

Share your thoughts and shape the future of local government in Norfolk

Overview

The Government wants to see all eight councils in Norfolk replaced with fewer, unitary councils - which are responsible for all services in their area.

This is a unique opportunity to rethink how local public services in Norfolk can best meet future needs and aspirations.

This is a major decision for the Government to make. At Norfolk County Council we don't want to jump to any conclusions - we want to look at all the evidence first before suggesting what approach we think will work best.

Local government reorganisation gives us the opportunity to create effective and high-quality public services for the people of Norfolk. We also strongly believe that the shape of local government should focus on the needs and ambitions of local people, with simpler, more sustainable approaches that provide value for money. So rather than fussing about structures and getting bogged down by bureaucracy we want to focus on the wider picture.

The needs of local people should shape the local government structure, not the other way around.

Why your views matter

Your feedback is crucial in shaping local government to better reflect the needs and priorities of our communities. We will use your feedback to develop a vision for local government in Norfolk and work on more detail over the summer before giving a final proposal to the Government in the autumn.

This is your chance to influence our proposals at an early stage and your opinions matter to us.

You can feed back your views from Wednesday 23 April 2025 until Tuesday 20 May 2025.

If you need a copy of this feedback form in a different format please email LGRfeedback@norfolk.gov.uk, call 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Thank you for taking the time to read and respond.

Keeping your data safe: how we handle your information

We want to hear your thoughts to help us shape local government in the future. We won't ask for your name, but we will ask a few questions about you. This helps us understand who is sharing their views and ensures our work represents everyone in Norfolk.

You don't have to answer any personal questions if you don't want to. But if you do, here's how we'll handle your data.

- We'll follow the **Data Protection Act 2018**, and **Norfolk County Council's rules** to keep your data safe and only use it for the purposes set out in this feedback form
- You can find a copy of our privacy statement on the Norfolk County Council website
www.norfolk.gov.uk/privacy

Important points:

- We'll keep this data for five years.

- We usually won't share this data with anyone else. If we have to share it because of laws like the **Freedom of Information Act 2000**, the **Data Protection Act 2018**, or the **Environmental Information Regulations 2004**, we'll make sure it's done legally.

Your choices:

- **You don't have to take part if you don't want to**
- **You can stop at any time**
- **You can skip any personal or other questions you don't want to answer**

(Required)

- Please tick (✓) this box to confirm that you've read our privacy and data protection statement above.**

What's local government reorganisation all about?

There's a lot going on in the world of local government at the moment.

First off, there's devolution. This is the transfer of powers and funding from national to local government. You may have heard about the proposals for Norfolk and Suffolk to come together to tackle the big issues, like housing, skills and transport under the leadership of an elected mayor.

At the same time the Government wants to change the way that local councils themselves are organised - where county and district councils will be replaced by new unitary authorities, which run all services. This is called local government reorganisation, and it is happening in many places across England.

Currently in Norfolk, some services (like highways and transport, adult social care and children's services) are run by the County Council, while others (like bin collections, planning, and housing) are run by your local borough, district or city council.

We want to hear what's important to you

The Government has asked local areas to come up with proposals for how things could work. At Norfolk County Council we think it's too early to start drawing lines on a map. We need to look at the data and what local government needs to deliver for residents first before focusing in on a preferred option.

We want to hear from you, the people of Norfolk. What are the most pressing issues you face, and how can local government help create the future you deserve? This is where your voice matters.

Although many of us use council services daily, we might not often think about how local government is organised - and that's perfectly okay! Whether you're an expert on local government or just learning about it, we want to hear from everyone. You don't need to answer every question; just let us know what matters most to you.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

In case it's helpful, here is a list as a reminder of some of the services that are provided by different councils.

Services that the county council is responsible for include:

- Caring for children, including fostering and adoption
- Caring for older people and vulnerable adults
- Looking after our roads, footpaths and cycleways, including filling potholes and gritting roads
- Buses, park and ride services and school transport
- Street lights and traffic signals
- Developing new roads
- The fire and rescue service
- Libraries
- Disposing of waste, including at recycling centres
- Trading Standards
- The registration service for births, marriages and deaths
- Working with businesses to boost jobs and skills
- Museums
- Norfolk Record Office
- Free bus passes for older people and blue badges
- Adult education, including training and apprenticeships
- Public health, including promotion of health checks

Services provided by district, borough and city councils include:

- Kerbside rubbish collection
- Council tax collection
- Housing
- Planning applications
- Building and development control
- Housing and council tax benefits
- Licensing
- Environmental health
- Business rates

A sense of belonging

Q1. Where do you live?

Please write here:

Q2. What do you consider to be your local area?

Please write here:

Q3. What do you love most about your local area?

Please write here:

Let's talk councils

We are interested in finding out more about how you currently view your local councils in Norfolk and how you connect with them. By local councils we mean both Norfolk County Council and your city, borough or district council – but not your town or parish council.

Q4. How do you feel about the value for money provided by your councils? Please share any examples of where you think your money is well spent or where improvements could be made:

Please write here:

Q5. Think of the last time you contacted one of your councils. How did you find getting in touch? How could councils make getting in contact with them easier?

Please write here:

Local democracy and you

Local councillors are elected by residents in their community to represent their views and interests. Their role is to listen to the concerns of the people who elect them and make decisions that benefit the local area. Councillors work to ensure that the voices of their constituents are heard and considered in the council's actions and policies.

Q6. If you have recently contacted one of your local councillors, how was your experience? What, if anything, could we do to make contacting your councillor easier and more accessible?

Please write here:

Q7. If you have not recently contacted one of your local councillors, do you know who they are? If you had a local issue, would you consider contacting them? What steps would you take?

Please write here:

Local services - what's working well and what could be better?

Q8. What services are working well in your local area?

Please write here:

Q9. What services are not working well?

Please write here:

Your ambitions for the future

Q10. What are your hopes and dreams for the future of your local area?

Please write here:

Q11. What are the biggest challenges facing your area?

What does your local area need, that it does not currently have?

Please write here:

Local government reorganisation – what matters to you?

The Government sent local councils in Norfolk a letter setting out what we need to think about when putting our proposals together. We're keen to find out what your priorities are.

Q12. What are your top priorities when it comes to reorganising councils in Norfolk?

Please tick (✓) **three** answers only:

- Ensuring council tax payers get value for money from efficient services
- Improving council finances
- Improving local services
- Making sure that services are not unnecessarily fragmented / split up
- Focusing on sensible economic and geographic areas for service delivery
- Reflecting local identities and cultural and historical importance
- Making sure new unitary structures support devolution arrangements

Strengthening neighbourhood empowerment, giving communities more control

Other, please write here:

Q13. How, if at all, would you like to be involved in local decision-making in the future?

Please write here:

Q14. If there's anything else you would like to tell us that will help us shape our proposals then please let us know here.

Please write here:

About you

We now want to ask a few questions about you. This helps us understand who is sharing their views and ensures our work represents everyone in Norfolk. You might recognise some of these questions from the Census. We use them because they are well-tested, and they help us compare who is responding with what we know about Norfolk's population. It's your choice - you don't have to answer any personal questions if you don't want to, but it helps us if you do.

Q1. Are you responding as...?

Please tick (✓) **one** answer only:

- An individual / member of the public
- On behalf of a voluntary or community group
- On behalf of a public sector organisation
- On behalf of a business
- A councillor
- A council employee

Q2. How old are you?

Please tick (✓) **one** answer only:

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and over
- Prefer not to say

Q3. What is your sex?

Please tick (✓) **one** answer only:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Q4. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Please tick (✓) **one** answer only:

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If No, please write your gender identity here:

Q5. Do you have any long-term illness, disability or health problem that limits your daily activities or the work you can do?

Please tick (✓) **one** answer only:

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Q6. Do you have caring responsibilities?

Please tick (✓) **all that apply**:

- No
- Yes – for children with additional needs
- Yes – for older family members
- Yes, other
- Prefer not to say

If 'yes, other', please write here:

Q7: How would you describe your ethnic background?

Please tick (✓) **one** answer only, from the list below:

Asian or Asian British

- Asian British
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese

Any other Asian background, please describe here:

Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African

- Black British
- Caribbean
- African

Any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background, please describe here:

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian

Any other mixed or multiple background, please describe here:

White

- English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Roma

Other White background, please describe here:

Another ethnic group

- Arab

Any other ethnic group, please describe here:

- Prefer not to say

Q8: What is the first part of your postcode? For example, NR15, PE30 or IP24?

First part of postcode, please write here:

Next steps

Your feedback will give us a clearer idea of what you want from the local government of the future. We'll combine this valuable input with our existing data to develop a proposal that we think best meets your priorities for Norfolk's local government.

We will use your feedback to develop a vision for local government in Norfolk and work on more detail over the summer before giving a final proposal to the Government in the autumn.

It will then be up to the Government to look through all the proposals they have received, decide on their preferred option/s and to carry out their own consultation.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this and respond.

Please send us your feedback by Tuesday 20 May 2025.

You can fill in our online feedback form at:

www.norfolk.gov.uk/LGRfeedback

You can email your feedback form to:

LGRfeedback@norfolk.gov.uk

You can send back a paper feedback form to:

LGR Feedback

Freepost RTCL-XSTT-JZSK

County Hall

Martineau Lane

Norwich

NR1 2DH

However, if you want to help the council save money, please use a stamp and send to this address: Communications Team, Norfolk County Council, Ground floor - south wing, County Hall, Martineau Lane, NR1 2DH.

You may wish to keep a copy of your feedback form for your own records.

Sign up for our monthly news bulletin

If you're interested in hearing more and keeping up with local government reorganisation, then sign up to receive Your Norfolk Extra, our monthly news bulletin sent direct to your inbox, visit: www.norfolk.gov.uk/yournorfolk



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