1st November 2024



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#### Contact us



## Please contact the office on 01673 866596

- For general enquiries including internal audit and advice, contact either Katrina Line 1 (or mobile 07422 963475) or Andrew – Line 3 (or mobile 07549 019842). Flexible Monday - Friday
- For general enquiries including website management service, invoices, training booking enquiries, contact Lindsey – Line 2 on Monday, Tuesday, Friday
- For general enquiries including website/portal updates, e-news items, vacancies, contact Elaine Line 4 on Fridays

Please note that there may be times when the LALC office is not manned, particularly if staff are out training or attending meetings. If you can't get hold of us by phone, please contact us via one of the methods below.



www.lalc.co.uk/contactus



enquiries@lalc.co.uk



Raise a new Enquiry on the portal (login required)

If any Clerks want to join the Clerks' eGroup, or any councillors want to join the Councillor eGroup, contact enquiries@lalc.co.uk.

This fortnightly newsletter is provided to member councils through the clerk and should be circulated to all councillors. This eNews can also be found on the LALC website under News.

### Training courses are available to book via the portal (login required)

The Training Bulletin is issued monthly, and courses are available to book via the portal. If there is any specific training which you feel would be valuable, and we don't currently offer it, please let us know and we will investigate. The Training Bulletin can be found on the LALC website <a href="www.lalc.co.uk/training-2-1">www.lalc.co.uk/training-2-1</a>.

Clerks – when booking training for your councillors, please ensure that their email address is correct. If not, they will not receive the booking confirmation or any joining instructions. If you have set up your councillors on the LALC portal, you will be able to select their correct email address from a drop-down list when booking the training.



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If you update your council email and are **already** booked on training, please let us know so that we can update your booking to ensure you receive the automatic reminders.

If one of your councillors resigns, and they were booked on LALC training, **please cancel their place**, so that others can book on. Failure to do so may not only deprive other councils from attending but could result in a non-attendance charge (see below).

#### Please note our training cancellation policy:

- For part day courses please ensure we receive cancellations at least 48 hours in advance
- For full day events please ensure we receive cancellations at least 5 working days in advance, as we need to pre-order and pay for lunches

Due to persistent non-attendance at booked events, it is unfortunate that LALC have had to amend the way we impose our cancellation fees. All members are charged 50% of the training cost when insufficient notice is received (as above) for non-attendance at training events. No shows will be charged at 100% of the course fee. All charges are regardless of whether the council is a member of the ATS or not.

<u>Current vacancies</u>	Position	Closing date
Barrowby Parish Council	Clerk	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2024
North Thoresby, Grainsby & Waithe Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
Chapel St Leonards Parish Council	Assistant Parish Clerk	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Toft Newton Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	No closing date
Metheringham Parish Council	Clerk	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Bracebridge Heath Parish Council	Facilities Cleaner	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024
<u>Caistor Town Council</u>	Estates Maintenance Operative	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2024
Pinchbeck Parish Council	Assistant to the Clerk	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Westborough and Dry Doddington	Clerk/RFO	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Stow Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	18 <sup>th</sup> October 2024
Hundleby Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	No closing date
Sheringham Town Council (Norfolk)	Town Clerk	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Potterhanworth Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	4 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
North Hykeham Town Council	Deputy Clerk	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
North Hykeham Town Council	Finance Administrator	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
North Hykeham Town Council	Maintenance Technician	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Heckington Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Hampton Parish Council (Peterborough)	Clerk/RFO	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2024



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### Vacancy advertising

LALC can advertise your vacancy on our website and in the fortnightly eNews. This is a **free** service. If you do not have a pre-prepared advert to send us, please complete our **Vacancy Template**, which can be found in the Members Portal under Document Templates.

We also offer a **paid** advertising service, which ensures that your advert also appears on Lincolnshire County Council's website, Facebook, and LinkedIn (in addition to the LALC website and eNews). The current fee for this is £75. Please complete the Vacancy Template (as above), ensuring that all requested information is completed, and then contact us at enquiries@lalc.co.uk. You will be invoiced for this service.

Please note that Lincolnshire County Council require a closing date on their advert, as well as salary information (these are mandatory fields). LCC will remove your advert once the closing date has passed, so please consider the date carefully as you will have to pay again to re-advertise if your vacancy hasn't been filled by then.

We recommend all councils advertise their vacancy, job details, method of application and up to date contact details **on their own website** too.

Please let us know when the vacancy has been filled, so that we can remove it from our website/eNews. If your vacancy has not yet been filled and you are continuing to advertise, please let us know of any revised closing date. If you no longer specify a closing date, please let us know so that we can update the vacancy adverts.

The NALC Recruitment Manual (developed as part of the Civility & Respect project) is now available via the portal. Go into Knowledgebase and click on 'Recruitment Manual' in the 'Employment' menu area.

#### Sign up to the LCC Town and Parishes newsletter – email:

lcctownandparishnews@lincolnshire.gov.uk

#### **Latest News**

To see the latest NALC news: <a href="https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news">https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news</a>

To see the latest SLCC news: <a href="https://www.slcc.co.uk/news-publications/">https://www.slcc.co.uk/news-publications/</a>

(No login is required).



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## Clerks Networking and SLCC Lincs branch AGM – PLACES AVAILABLE

Come and network with fellow Clerks at our full day event on 26th November at Welbourn Village Hall!

#### Schedule for the day

9:30 Registration for SLCC members

10:00 SLCC Lincolnshire Branch AGM 10:00 Registration for non SLCC members

10:30 Joe Russell from Complete Communities, presenting on "Beyond Ideas: Tips for writing engaging plans and strategies".

This session is primarily aimed at officers and clerks. It focusses on finding ways to make public sector documents engaging and readable for residents and businesses.

#### We will cover:

- The importance of a strategic approach
- Phraseology and perceptions
- Improving your story telling and narrative
- Tips for improving readability and engaging people with your plans

#### 12:00 Lunch

13:00 Grant White (WLDC Communities Manager) and Paul Drury will be running a joint workshop on Effective engagement/consultation and tips to write successful bid applications.

Places can be booked now via the portal (login required).

### SLCC: Local Government Pay Claim 2024/25 Update – Agreement Reached

We have now been informed that agreement has been reached on this year's pay claim covering the year from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

For all grades up to SCP 43 the agreed amount is £1,290 per annum. Grades from SCP 44 to 62 are increased by 2.5%

All employers are encouraged to pay the pay award as swiftly as possible.

Backpay for employees who have left employment since 1 April 2024:

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If requested by an ex-employee to do so, it is strongly recommended that employers should pay any monies due to that employee from 1 April 2024 to the employee's last day of employment. When salary arrears are paid to ex-employees who were in the LGPS, the employer must inform its local LGPS fund. Employers will need to amend the CARE and final pay figures (if the ex-employee has pre-April 2014 LGPS membership) accordingly.

View the local government services pay agreement 2024 (including new pay scales): <a href="https://www.slcc.co.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/LGS-Pay-01Apr24.pdf">https://www.slcc.co.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/LGS-Pay-01Apr24.pdf</a>

Last year, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) announced they would no longer re-baseline the Green Book rates published by the Local Government Association (LGA). As a result, the LGA rates now apply across the sector from this settlement. However, we will be releasing an updated version featuring local council scales soon.

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### Government consultation on virtual meetings and proxy voting

Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, announced at the Local Government Association's (LGA) 2024 Conference in Harrogate on Thursday 24 October, that the government will seek views on allowing councils to determine their own approach to virtual meetings and proxy voting. It is also considering changes to the standards regime include removing the requirement for councillors' home addresses to be published and introducing sanctions.

A consultation paper has been published with a closing date of 19 December: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/4k6vz6j8">https://tinyurl.com/4k6vz6j8</a>

Both NALC and SLCC are encouraging councils, councillors and clerks to respond to this consultation - your responses are vital in demonstrating the strong support for this flexibility, building on the momentum from the previous call for evidence.

NALC and SLCC will also be responding to the consultation and share the view that remote meeting options are essential for:

- Enabling participation from those with caring responsibilities
- Supporting councillors managing illness or disability
- Increasing diversity in local democracy
- Enhancing accessibility to local decision-making

It seems that neither bodies were aware that government were going to seek views on proxy voting.

Responses can also be submitted direct via UK Gov Citizens' Space: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/2z56hfvd">https://tinyurl.com/2z56hfvd</a>



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## **Cloudy IT webinar - Broadcasting and Hybrid Meetings**

Cloudy IT are hosting a webinar on Thursday, 21st November focused on broadcasting and hybrid meeting solutions. This session will explore practical options to ensure councils of all sizes can achieve accessible, high-quality virtual meetings.

Find out more: https://tinyurl.com/mnu22843

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#### **LCC School Admissions consultations**

The following schools are consulting on their 2026/27 Admission Policy:

Alford John Spendluffe Technology College - <a href="https://www.jstc.org.uk/admissions">https://www.jstc.org.uk/admissions</a> The consultation period runs from 18 October 2024 to 29 November 2024.

Spalding Parish C of E Day School -

https://www.spaldingparish.lincs.sch.uk/page/?title=Admissions&pid=137
Louth Kidgate Primary Academy - https://www.kidgateprimaryacademy.co.uk/admissions/
The consultation period runs from 1 November 2024 to 13 December 2024.

Boston St Nicholas CE Primary Academy - www.bostonstnicholas.co.uk/admissions/

Boston St Thomas CE Primary Academy - <a href="https://www.stthomasacademy.co.uk/admissions/">https://www.stthomasacademy.co.uk/admissions/</a>

Gipsey Bridge Academy - https://www.gipseybridgeschool.co.uk/policies-performance-data/

Grantham Little Gonerby CE Primary Academy - www.little-gonerby.co.uk/new-starters-admissions/

Grantham Little Gonerby CE Primary Academy - www.qegs.lincs.sch.uk

Leadenham CE Academy - www.leadenhamprimaryacademy.co.uk/admissions/

Lincoln Bracebridge Infant & Nursery School -

https://www.bracebridge.lincs.sch.uk/news/detail/policy-consultation/

Lincoln Christ's Hospital School - https://lincolnchristshospitalschool.co.uk/

Lincoln The Lancaster School - www.lancaster.lincs.sch.uk/policies-1/

Long Bennington CE Academy - www.longbenningtonacademy.co.uk/admission-arrangements/

Marton Academy - https://themartonacademy.co.uk/information/admissions/

North Thoresby Primary Academy -

https://sites.google.com/aetinet.org/north-thoresby-primary-academy/key-information/admissions

Pinchbeck East CE Primary Academy - https://pinchbeckeast.lincs.sch.uk/

Skegness Seathorne Primary Academy - <u>www.seathorneprimaryacademy.org</u>

Spalding Primary Academy - www.spalding-pri.lincs.sch.uk/school-admissions/

Spilsby Primary School - www.spilsbyprimary.org.uk/admissions/

Utterby Primary Academy -

https://sites.google.com/aetinet.org/utterby-primary-academy/key-information/admissions

Washingborough Academy - <a href="https://www.washac.org/">https://www.washac.org/</a>

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Welbourn Sir William Robertson Academy - <a href="https://www.swracademy.org/">https://www.swracademy.org/</a> Wyberton Primary Academy - <a href="https://www.wybertonacademy.co.uk/admissions/">https://www.wybertonacademy.co.uk/admissions/</a> The consultation period runs from 4 November 2024 to 17 December 2024.

Bourne Academy, Old Leake – Giles Academy, Spalding Academy, Donington – Cowley Academy <a href="https://www.slat.org.uk/policies/">https://www.slat.org.uk/policies/</a>

The consultation period runs from 4 November 2024 to 17 December 2024.

#### The Rural Bulletin – Rural Services Network

In our ongoing commitment to address rural housing challenges, we have joined forces with partner agencies including CPRE, ACRE, NALC, Community Land Trust Network, and the Town & County Planning Association, to write to the Minister of State for Housing, Matthew Pennycook MP. Our joint letter urges significant reforms to make housing more accessible and affordable, particularly in rural communities.

Additionally, our work has been prominently mentioned during a pivotal debate in the House of Lords, focusing on rural priorities. The debate underscored the importance of connectivity, transport, and affordable housing, aligning closely with our mission to ensure that rural areas are not overlooked in policy discussions.

## 'Inspiring the Next Generation Through Playground Data' – an ONS Article

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published an online article detailing a playground survey carried out in collaboration between ONS, the BBC and the Micro:bit Foundation.

Part of the BBC Micro:bit – the next gen campaign, the survey 'was designed to inspire the next generation by encouraging primary school children to become playground investigators and dive into the world of data collection and analysis.'

#### Read the article:

https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2024/09/30/inspiring-the-next-generation-through-playground-data/

### An Open Letter to the Electoral Sector

The Minister for Democracy and Local Growth, Alex Norris MP, has issued an open letter regarding democratic participation to colleagues in the electoral sector.



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His letter outlines the work that is being completed to deliver on commitments which will transform engagement in the democratic process, including voter ID reform, improving participation in elections, and reviewing electoral registration and conduct. He also stresses 'the importance of working collaboratively with colleagues across the electoral community to bring about these vital changes.'

Find out more: https://tinyurl.com/52469mew

#### NALC announces the launch of the new Local Council Award Scheme criteria

The following key changes have now been agreed and introduced:

- Scheme award level names The scheme award levels have been renamed Bronze, Silver and Gold. These replace Foundation, Quality and Quality Gold levels, respectively.
- Civility and respect—The civility and respect work programme is a key area of our work, and new
  criteria have been introduced for Bronze level upwards. These include signing up for the Civility and
  Respect Pledge, adopting a Dignity at Work Policy, and, for Gold level, evidencing how the council
  supports a culture of civility and respect.
- Democratic mandate— The existing criteria have been strengthened with the requirement to show active promotion of elections and democratic engagement at all levels of the scheme. Additions include promoting elections and vacancies at the Bronze level, having a co-option policy at Silver, and requiring at least two-thirds of councillors to have stood for election at Gold.

Additionally, some criteria have been amended, and new policy requirements have been introduced. Only applications using the new criteria form will be accepted for **assessments commencing in January 2025**.

### LCC announce Highways road improvement statistics over the summer period

Figures now in show that, from the start of May to the end of September, Lincolnshire County Council Highways completed nearly 135,000 road improvements - including almost 41,000 potholes repaired - in the county.

#### Key statistics:

potholes repaired: 40,745
pothole reports: 18,524
footpaths rebuilt: 187
roads rebuilt: 144

roads surface dressed: 484footpaths surfaced dressed: 244

drainage schemes: 32streetlight repairs: 3,118

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tree and vegetation jobs: 1,351gullies cleaned out: 69,694

### Parish Council Domains Service - 70% of funding for .gov.uk domains now allocated

The Parish Council Domains Helper Service has now allocated just over 70% of the funding available for councils moving to a .gov.uk domain in this financial year. If your council is thinking about doing the same, we urge you to act soon to avoid missing out.

At the time of writing, projections show that we will reach 100% allocation of funds by mid-February next year. However, over the last few months we have seen an increased demand from councils which could mean reaching our full allocation sooner. As a reminder, it is highly unlikely that funding will be available in future financial years.

#### Who can claim funding and how

The £100+VAT Government funding is available to councils that are:

- Moving to a .gov.uk domain
- Already have a .gov.uk domain but are purchasing additional services such as .gov.uk emails for the first time

Funding is allocated on a first-come, first-served, once per council basis. It can only be accessed via the Parish Council Domains Helper Service's shortlist of Approved Registrars.

#### What to do next

- Talk to your council colleagues about the need to take action
- Register for one of our free, no obligation, online sessions and find out more about .gov.uk domains, how to progress an application and access available funding.

Our aim is to communicate at each significant funding milestone - the next update will be when we reach 90% allocation.

The Parish Council Domains Helper Service Team - parish.helper@domains.gov.uk

### Free Worknest webinar - Embedding a True Safety-First Culture

When: 14th November, 13:00 – 14:00

When safety becomes a shared value among all employees, the benefits are far-reaching – not only from an ethical point of view but in terms of reduced accidents, increased productivity, improved morale, and



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enhanced retention rates. Yet, many organisations struggle to embed a safety culture into daily operations, as top-level policies often fail to resonate with frontline employees.

This webinar from WorkNest will offer practical strategies to help you instil a 'safety-first' mindset, making health and safety a core value across your organisation.

#### The session will cover:

- What is safety culture and why is it important?
- How to measure your current safety culture:
- Different types of safety cultures and barriers
- Compliance versus genuine safety
- Key resources from the HSE
- Engaging all stakeholders

Register: https://worknest.com/training/embedding-a-true-safety-first-culture-partners/?v=RCAOSW

### Best for business: new EV chargers at county centres

Multi-vehicle charging points are now available at all 7 of Lincolnshire County Council's business centres.

The brand new BP Pulse charging stations can charge 14 vehicles at any one time, with 2 at each centre. They replace older, outdated chargers that had previously been at some of the business centres.

Lincolnshire County Council's business centres are located at:

- Aura Business Centre, Skegness
- Eventus, Market Deeping
- Mercury House, Gainsborough
- Oak House, Lincoln
- The Hub at the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone, Holbeach
- The Old Magistrates Court, Caistor
- Wyvern House, Lincoln

#### Find out more about this at:

https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/local-business-support/commercial-property/business-centres/

### NALC introduces new dedicated resource on community safety

NALC have launched a comprehensive resource to support parish and town councils across England in enhancing community safety. This new website section offers parish and town councils a range of



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resources on issues critical to local safety, such as addressing emergency and disaster planning and building partnerships with local authorities and police forces.

This new community safety section features specialised resources on anti-terrorism and CCTA, emergency planning, licensing and traffic calming measures, police community support officers and community wardens, speed limit enforcement and reducing dangerous driving. Each section equips parish and town councils with actionable insights and strategies to foster safer communities.

The new web section also features a case study publication illustrating how parish and town councils have successfully enhanced community safety through targeted interventions. These real-world examples include organising local safety events, collaborating with environmental officers, and reducing dangerous driving.

This resource underscores our commitment to empowering parish and town councils to foster stronger, safer communities across England's diverse parished areas.

Read more: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/nhkvyase">https://tinyurl.com/nhkvyase</a>

## NALC backs Mumsnet campaign to publish parental leave policies

NALC have endorsed Mumsnet's campaign encouraging public sector organisations to publish their parental leave policies openly. This campaign supports a growing movement for workplace transparency and equality. As a further step, we have also taken the unique step of publishing our Staff Handbook in its entirety in the open area of the NALC website, making our parental leave policies openly available. By doing so, we lead by example, providing a resource that parish and town councils can reference as they update or create their policies. This added measure reflects our dedication to the campaign and creating a workplace culture supporting equality, transparency, and family-friendly practices. I urge parish and town councils and to do the same, by publishing their parental leave policies on the open areas of their own websites. We continue our engagement with Mumsnet working and supporting each other on common interests and initiatives.

https://www.mumsnet.com/articles/publish-parental-leave

#### NALC speak in parliament on Martyn's Law

NALC chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, was in parliament this week to give evidence to MPs on the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also known as Martyn's Law. The session held on 29 October 2024 was the first day of the House of Commons Committee Stage, where a committee made up of MPs heard oral evidence from a range of people and organisations, including Figen Murray, Brendan Cox, Mayor Andy Burnham, Metropolitan Police and Hospitality UK. Keith spoke alongside Helen Ball from the Society of



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Local Council Clerks, where they highlighted the impact of the legislation on parish and town councils, welcomed the increase in the standard tier threshold from 100 to 200 people, which we lobbied for, reinforced the need for support including guidance, and highlighted issues requiring further clarification such as responsibilities and cooperation. You can read the full transcript on Hansard of the morning session featuring Keith and Helen or watch it back on Parliamentlive.tv, likewise read and watch the afternoon session, which included Jeremy Leggett from Action with Communities in Rural England and Dan Jarvis MP, the minister for security.

Hansard transcript: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/3ukyrwep">https://tinyurl.com/3ukyrwep</a>
Watch on Parliament.tv: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/2nxmvhzu">https://tinyurl.com/2nxmvhzu</a>

### **Demos report on local government finances**

According to a new report by the think tank Demos, Beyond the sticking plaster — a vision for long-term reform of local government finances, a fundamental reform of local government finances in England is needed. However, a need for clarity about the purpose of local government is a severe barrier to reform of the finance system. Focussing on demand led to high-needs services delivered by principal authorities, the report argues that serious reform is urgent because of the crisis in local government finances. Its central recommendation is for the government to create Public Service Trusts to take on legal responsibility and commissioning powers for adult social care, children's social care, homelessness, and support for children and young people with SEND. The report also proposes a new vision for liberated local government in England, focusing on two purposes: local democracy and place leadership. Our head of policy and communications, Justin Griggs, attended the event to engage with attendees and make the case for the role parish and town councils play in communities as the first tier of local government and the impact that financial challenges facing principal authorities have on our sector.

Read the report: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/mpppx3rw">https://tinyurl.com/mpppx3rw</a>

#### **Breakthrough Communications – Communications and Compliance resources**

Breakthrough Communications have pulled together a number of relevant resources for parish and town councils.

An Introduction to Data Protection for Council Staff – This training video provides an overview of your obligations.

https://www.councilhive.co.uk/hive-into-to-data-protection

2025 Communications and Compliance Masterclasses and Lunchtime Webinars. These will include the use of AI in councils, community engagement best practice, latest social media techniques, guidance on GDPR and FOI compliance.

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https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/events-masterclasses

Compliance Corner blog: Managing GDPR and FOI requests in your council <a href="https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/post/compliance-corner-understanding-the-difference-between-foi-and-gdpr-sar-requests">https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/post/compliance-corner-understanding-the-difference-between-foi-and-gdpr-sar-requests</a>

Digital Best Practice blog: 10 ways to boost social media reach and engagement in 2025 <a href="https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/post/10-fresh-ways-to-supercharge-community-engagement-on-instagram-and-facebook-in-2025">https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/post/10-fresh-ways-to-supercharge-community-engagement-on-instagram-and-facebook-in-2025</a>

All Breakthrough Communications blogs: <a href="https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/blog">https://www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/blog</a>

### **NALC White Ribbon Campaign**

This year's White Ribbon Day theme is 'It starts with men', so we are asking: "How are you showing up as a male ally?" We seek a quote (up to 50 words) from men in the sector sharing how you support gender equality and challenge harmful behaviours. Your story could inspire others to act. The quotes will be feature in our White Ribbon Day campaign. Please email your quotes to <a href="mailto:daisy.petrow@nalc.gov.uk">daisy.petrow@nalc.gov.uk</a> and be part of the change!

White Ribbon Day: https://tinyurl.com/mse2x5x6

## **NALC Blog: Black History month**

This week's blog celebrates Black History Month 2024, themed "reclaiming our narratives". Parish and town councils are actively engaging their communities to celebrate contributions of Black individuals and communities to history and culture. Councils are hosting events that include fairs, exhibitions, workshops, and performances, each tailored to highlight the stories and achievements of Black Britons, past and present. Great Linford Parish Council features a marketplace of Black-owned businesses, Hinton Parish Council spotlights WWII Black veterans, and Leighton-Linslade Town Council offers educational gatherings. Meanwhile, Lowestoft Town Council, Nailsea Town Council, and Queen's Park Community Council are providing cultural events from African music to film screenings. These efforts showcase local governments' commitment to unity, diversity, and ongoing community education, fostering a month of meaningful celebration and reflection.

Read the full blog (NALC login required): <a href="https://tinyurl.com/2wbeb3cx">https://tinyurl.com/2wbeb3cx</a>

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### **Debate Not Hate: Survey of Councillors, August 2024**

In August 2024, the Local Government Association (LGA) conducted an online survey with councillors across England and Wales to examine the levels of abuse or intimidation faced due to their role as councillors. This survey builds on the 2023 Debate Not Hate survey, which assessed changes in abuse and intimidation trends since the 2022 Councillors' Census.

The 2024 survey received 1,734 responses, resulting in a 10% response rate—an improvement over the 5% response rate in 2023. Respondents included councillors from diverse political backgrounds and varying levels of experience.

Of those surveyed, 73% reported experiencing abuse or intimidation in the past year. The survey also highlighted that 14% of responses came from town councillors and 9% from parish or community councillors.

Read the report: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/mwcu9yjn">https://tinyurl.com/mwcu9yjn</a>

### Local councils to manage local church buildings?

A recent article in The Guardian suggested that the Church of England is panicking about declining congregations and suggested that:

"Too many beautiful church buildings are going to ruin. Councils could run them better. Let them."

"There is only one solution. Local councils should be given control of closed churches and the emerging reuse of church buildings should be encouraged, most obviously by social enterprises. Some very few churches are already replacing benighted high streets, providing spaces for post offices, shops, libraries, food banks, schools, cafes, day centres, gyms, even breweries. Churches can be difficult to convert and heat. Seeking planning permission for their conversion can be a nightmare. But social enterprises in Britain are now turning over a phenomenal £78bn. They show the scope for local innovation when given the opportunity. Church buildings could be one such opportunity."

"It is obvious that this task should fall to the most local tier of government. Parishes and town councils already look after sports grounds, community centres, markets and gardens. Often these are explicit precepts. The issue does not require another central tax. It requires the dioceses of the Church of England to acknowledge that they can no longer handle these redundant buildings on their own, and for local councils — and local people — to answer the challenge. It really is that simple. It just needs the church and local government to get together and get on with it."

Read the full article: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/5bu9wv4k">https://tinyurl.com/5bu9wv4k</a>