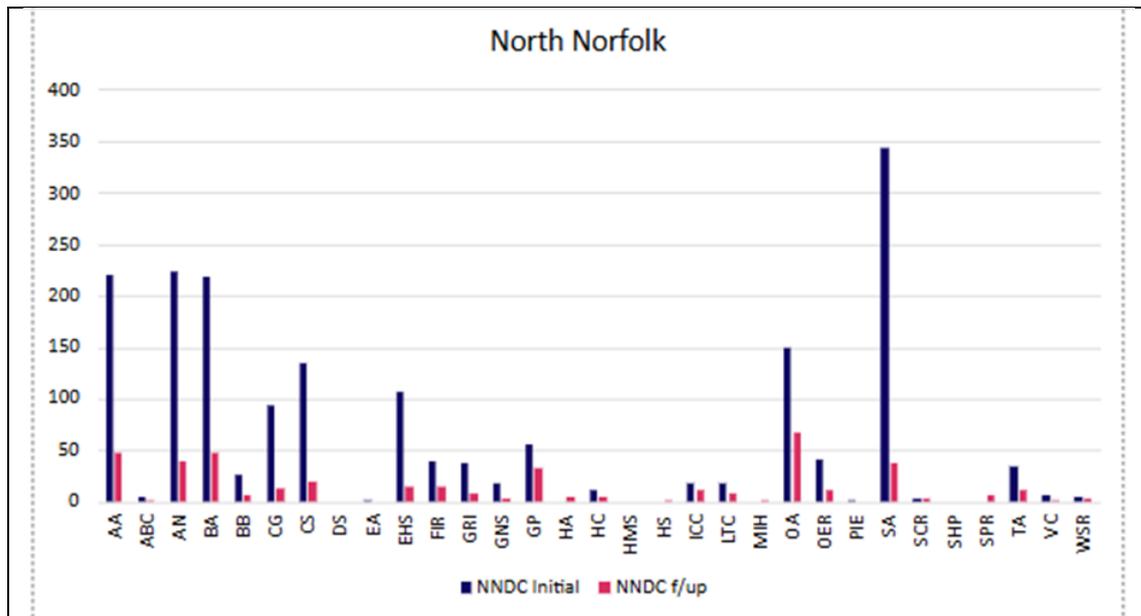
The exercise and support given by Active Now and Your Health Norfolk has improved her confidence and Mrs W reports feeling encouraged.

She intends to start going to some of the signposted social opportunities now that the weather has started to warm up.

Mrs W said "I am very happy to have received the help given to me. Now I don't feel so frightened of being frail"

Note: Due to overlapping reporting, the below graphs represent data from the start of the pathway in July 2024 to the end of January 2026. Further data will be provided in future reports.

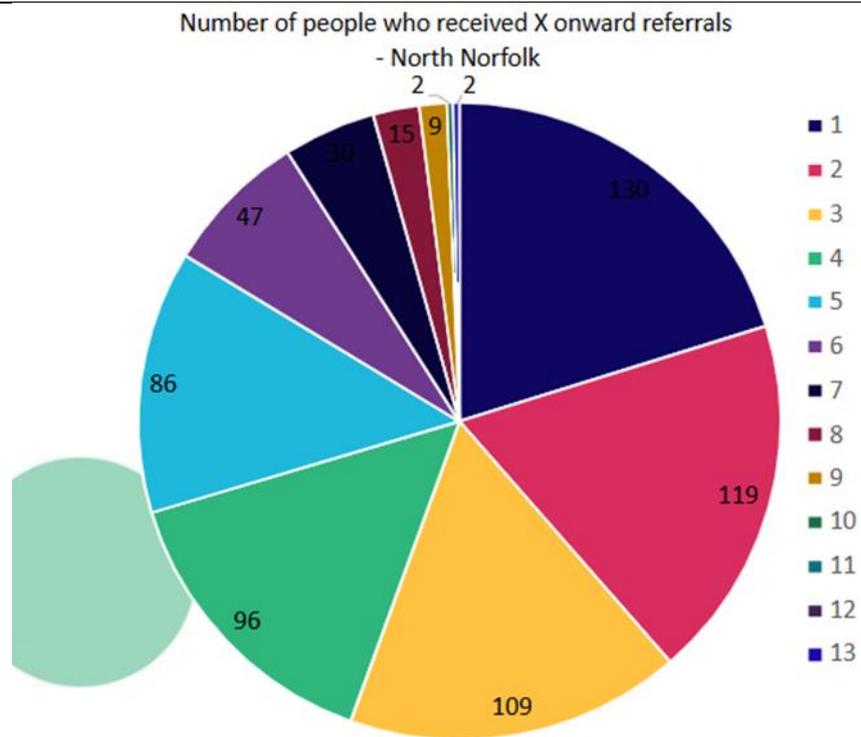
The following bar graph shows the range of referrals and actions made during the initial and follow up contacts with the Frailty pathway officer. These vary from over the phone advice, the sending of leaflets and information by letter, signposting, and completion of referrals into the service, as some examples.



AA – Aids and Adaptations
 ABC – Assisted Bin Collection
 AN – Active Now Falls and Frailty Pathway Referral
 BA – Benefit Advice
 BB – Blue Badge Application
 CG – Community Group Signposting
 CS – Carer Support
 DS – Debt Support
 EA – Everyone Active Referral
 EHS – Energy and Heating Support
 FIR – Financial Inclusion Referral (North Norfolk Only)
 GRI – Grant Funding Identified
 GNS – Good Neighbour Scheme or Community Support Referral
 GP – Signposted back to GP
 HA – Housing Application (Or Suitability Assessment Referral)

HC – Hearing Concerns Referral/Signposting
 HMS – Handyman Service (Broadland and South Norfolk Only)
 HS – Hoarding Support
 ICC – Escalated to ICC for MDT review or intervention
 LTC – Long Term Condition Support
 MIH – Make it Happen Funding Used
 OA – Other Action
 OER – Other Exercise Referral
 PIE – Purchase of Items or Equipment
 SA – Safety Advice
 SCR – Social Care Referral
 SHP – Referred back to Social Housing Provider
 SPR – Social Prescribing Referral
 TA – Transport Advice
 VC – Visual Concerns Referral/Signposting
 WSR – Wellbeing Service Referral

The following chart shows the number of people who have received one or more referrals from their contact with the pathway. For example, 109 customers have received 3 referrals or actions, 86 customers have received 5 referrals or actions, and 2 customers have received 13 referrals or actions, because of their contact with the pathway.



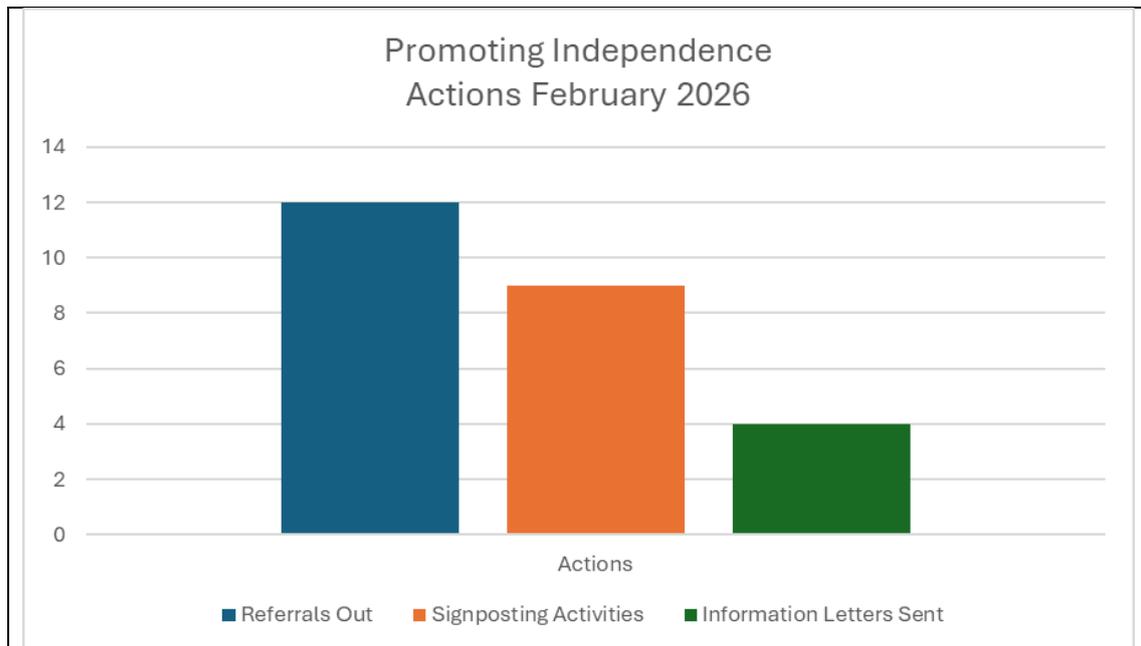
Promoting Independence

Promoting Independence is a new workstream lead by Norfolk County Council which uses Artificial Intelligence to identify residents who may be at risk of falls.

Letters are sent via Norfolk County Council in batches. Contact is then made by an Officer based at NNDC.

In February, **78** customers were contacted. Of these, **29** opted into the service, **35** opted out of the service and **14** did not respond to contact attempts.

Of the 29 customers opting in to the service:



The number of residents connected with has increased, which likely relates to the growing maturity of the project.

The number of opt ins has increased, however the ratio of opt ins to opt outs remains roughly the same.

Promoting Independence Case Study

Mrs C is in her early 90s and living alone in a rural and isolated community. She recently stopped driving which has impacted her social life, leaving her increasingly isolated and feeling bored.

Mrs C's daughter does visit during the weekends and evenings to help and Mrs C gets picked up once a month to attend an art society group.

Following her call, the Outreach Officer referred her to Community Action Norfolk and initial conversations with Future Projects have already taken place.

In addition, Mrs C was sent a letter, which included leaflets for North Norfolk Community Transport and signposted her to Poppy the Wheelie Boat.

Mrs C was very pleased with the call and was very excited to get some independence back.

Healthier Towns

Fakenham

- On the 10th February, the Healthier Fakenham information session and launch event were held. The launch was well attended, with approximately 30 attendees. Presentations were given by the 12th Man

and Kooth, plus a presentation on local data and statistics and an introduction to Healthier North Norfolk.

- A PositiviTea event followed the launch and information session.

Feedback from attendees to the PositiviTea included:

- ***That it was “friendly, informal and light”***
- ***“ You could ask anybody anything”***
- ***“there was no pressure to do anything or make any commitments”***
- ***“Everyone was really friendly”***
- ***“I felt so welcomed”***

Aldborough

- On the 20th of February, the Healthier Aldborough information session and launch was held.
Presentation were given on local data and statistics, social isolation and carers.
- A number of small initiatives were agreed on the day.
- Several members of the Community Centre team will undertaken Mental Health First Aider training.

Stalham

- On 27th February, the Healthier Stalham information session and a PositiviTea Session were held, with a particular focus on mental health. 29 local organisations/residents attended. The 12th Man gave a presentation on male suicide and mental health and Mind presented on the impact of change on mental health.
- As a result of the event on the 27th, two local barbers and staff from the pub have requested mental health first aider training.
- The headteacher of Stalham High School has arranged for school access to the Parish Church and for the Family Hub to work with them on a series of events for the students.
- The foodbank agreed to run basic cookery sessions at the town hall.
- A remedial art tutor has requested time to run an art group.

Members are advised to contact Catherine Van Battum, Health and Communities Team Leader, directly for further information regarding the Healthier Towns initiatives.

Other Service News

Poppyland Radio Shows

In February, two new shows were recorded:

- **National Heart Month:** How do we look after our inner selves and why is it important to do so? Spencer McCormack explains how to care for our heart and other vital organs so that we can stay healthier for longer
- **My Medical Support:** when their daughter was born with a rare condition, parents Scott and Jess were inspired to create a life-saving medical ID service anyone can rely on in an emergency.

North Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Partnership

The Working Group Leads have been working with Norfolk Community Foundation to launch: <https://www.norfolkfoundation.com/funding-support/grants/groups/north-norfolk-health-and-wellbeing-partnership-fund/>
In addition, we have been liaising with the organisations the Partnership chose to fund directly to ensure they are aware of the reporting and evaluation expectations required by the Partnership.

The North Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Partnership Prevention Working Group met on 12th February to learn about Adult Social Care Transformation and to discuss North Norfolk work programmes linked to Prevention.

Leisure

Leisure Contract

As reported in previous months visits to our sports and Leisure facilities in January and February were down on the same time last year which can mainly be attributed to the works being carried out at Fakenham on the new swimming pool and gym extension. This works has reduced the facilities available to members and therefore visits have been reduced by around half. Health and Fitness memberships across the contract sat at 3564, which is an increase on the number reported at the end of December. Total visits for January and February were 37853 and 28495 respectively.

Works on site at Fakenham continue to progress well with many areas ahead of schedule.



Countryside

The Rangers have completed a large amount of tree management works across all sites over the winter period and before the start of bird nesting season. Long term member of the team Steve White has moved on to a new role in Norwich and we hope to be able to recruit a new Countryside Ranger soon.

The first phase of the Eco Community Classroom project is now complete with the main building works finished. Our ranger team and volunteer group will now be working on landscaping and fencing around the facility in the coming weeks, and then the final phase will see new energy generating outdoor gym equipment and educational interpretation installed into the picnic area adjacent to the classroom.



Countryside events for the year will kick off with Easter Egg Hunts at Sadlers Wood and Holt Country Park, with further events scheduled for each of the subsequent school holidays throughout 2026. Additional funding has also been secured to provide a further short programme of events and activities as part of the Green Futures Youth Project

which the Rangers have been delivering on behalf of the North Norfolk Youth Advisory Board.



Blue Flag Beaches & RNLI

Blue Flag signage is being updated across our resorts ahead of the bathing season along with new notice boards which provide all the necessary additional information required as part of the Blue Flag Award process. Keep Britain Tidy have estimated an announcement on this years awards towards the end of April.

The RNLI are delivering new lifeguard training courses around Easter time to ensure that their cohort for the season are fully qualified and ready to start at the end of May. There are no concerns regarding the number of lifeguards available to work on our beaches this year.

Pier Pavilion Theatre

The first concert of the year in the theatre took place on February 18th with 353 people attending *Taylormania – The Taylor Swift Tribute*. Concert sales in general have started strong with 7979 tickets sold up to 8th of March, which is 1623 more than at the same time last year. Some of the most popular shows in terms of sales so far include *Talon – Eagles Tribute*, *Dreams of Fleetwood Mac* and *The Ultimate Classic Rock Show*.

Markets

The first Wednesday Market of the season will be on 1st April at Sheringham and these will run right through to the end of September at least. Trader numbers for both Sheringham markets remain steady and very similar to last year. The team are also working through a number of new applications which have been received. Additional themed markets are now being planned for the year and will be advertised very soon

Physical Activity Development

Officers continue to work with Norfolk FA and The Football Foundation to submit an application for grant funding to provide a new 3G football facility on the Fakenham Sports Centre site. This application has been heard at the Football Foundation's case conference and we are waiting to hear back regarding the project's next steps. It should be noted that there are still some obstacles facing this project but we are hopeful of being able to overcome them.

Locality Officer Updates

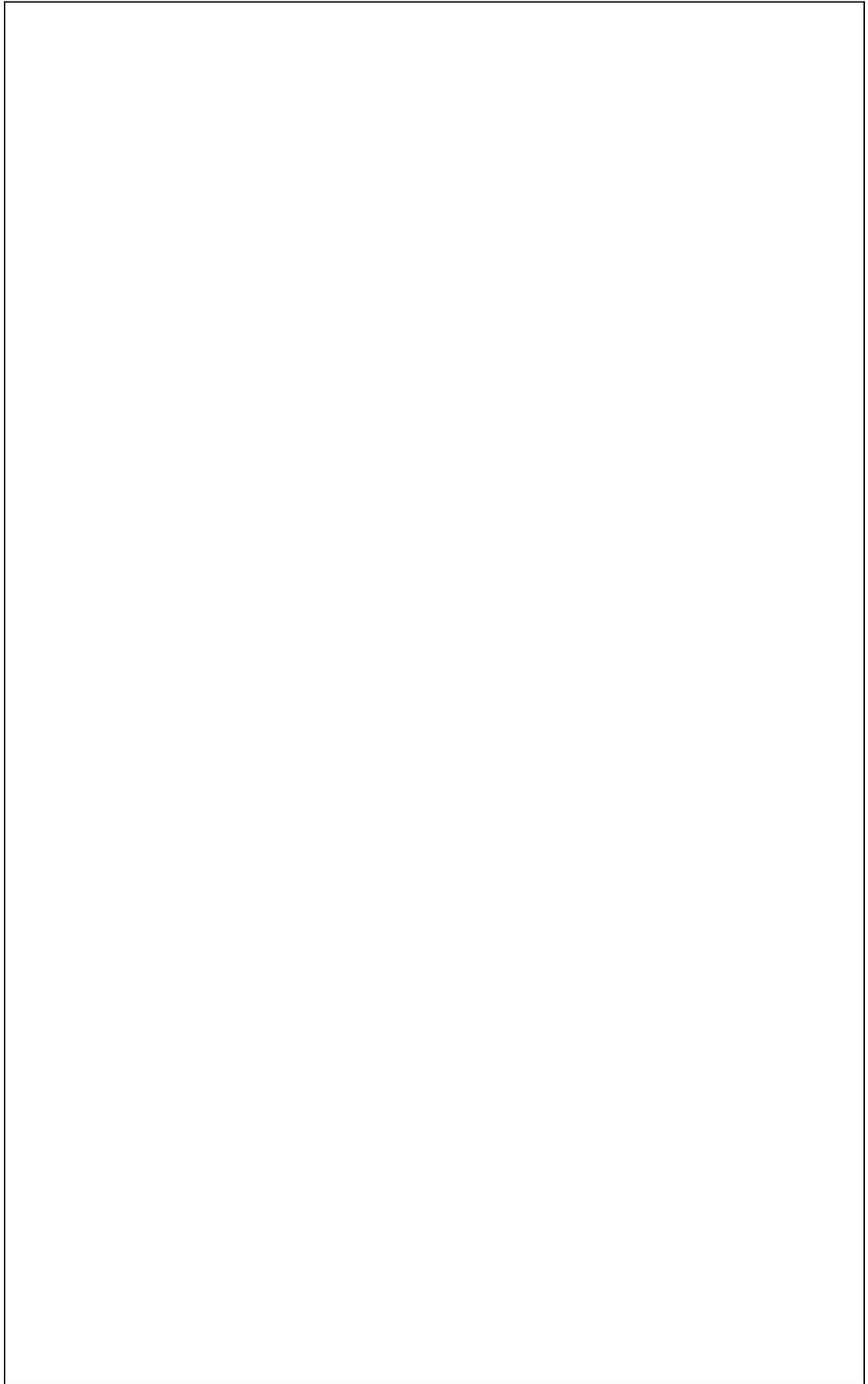
Big Norfolk Holiday Fun – Easter provision has been approved for 5 providers (EP Youth, Holt Youth Project, Premier Education, The Treasure Box and Everyone Active) with sessions to be held across the following locations- North Walsham, Fakenham, Sheringham, Stalham, Holt). Discussions with additional providers who might come on board in the Summer are underway.

About with Friends – The team have worked up and submitted an application to Sport England's movement fund in association with About with Friends. If successful these funds will help to deliver a Wellness Hub for their members, which will also be available to hire by the wider public.

Hire Hubs- I have created the online and paper questionnaire which will give us an understanding on what equipment residents would like. These will be sent to local schools and be available to complete at each library.

Cromer Academy equipment loan scheme - £2500 has been agreed to allow the school to create an equipment loan scheme which will primarily focus on providing equipment to Pupil Premium students. There will be a big focus on the correct football boots to allow students to use the 3G pitch and the school will be able to support pupils with other equipment at their discretion.

Fakenham Junior Parkrun- Application has gone into the Family Hub for the start up costs for the junior parkrun.



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2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.
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E-TIP project – installation of Phase 1, late March 2026 On-going Town of Culture EoI development with cultural and community stakeholders in towns in North Norfolk

3 Meetings attended

Norfolk Tourism Best Practice group

