

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025**

### **COUNCILLOR SUE LINTERN - CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND EVENTS**

For the period 21<sup>st</sup> July to September 20<sup>th</sup> 2025

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Portfolio Update**

##### **Coastal Influencer**

Good news – we now have an influencer on board to help shout about our coastline. The plan is for them to show off everything there is to do here, reaching new audiences and (hopefully!) drawing in more visitors.

##### **Hunstanton Observatory**

I've got to keep banging the drum about this one – the Observatory is such a brilliant space, and it's completely free for businesses to hire. Perched on the clifftop, it's perfect for creating experiences that go way beyond the usual golf and spa packages. Businesses could run stargazing, astrophotography, night walks, wellbeing sessions, even storytelling or little eco workshops – the list goes on.

In November, we're hosting a special event, *Sailors' Night Sky Storytelling*, delivered by Outsideology. Funded through this year's Hanse/Maritime campaign, the event is designed to showcase the Observatory in action and inspire businesses to make the most of this remarkable venue.

##### **Tourism – the big picture**

There's always that question – *"Why aren't we like Cornwall or Devon?"* Well, funny thing is – we actually get more day visitors than them and spend overall is higher too. The problem is, people don't stay over as much, so the per-visitor spend is lower. That's what we need to fix.

So the focus is on:

- More out-of-season projects to bring people here all year round.
- Promoting sustainable tourism, similar to the "Norfolk...Naturally" campaign (we'll mirror this for West Norfolk).
- Making sure we shine a spotlight on places like Downham Market, Hunstanton and our rural areas.

An important industry-wide trend worth noting: websites everywhere are getting much less traffic (AI scraping is part of the problem), so we need to be smart about how we keep people's attention online.

## Norfolk Coast Myths & Legends

As part of our out-of-season campaign, I attended the fantastic launch of our *Myths and Legends* booklet in Hunstanton. Created by our senior tourism officer, Philip Eke, the booklet is a wonderful resource packed with fascinating stories from across the Norfolk coast. Each legend includes a short retelling of its origins, along with a QR code linking to the BeNorfolk website for further details. Every page also features a suggested itinerary, encouraging readers to explore more of the surrounding area.

The launch event brought these tales to life, with members of Culture Babylon performing the stories against a backdrop of music and photographs. The event will also be held in King's Lynn and Wells, and I'd highly recommend going along if you'd like to discover more about our ghosts, witches, and mystical creatures.

## Hansa20 Projection Art

The artists are still running community workshops. The big finale – light projections on three buildings – goes live late November to mid-December. I'm looking forward to seeing the end result, I'm sure it will look amazing.

## Film Production

We now have a dedicated page on the Visit West Norfolk site for film scouts – another way to put our area on the map.

## Guildhall – all the learning projects

I caught up with Jane Hamilton (Learning & Engagement Officer) and honestly, the work she's been doing is incredible. From Shakespeare workshops and Play-in-a-Day drama sessions, to big family holiday programmes and taking activities out to rural villages – she's reached thousands of children and families.

Launched in Autumn 2023, the Guildhall's formal learning programme was developed in consultation with local schools and has already engaged a wide range of pupils from King's Lynn, Downham Market, and across West Norfolk. The programme offers creative opportunities to connect with the Guildhall's heritage in meaningful ways.

We are also working in partnership with the National Centre for Writing in Norwich to deliver free *World of Words* workshops. These give primary pupils the chance to explore Shakespeare's language in fun and accessible ways, while also working towards their Discover Arts Award. NCW has also supported the programme by funding Arts Award Advisor training.

- Since Sept 2023, **over 8,500 young people** have been involved.
- Shakespeare Week alone hit **650 kids in 2025**.
- Schools, home-ed families, and volunteers are all really engaged.

Jane is sadly leaving us soon, so we need to make sure her brilliant work

continues.

### **Dragon Festival – November 8<sup>th</sup>**

This year's Dragon Festival will be bigger than ever – a **town-wide takeover** instead of just the Guildhall. Everything from theatre and trails to medieval music, archery, reptiles and crafts – and all of it **free**. It should be a huge day out.

### **Robert Armin Festival**

New for September – our first ever festival celebrating King's Lynn's own Robert Armin, (local lad and Shakespeare's comic actor friend). On 25th September 2025, 440 Theatre Company will be performing two 'Shakespeare mash-ups' of A Midsummer Night's Dream and Macbeth for primary schools at King's Lynn Minster. There are already 414 children signed up for these free performances.

### **Guildhall Restoration**

Work is progressing on moving items out of the Guildhall and into storage. An exciting feature of the project will be the installation of a live camera feed inside the Guildhall, allowing visitors to follow the work in real time from #29, the neighbouring building, which will remain open for the foreseeable future. Archaeological investigations are also continuing, with new discoveries still being made. The most recent finds include two Victorian benches and original signage.

The **King's Lynn Heritage Open Day**, which was held on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September, was a superbly attended event, despite the unpredictable weather. Venues have already mentioned really good attendance figures, and the King's Lynn Civic Society will issue a report of the event's successes in time.

We now look forward to the **Downham Market Heritage Open Day**, happening on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September, led by the Discover Downham Heritage Centre with a superb group of dedicated local volunteers, the Downham Market Town Council and BCKLWN officers also supporting this event programme.

### **Parish & Town Councils**

- Hunstanton TC are planning the carnival and Christmas events – there is possible use of their town hall now the Guildhall is closed.
- Still supporting the mediation between Clenchwarton PC and the football club. It's ongoing, but everyone's working towards a fair outcome.
- LGR is a hot topic – I've been attending meetings and trying to make sure Town & Parish Councils aren't left out of the loop.

## **Norwich Castle**

On 11 August, I had the opportunity to tour the newly refurbished Norwich Castle. This historic building has undergone a major seven-year restoration, and the results are truly inspiring. It's a remarkable space and well worth a visit.

## **Small Grants**

Another key part of my portfolio is managing a small grants fund. Recently, my colleagues and I awarded over £35,000 to support local community projects, helping to bring ideas to life and make a real difference across the area.

## **Public Art**

Good news – we secured **£5,000** towards conserving the King James I portrait. It'll go on display in the Guildhall once renovations are done. Several other paintings are being cleaned and prepped for public display too.

## **The Workshop**

I met with Adam Taylor (CEO) – their team will hopefully be moving into the old library building soon. The new space offers great potential for small-scale performances, a central part of their programme. They do outstanding work, partnering with more than 400 organisations across Norfolk to engage young people, home-educated children, and those most at risk – reaching over 1,500 children and young adults through the performing arts.

## **Museums**

Our museums have enjoyed a busy summer. At the Lynn Museum, two highly successful exhibitions drew large audiences: *Woof: A Celebration of Dogs* and *Star Wars: May the Toys Be with You*. These temporary exhibitions are designed to inspire collecting while also allowing the museum to showcase light-sensitive items that cannot remain on display for long periods. The next exhibition will highlight treasures from the Lynn Museum archives, featuring a selection of the thousands of objects acquired since the museum's founding in 1844.

From 1 October through 31 March, admission to the Lynn Museum will be free. October will also see the return of the Finds Identification and Recording Day, where members of the public can bring in their discoveries and engage directly with museum experts.

At the Stories of Lynn Museum, the powerful *Surviving the Railway* exhibition marks the 80th anniversary of VJ Day. Alongside this, the museum continues to deliver an excellent education programme for schools and community groups.

The *Kick the Dust* project also continues to thrive. Working with partners across the county, it supports vulnerable young people aged 13–25, helping them develop creative skills and prepare for the workplace. The project is guided by an active youth board and will soon launch an updated youth engagement strategy.

This year alone, over 3,000 children have visited our museums. We are seeing a growing number of home-educated children among these visitors, and our team has responded by developing tailored programmes to meet their needs. It is also worth remembering that all Norfolk schools receive free admission for self-guided tours of our museums.

I'm pleased to note that all museums in our group have received full accreditation. This review, conducted every four to five years, confirms that we are meeting national standards in all aspects of our operations.

### **Borough Council Events**

It has been a busy few months for Borough Council events in King's Lynn and Hunstanton. All of our events are free, and our dedicated events team has worked tirelessly to ensure they run smoothly, safely, and in full compliance with health and safety standards.

Over the past months, King's Lynn hosted 26 BCKLWN-run events, with support provided for an additional 19 events in the town.

Hunstanton saw six major events, numerous smaller activities, and support for eight events organised by other groups.

**I want to extend my sincere thanks to the events team for their hard work, dedication, and commitment. Their efforts bring enjoyment, community spirit, and memorable experiences to the borough — all free of charge.**

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

Soap box Derby – Hunstanton  
Downham Market Heritage Day  
Norfolk Coast Myths & Legends launch – Kings Lynn and Wells

### **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

21/7 – Cabinet meeting  
21/7 - Kings Lynn Festival - McConnel & McCready  
22/7 – Local Plan de-brief  
23/7 – Purfleet event  
23/7 – Hunstanton Town Council  
24/7 – Cabinet meeting  
25/7 – LGR roadshow  
26/7 – Kings Lynn Festival – Philharmonic Orchestra  
27/7 – Kings Lynn - food festival  
27/7 – Downham Market – food festival  
28/7 – Planning committee  
29/7 – Guildhall meeting with SR and TFH  
30/7 – Cabinet briefing  
31/7 – NHS hospital briefing  
31/7 – Full Council meeting  
4/8 – LGR peer presentation  
6/8 – Guildhall meeting with JH  
6/8 – Portfolio meeting with PE  
7/8 – Hunstanton briefing  
7/8 – Hunstanton Town Council – events meeting  
7/8 – Town & Parish Council LGR event  
8/8 – Portfolio meeting – TFH  
11/8 – Tour of Norwich Castle  
13/8 – Cabinet briefing  
15/8 – LGR briefing  
18/8 – Portfolio meeting with SR  
19/8 – Cabinet sifting  
19/8 – meeting with Clenchwarton PC + football club  
20/8 – Cabinet sifting  
26/8 – small grant scheme application review  
27/8 – Transformation Programme board meeting  
1/9 – Planning committee  
1/9 – LGR briefing  
3/9 – Transformation Programme briefing  
4/9 – Cabinet briefing  
5/9 – LGR briefing from South Norfolk  
5/9 – Dragon Festival update  
10/9 – Guildhall project board update  
10/9 – Cabinet briefing  
11/9 – The Workshop meeting  
11/9 – Town & Parish Council LGR event  
12/9 – Portfolio meeting – JB  
15/9 – Portfolio meeting – MC and DM  
15/9 – KLWN Area Museum committee  
16/9 – Portfolio meeting – Dh and PE  
16/9 – Cabinet meeting

16/9 – Mayors Design Awards  
18/9 - Full Council meeting  
19/9 – Garden Wildlife Awards  
19/9 – Norfolk Coast Myths & Legends launch