

District Councillor Report – James Eddy

First of all I'd like to wish you all a very happy New Year. I hope you have all had a lovely and enjoyable time with your families and friends and have managed to avoid the seemingly endless number of illnesses that have been doing the rounds this winter.

When it comes to all things South Norfolk Council, we are now heading into arguably the busiest time of the year. This month there will be lots of work done by councillors and officers to discuss, calculate, and negotiate the details of this year's district council budget. As I'm sure you appreciate, this isn't always the easiest thing to do. Obviously, money remains tight in local government and there are always slightly different priorities for each of the party's represented at the council. Even so, my hope, as always, is that all sides can find a way to provide the best service and value for money for the people of South Norfolk.

On an unrelated though no less important note, I would like to take this opportunity to pass on a message from Harleston Information Plus. They are looking for volunteers to spend a little time each week with people who may be feeling lonely or isolated and male volunteers are particularly needed. The role involves face-to-face befriending — at home, in cafés, libraries, or community spaces — helping to improve wellbeing, build confidence, reduce loneliness, and reconnect people with their communities.

Activities could be chatting, going for a walk, attending events, or simply offering companionship. It's ideal for friendly, empathetic people aged 18+ who can commit to at least one hour a week. HIP offers same-gender befriending, so men would support men, and women would support women, to make sure that everyone is comfortable and at ease. So, if you've got a little spare time each week please do consider getting involved. After all, these small acts of kindness can make a real difference to people's lives.

To find out more go to the website harleston-norfolk.org.uk or call Jayne on 01379 851917 or you can get in touch with me and I'll pass on your details too. Similarly, if you need help with anything District Council related then feel free to contact me at james.eddy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk or visit me at my next councillor surgery at HIP on the last Saturday of every month between 10am and 12.

All the best,

James