# County councillor’s report September

# Development starts on new affordable housing scheme

Work has begun today on a new development of 48 homes, designed by Norfolk County Council owned company Repton Property Developments.

The Saxon Heath estate in Attleborough has been designed in conjunction with Lovell to meet high design and specification requirements of Orbit Homes, who will eventually own and manage the site.

Predominantly made up of family homes, all the properties on the site will either be Shared Ownership, or for social rent. The development follows previous successful partnership working with Lovell in Acle and Hopton and is Repton’s first all-affordable scheme. The project is set to be completed in 2023.

The reason for including this in my report, besides updating you on a Norfolk County Council initiative through Repton properties, is let you know that I will be seeking similar ventures in and around Holt if any land opportunities open up.

# £49.55m funding to improve Norfolk bus services confirmed

Norfolk has been successful in securing £49.55m of funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to make the county's bus services and facilities better.

In October 2021 the County Council published Norfolk’s Bus Service Improvement Plan which outlines the ambitions for the next five years.

In April this year the DfT notified us of an indicative allocation of funding for three years. The County Council has since worked alongside bus operators to shape details of what the money would be spent on should we secure it. To help shape our plans in May we launched a consultation asking for residents’ views on bus services in Norfolk. More than 1500 people took part in the consultation which helped us to identify what the barriers are to using buses and which of the priorities within the plan are most important to them.

The final plan includes:

* lower fares for under 25 year olds
* bus priority schemes
* more real time information
* improved waiting areas and integrated travel hubs
* new and more frequent services

Linda McCord, Independent Chair of the Norfolk Enhanced Partnership and who works for the passenger representative body Transport Focus said:

“Securing this money is a major boost for travel across Norfolk. Improving services across the county is vital in improving rural mobility and is key to reducing the number of vehicles on our roads. In less than five months our Enhanced Partnership has already delivered a new single ticket for use across all operators, has created a marketing campaign to encourage more people to use the bus, has agreed a single customer charter for all operators and has signed up to a single travel brand for the County with Travel Norfolk – so I’m very excited to see more of our plans being delivered over the next three years.”

Retention of Barclays Service in Holt at the Venue

I am delighted to announce that we have retained Barclays banking services in Holt.

The Venue will now be the new home to Barclays, two days a week from Monday 7th November

2022, before the main branch shuts in December.

After Barclays' announcement to close, Duncan Bakers office immediately worked hard with all elected

members for the area, Duncan Baker Clirs Eric Vardy and Georgie Perry-Warnes along with Mayor Rodney Smith,

to help save these vital services. Together we recommended that Barclays approach Anthony and

Carolyn Burn who already do a fantastic job in providing community space in the centre of Holt at

the revitalised Community Centre - The Venue.

Negotiations have been ongoing since mid-June; however, we're pleased to now say that a

commercial agreement has been reached for Barclays to serve customers for two full days per week,

from 9.00am until 17.00pm on a Monday and a Wednesday with an option to increase to 3 days

should they need to in the future.

This is only four hours less in opening hours than the current branch provides and the longer

afternoon opening is another benefit given the current bank shuts at 2.30pm.

We are now working on an external cash machine to be provided in the town which is also a vital

necessity.

Councillor Eric Vardy

District Councillor for Holt Ward

County Councillor for Holt

Cabinet Lead on Environment and Waste