

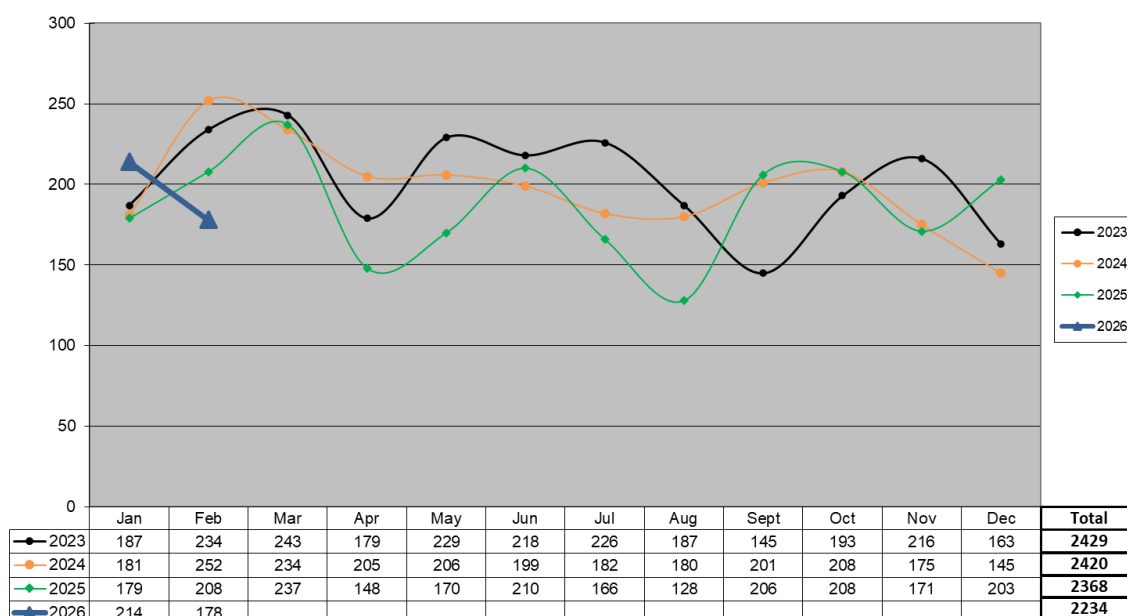
CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL
26 March 2026

COUNCILLOR JIM MORIARTY - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & LICENSING

Planning and Discharge of Conditions applications received

Application numbers for January and February are almost identical compared to the same period last year, 392 applications.

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



Major and Minor dwelling applications and householder applications received comparison

	1/3/23 – 28/2/24	1/3/24 – 28/2/25	1/3/25 – 28/2/26
No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	18	22	29
No. of Minor dwelling applications rec'd	240	257	282
No. of Householder applications rec'd	613	621	540
Total	871	900	851

*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units *Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

2025/26 performance for determining planning applications 1/3/25 – 28/2/26

	National target	Performance
Major	60%	91%
Non – Major	70%	93%

Appeal Performance – appeal decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate between 1/3/25 – 28/2/26. This measure is different to the ‘quality of decision’ measure.

	Officer delegated		Committee overturns		Total	
	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed
Appeals						
Planning	38	11	3	7	41	18
	78%	22%	30%	70%	69%	31%
Enforcement	5	2				
	71%	29%				

Quality of decisions

This measure calculates the percentage of the total number of decisions made by the Local Planning Authority on applications that are then overturned at Appeal.

The Assessment period for this measure is two years up to and including the most recent quarter plus 9 months. Therefore, performance at the end of January 2026 is calculated as follows:

Planning applications determined by the Local Planning Authority between 01/6/2023 to 31/5/2025 (not the date the Local Planning Authority receives the appeal decision from the Inspectorate) plus 9 months to allow appeals to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate = 28/2/2026.

The threshold for designation for both Major and Non-Major is 10% - this is the figure that should not be exceeded, otherwise there is a risk of the Authority being designated by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

MAJOR		
No. of Decisions Issued	No. Allowed on Appeal	% Overturned
111	1	0.90%

NON-MAJOR		
No. of Decisions Issued	No. Allowed on Appeal	% Overturned
2756	23	0.83%

Revenue income for financial year 2025/26 (Planning and Discharge income)

Figures are based on a full year projected income budget of £1,218,500.

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 25 – February 2026	April 25 – February 2026	
£1,116,958	£1,330,546	+£213,588

Development Management (DM) staff update

Unfortunately, our recent recruitment drive was not as successful as we had hoped as we were unable to recruit to the Principal Planner and Planner role. However, we were successful in recruiting two Graduate Planners and they will be starting in April and July respectively.

Recruitment to senior planning roles is a national issue and therefore instead of going back out to advert, or recruiting contractors, we have made some minor structural changes by amalgamating the three Development Management teams into two. This allows us to maintain service consistency in the short term. Further, consideration will be given to recruitment and/or the structure later in the year.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The CIL funding applications are now open as of 1st March, and will close at 5pm on 1st May. Applications are encouraged for projects requesting between £10k and £100k – full criteria is available on our website:

[CIL funding applications | CIL funding applications | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk](#)

The next round of parish payments will be sent to relevant parish councils by 28th April, and work for the FY25/26 Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) will begin after close of accounts.

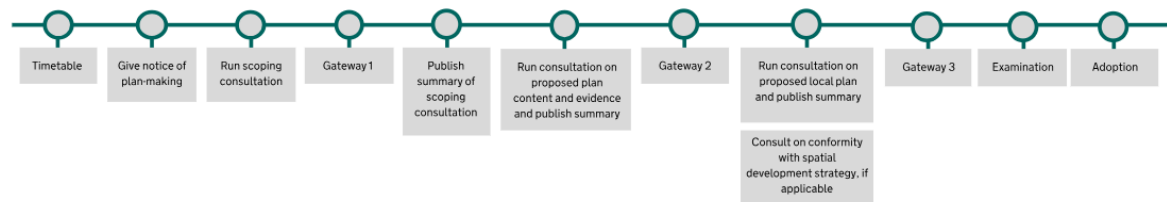
Local Plan

Government’s ambition is to achieve full coverage of up-to-date local plans across the country as soon as possible. The key regulations for the new plan-making system have been issued. This will enable local planning authorities to commence plan preparation from March 2026. This includes the new [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2026](#). This leads on from the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act 2023 and they will replace the existing 2012 plan-making regulations. This effectively ‘turns on’ the new plan-making system.

It is anticipated that further regulations will follow on plan-making data standards, plan timetables, housing requirements, the later stages of the preparation process for local plans, and details of post-adoption monitoring requirements. To support the new system Government have published online guidance: [Create or Update a Local Plan](#).

The new plan-making system is radically different to the existing one. The diagram below illustrates the stages. The process must be completed within a 30-month timescale.

Tasks in local plan-making where the sequence is required by law



On the 15 January 2026 MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) wrote to the Borough Council confirming that as we submitted a local plan for examination on, or before, 12 March 2025 and the housing requirement in plan as submitted for examination (and now adopted) was meeting less than 80% of the new local housing need, calculated using the standard method, that the Borough Council will therefore be required to start a local plan early in the new plan-making system. We must do this by publishing our notice to commence plan preparation by 30 June 2026 and publishing our Gateway 1 self-assessment by 31 October 2026. MHCLG have also been clear that plan-making should not stop or be paused due to local government reorganisation or devolution.

Work continues at pace to meet the new statutory timescales. Officers are engaging with MHCLG, the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), Planning Officer Society (POS), and other planning authorities in Norfolk on the new planning system. The Local Plan Task Group and the Planning Committee have been briefed on the new plan-making system and as part of the All-Member Briefing Sessions we'll be covering this on 26 May.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. [A new NPPF has been consulted on](#), and with thanks to Members of the Local Plan Task Group and Officers across a variety of departments we have submitted our representation on the new proposals. Government has stated that the final version is planned for publication in Summer 2026.

The key changes proposed include the introduction of national policies for decision making, as envisaged by the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act 2023. With these will be set at a national level they will remove the need, and the ability, for local plans to contain such policies. Existing development plan policies which are in any way inconsistent with the national decision-making policies in the new NPPF, once in place, should be given very limited weight.

Neighbourhood Planning Update

As of March 2026, there are 25 “made” (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans in place, covering 28 parishes. This includes, most recently:

- Marshland St James Neighbourhood Development Plan 2022-2038 – passed at referendum on 2nd October and subsequently “made” on 8th October 2025;
- Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2038 – passed at referendum on 30th October and subsequently “made” on 10th November 2025; and
- The Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan 2022 – 2036 – passed at referendum on 13th November and subsequently “made” on 1st December 2025.

Two further Neighbourhood Plans are expected to come forward to referendum in the coming months. Details are set out below:

Neighbourhood plans that have reached submission stage (Regulation 15) and are expected to proceed to referendum during 2026-2027 financial year

	Current position
Docking Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039	Submitted by Docking Parish Council for independent examination, 14 August 2025 . “Regulation 16” consultation, 29 September – 10 November 2025; examination early/ spring-2026; referendum/ adoption, summer 2026
Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan Review 2022-2038	Re-submitted by Walpole Cross Keys Parish Council for independent examination, 26 August 2025 . “Regulation 16” consultation, 29 September – 10 November 2025; examination early/ spring-2026; referendum/ adoption, summer 2026

Other Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

	Current position
Dersingham	Neighbourhood Area first designated October 2017. During 2025-2026 moves to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan have been revived (since autumn 2025). Anticipated Regulation 14 consultation during 2026-2027.
Great Massingham	Neighbourhood Area first designated June 2021. During 2025-2026 moves to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan have been revived (since summer 2025). Anticipated Regulation 14 consultation during 2026-2027.
Ingoldisthorpe	Various draft evidence documents under preparation (e.g. Design Codes, Housing Needs Assessment) prepared, 2024-2025; anticipated Regulation 14 consultation during 2026-2027
Pentney	1 st draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation March-May 2023, following which Plan has been significantly amended (e.g. due to adoption of Local Plan 2021-2040). Preliminary 1 st draft Plan and draft Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report signed off February 2026, allowing plan to proceed to Regulation 14. New Regulation 14 consultation anticipated spring/summer 2026; submission autumn 2026.
Shouldham	Preliminary 1 st draft Plan and draft Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report signed off October 2025, allowing plan to proceed to Regulation 14. Regulation 14 consultation anticipated spring/summer 2026; submission autumn 2026.
In addition, several other Parishes are designated Neighbourhood Areas, but progress with plan-making is unknown, or at an early stage	New Neighbourhood Plans: Burnham Overy; Outwell; Tilney St Lawrence; West Dereham Neighbourhood Plan reviews: Hunstanton; North Runcton & West Winch

Overall, it is anticipated that the Docking Neighbourhood Plan and Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan review will come forward to referendum during summer 2026 (2026-2027 financial year). Other active emerging Neighbourhood Plans (Dersingham; Great Massingham; Ingoldisthorpe; Pentney; Shouldham) may come forward to referendum during the 2027-2028 financial year.

Despite financial support for developing Neighbourhood Plans, previously provided by Locality, having been withdrawn (reported to the Council on 31 July 2025), Neighbourhood

Plans continue to come forward. Withdrawal of Locality funding may impact the ability of some communities to progress their planning work, and alternative support mechanisms may need to be considered going forward. However, in the short-term Neighbourhood Planning remains popular, but the impact of withdrawal of Locality funding and / or changes to the National Planning Policy Framework upon future Neighbourhood Plan preparation and / or reviews in the medium / longer term, remains to be seen.

LICENSING

- The Tobacco and Vapes Bill has moved to the Final Stage (consideration of amendments) in the House of Lords, and is said to require any premises selling tobacco, vapes and associated products to have a premises licence, and any person a personal licence. <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3879> To be administered by Local Authorities and enforced by Trading Standards , but this may change. This will have a big impact on workload and resouces if it is implemented as per the bill.
- We have completed the second round of inspections at all Gambling premises licensed within the borough. Premises includes - Adult Gaming Centres, Betting shops, Family Entertainment Centres, Bingo Premises and Gaming Machines in Pubs. We are also carrying out a review of gaming machines within licensed Club premises.
- Government has launched a consultation on a major overhaul of taxi and PHV licensing – ends 1 April 2026. Proposal to move taxi licensing regime from Local Authorities to Local Transport Authorities.
- A Taxi Drivers licence was suspended for one month by Members of the Licensing & Appeals Panel in February and another was suspended pending evidence of medical fitness to drive. No further information can be provided due to the confidential nature of information.
- We have received our first application to licence two primates within the borough. Those primates also require a Dangerous Wild Animals licence.