

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Council Meeting

COUNCILLOR SUE LINTERN - CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND EVENTS

For the period 15th November to 19th January

Guildhall

Members will be aware that scaffolding has recently been erected around the Guildhall as part of ongoing building works. This does not affect access to No. 29 King Street, which remains open to the public Monday–Saturday (11.00am–3.00pm). Visitors can continue to learn more about the project and view the live-stream of works in progress. Public interest remains strong, and the project is expected to be of significant heritage and educational value as it develops.

I am pleased to introduce Kathy Hipperson, Learning and Engagement Officer, and Beth Goldsmith, Heritage Volunteer Co-ordinator, who have recently joined the team. They will play a key role in ensuring we continue to engage with residents of all ages across the borough. I am confident that, even while the Guildhall is undergoing renovation, we will be able to build on the success of our highly regarded outreach programme.

This is an excellent time to get involved as a heritage volunteer. Our volunteers provide an invaluable service, helping to keep historic sites open across the borough. Opportunities are open to people of all ages and offer a fun, rewarding experience that supports skills development, enhances job applications, and helps build new friendships. Anyone interested in volunteering is encouraged to contact us at culture@west-norfolk.gov.uk.

HANSA20: Hanseatic Digital Projection Project

The HANSA20 digital projection project has been on display throughout December and we are working on this to continue into February. The project celebrates King's Lynn's maritime heritage and marks the twentieth anniversary of the town's re-entry into the Hanseatic League.

The initiative achieved extensive community participation and transformed three landmark buildings—the Custom House, the Minster, and Greyfriars Tower—into large-scale digital artworks. Feedback has been extremely positive, and the success of this project has prompted further consideration of similar initiatives in future years to build on this momentum.

Norfolk Coast: *Myths & Legends* Booklet

The *Norfolk Coast: Myths & Legends* booklet has now been distributed at key coastal venues and other appropriate outlets. The publication is intended to

stimulate out-of-season coastal tourism and includes a QR code linking readers to extended digital content, such as maps and additional stories. Three launch events were held and proved to be highly effective promotional opportunities, helping to raise awareness of the booklet and its focus on off-season tourism along the coast.

To broaden reach, a local influencer was commissioned to promote the booklet via YouTube and Instagram. This approach has proved successful in engaging demographics not traditionally reached through council channels, achieving over 20,000 combined views. The integration of printed material, online content, and video promotion has demonstrated an effective multi-platform engagement model.

We are now at the early planning stages for next Autumn and Winter. This will include two events in King's Lynn promoting the *Norfolk Coast: Myths & Legends* booklet, with a particular focus on the life and work of a local literary figure who has previously received little public recognition: F. R. Buckley, a writer, actor, and broadcaster who lived in the Exorcist's House near St Nicholas' Chapel.

The proposed project, titled *The Uncanny Life & Haunting Times of F. R. Buckley (Norfolk Coast: Myths & Legends)*, will comprise a one-hour creative presentation exploring the literary career and magical interests of Frederick Robert Buckley (1896–1976). This activity will form part of the next phase of promotion for the Tourism Department's out-of-season folklore and dark tales booklet, *Norfolk Coast: Myths & Legends*.

This tourism campaign celebrating coastal beliefs and folklore remains at an early stage of development. Officers hope to attract sponsorship in future years to support the long-term sustainability of the booklet, including annual print runs and distribution.

Hunstanton Observatory

Work will shortly commence on the development of a programme of new environmental events for Spring 2026 at the Hunstanton Observatory. These events will aim to showcase the versatility of the venue to both local businesses and visitors.

King's Lynn Hanse Festival

The Tourism Department will once again act as one of the principal leads and supporters of the King's Lynn Hanse Festival, scheduled to take place on Sunday 24 May 2026 along the riverside at South Quay and Hanse House.

The festival represents the unofficial start of the summer events programme in King's Lynn. Local schools and a wide range of community groups will again be involved in celebrating the town's maritime heritage and its long-standing historic connections with Northern Europe and the Baltic.

Events Programme

Although still early in 2026, the Events Team has been actively planning the year's programme. Popular core summer events will continue, with ongoing

work to enhance quality and visitor experience within existing budget constraints.

In addition, officers are exploring the feasibility of introducing outdoor film nights in The Walks. Logistical considerations are currently being assessed, and a further update will be provided should this initiative progress.

King's Lynn Film Festival

I attended the launch event for the King's Lynn Film Festival, which was delivered entirely by students from the College of West Anglia. Students managed all aspects of the event, including catering, hosting, and programming.

The launch showcased a short, curated film featuring excerpts from student work to be screened during the festival. Held at the Corn Exchange, the event highlighted the considerable creative talent within the borough and demonstrated the value of supporting youth-led cultural initiatives.

Cultural Partnerships

Alongside the Council's Cultural Champion, I met with representatives of the Civic Society to discuss their work and their concerns relating to the visual and built environment in King's Lynn. A number of points were identified for further consideration, and we will continue dialogue with this group.

I also undertook a visit to the GroundWorks Gallery, a distinctive venue focused on exhibitions addressing environmental themes. The gallery contributes to the borough's diverse cultural offer and presents opportunities for future collaboration.

King's Lynn Area Museums Committee

The Committee received a range of operational and strategic updates, including:

- **Visitor numbers:** Both the Lynn Museum and Stories of Lynn continue to attract strong visitor numbers. Over 20 school visits took place in the last quarter, alongside engagement with home educators. Attendance was also strong during Heritage Open Day and the Dragon Festival.
- **Exhibitions:**
 - *May the Toys Be With You* will continue at the Lynn Museum until May 2026.
 - The next exhibition, provisionally titled *Unboxed*, will feature archive items dating back to the 1840s, many of which are rarely displayed and require careful conservation planning.
 - Stories of Lynn's exhibition *Making the Rounds: Stories of Nurses Told in Textiles* runs until the end of March and has been well received.

- **Collections and learning:**

- As part of the Newman legacy, work is underway to explore updates to the animated film on the Seahenge environment.
- Museum trainees are developing a project to replicate pilgrim badges.
- Stories of Lynn delivered a highly successful half-term witchcraft-themed programme and will shortly be launching an under-5s group.

- **Youth engagement:**

- Through the Kick the Dust project, the Youth Heritage Collective is developing *Norfolk's Role in the British Civil War*, in collaboration with the College of West Anglia.
- A five-year Youth Engagement Strategy has now been completed.

- **Access and marketing:**

- Free entry during winter months (1 October–31 March) continues to support access for schools and local residents, with paid entry from 1 April–30 September targeted at visitors.
- Marketing analysis indicates strong family engagement with themed exhibitions.
- The Lynn Museum remains the only Norfolk Museum Service site with an active TikTok presence.

We are also exploring the addition of Norfolk Museum Service information to the Borough Council's News and Events webpage

Parish Councils

To improve the reach of cultural and events communications across the borough, particularly in rural areas, all Parish Councils have been contacted to assist in expanding contact databases, including parish-level social media channels.

By incorporating parish networks into weekly updates, the Council aims to increase awareness and participation in events across King's Lynn and Hunstanton.

Culture Steering Group

As part of delivering the Council's Cultural Strategy, work has progressed on establishing a Culture Steering Group. Membership is being finalised, and the inaugural meeting is scheduled to take place by the end of the month.

Summary

The portfolio continues to deliver a wide-ranging programme of cultural and heritage activity across the borough, supporting public engagement, strengthening partnerships, and contributing to tourism and local pride.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Norfolk records committee
Norfolk Joint Museums committee
Norfolk Arts Forum
The Mart
Downham Market visit

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

17/11 – Review of SLA's
17/11 – Kings Lynn Film Festival launch
18/11 – Kings Lynn masterplan
18/11 - Meeting with Clenchwarton PC + football club
18/11 – Portfolio meeting
18/11 – Cabinet briefing
19/11 – portfolio meeting
24/11 – Civic Society meeting
24/11 – Values & behaviours briefing
24/11 – Groundworks gallery visit
27/11 – Portfolio meeting
27/11 – Pre-council briefing
27/11 – Full Council
1/12 – Planning Committee
3/12 – Planning sifting
3/12 – Renters Rights Act briefing
3/12 – Cabinet briefing
8/12 – Housing Delivery Strategy report
9/12 – Cabinet sifting

6/1/26 - Comms meeting
7/1 - CPP
8/1 - Electoral Arrangements Committee
12/1 – Planning Committee
12/1 – KL area museums committee
13/1 - Portfolio meeting
14/1 – Cabinet sifting

15/1 – Cultural Champion meeting

16/1 - Budget briefing

16/1 - Portfolio meeting – PE

16/1 – Portfolio meeting – TFH

19/1 – Hanse Committee