


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 chair and should be circulated to all councillors. This eNews can also be found on the [LALC website](#) under News (LALC News). Other important information which comes up in between eNews publication dates is also shared on the website under News (Our Blog).

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 www.lalc.co.uk/training-2-1.

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.

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.

Current vacancies	Position	Closing date
Fenton and Torksey Lock Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	No closing date
North Thoresby, Grainsby & Waithe Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	28 th February 2025
Coningsby Town Council	Admin Assistant	No closing date
Brookenby Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	14 th February 2025
Bardney Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	No closing date
Claypole Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	28 th March 2025
Barrowby Parish Council	Clerk	23 rd March 2025
Hundleby Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	No closing date
Nettleham Parish Council	Facilities Manager	7 th April 2025
Swineshead Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	24 th April 2025
Carrington and New Bolingbroke Town Council	Clerk/RFO	24 th April 2025
Skegness Town Council	Grounds Team Manager	16 th April 2025
Donington Parish Council	Clerk/RFO	2 nd May 2025

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.

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

lcctownandparishnews@lincolnshire.gov.uk

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Latest News

To see the latest NALC news (NALC login required): <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news>

To see the latest SLCC news (No SLCC login required): <https://www.slcc.co.uk/news-publications/>

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LALC Summer Conference - 16 July 2025

Booking is now open for the 2025 LALC Summer Conference - taking place at the Epic Centre at Lincolnshire Showground.

Come along for an interesting and enjoyable day: meet old friends, network, and make new friends and contacts.

Do you have news to share?
Get in touch via our website.

LALC will provide links but is not responsible for the content of external websites.

The day will start with a Welcome & Introduction from our guest speaker.

There will be a varied selection of Talking Tables on different topics. These will be interactive sessions using discussion, scenarios, case studies, and shared problem solving.

Talking tables to include: Clear Councils (insurance), Worknest (Health & Safety), Worknest (HR), Unity Trust, CCLA, Andrew Towler (Effective comments on planning applications), Breakthrough Communications, Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer (Armed Forces Friendly Councils), Cloudy IT (GovAssist), Lincs Fire & Rescue (Societal resilience).

Delegates will have the opportunity to attend 5 of these tables during the day, selecting topics which are of specific interest to your council. If you are bringing several colleagues from the same council, you may want to share out which Talking Tables you'd like to visit, to ensure you get the most out of the topics on offer.

There will also be various Trade Stands to peruse. The LALC Webmaster will also be on hand to answer any website queries.

More detail to be announced later.

This is a new style of conference for LALC, and we hope you find the day interesting and informative.

See you there.

Cost is £45 per head plus VAT.

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LALC at the Lincolnshire Show - 18th and 19th June 2025



LALC will have a marquee stand at Lincolnshire Show jointly with our neighbouring County Association covering North and North East Lincolnshire (ERNLLCA) with the aim of promoting the work of local councils across Greater Lincolnshire.

We would be very grateful for a few photographs of some of what parish and town councils do in your communities such as images of allotments, playing fields, well-tended public gardens, cemeteries and memorials and features such as benches, phone boxes, events, or community buildings that can form part of a display.

We will also be promoting the role of parish and town councillors and clerks to encourage people to come forward if they are interested in vacancies.

We would be very grateful if any parish or town council might have some floor-standing display stands or boards that we could borrow for the week for the display. We are also looking to borrow a small chiller and some fans that have recently been PAT-tested (who knows what the weather will be in June!)

We hope to see a few of you at the Stand during the Lincolnshire Show.

If you think you can help, let us know by emailing enquiries@lalc.co.uk

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Change of date: Misuse of social media as a tool to intimidate and harass employees

This Chris Moses training will now be held on 3rd July (10:00 – 11:30) instead of the originally advertised date of 26th June.

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Worknest webinar: The Future of Family-Friendly Rights and Leave - simple, actionable advice for employers

Are you confident in your understanding of UK family-friendly employment rights? Do you know how these rights are set to evolve under the Employment Rights Bill?

In our recent poll, 84% of employers admitted they don't fully understand how Labour's proposed changes could impact family-friendly rights. With several key reforms on the table – including enhanced protections and leave entitlements – this is an area that will impact all workplaces, and one employers simply can't afford to overlook.

Join WorkNest's Employment Law and HR experts for a **FREE** webinar on **8 May at 2:00pm** as we unpack key family-friendly employment law updates, provide expert guidance and practical solutions, and help you prepare for what's to come.

Find out more: <https://tinyurl.com/2s4a5fb8>

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Worknest webinar: Keeping Your Council Compliant - proactive tips, best practices, and preparing for change

Is your council meeting its health and safety duties?

As a council, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of your staff, volunteers, visitors, and the public should be a top priority. Failing to stay compliant with changing health and safety laws puts your council at risk of legal action, fines and reputational damage.

Join WorkNest's **FREE** expert-led webinar on **13 May at 11:00am** for practical, no-nonsense guidance on the latest legal updates and risk management strategies – designed specifically to help councils tackle workplace safety challenges and stay compliant.

Find out more: <https://tinyurl.com/3yphz5m5>

Worknest webinar recording: Employment law update

A recent webinar recording of 'Employment law update – key rights, reforms and compliance risks' is now available: <https://tinyurl.com/bdhjd4yz>

Running time 1:00 hour.

Latest LCC Town and Parish Council Update

Read it here: <https://tinyurl.com/yn9tjfpv>

SLCC: Annual Report on Devolution 2023 to 2024

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has published its latest annual report on devolution, covering the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The report includes information on devolution agreements reached or implemented between the government and various areas during the period, and also details financial resources devolved to mayoral combined authorities over the year.

Access the annual report: <https://tinyurl.com/2sv7hfv6>

SLCC: Programme of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Schemes

The government has committed to spending a 'record two-year investment of £2.65 billion in flood and coastal erosion risk management' between April 2024 and March 2026. As such, the Environment Agency

has recently published information about projects that will receive an allocation between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, as well as prioritised projects that are ready for delivery.

The two-year commitment will help protect 52,000 homes and non-residential properties, including shops, business and industrial premises, schools, hospitals, transport links, and utility sites.

Read more about the programme: <https://tinyurl.com/mrx5frtr>

[illegible]

SLCC: Arts Council England Review: Open Call for Evidence

Baroness Hodge of Barking has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to conduct an independent review of the Arts Council England (ACE).

Supported by an advisory panel featuring experts from across the creative sectors, the review is ‘an opportunity to examine how to bring cultural excellence to every corner of the country while amplifying local voices in decision-making.’

The review will look at how ACE nurtures creativity at all levels, and explore ways to enhance this through stronger dynamic partnerships between national and regional stakeholders.

Baroness Hodge will provide the government with a comprehensive report of her findings, alongside recommendations for change later this year. The government will publish the conclusions of the review along with the government's response in 2026.

Find out more, including how to respond: <https://tinyurl.com/5y7y9f5m>

The closing date of the survey is midday 30 June 2025.

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SLCC: Government Announces Planning Reforms to Infrastructure Delivery

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has announced that, under changes to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, clean energy projects, public transport links, and other major infrastructure projects are set to be delivered on average at least a year faster.

Under the changes, statutory consultation requirements unique to major infrastructure projects will be scrapped, ‘cutting down the average two-year statutory pre-consultation period by half and paving the way for new roads, railways, and windfarms that will bolster the country’s connectivity and energy security.’

MHCLG has noted that recognising community voices will remain vital. As such, the government 'will bring this process in line with planning applications for major housing schemes, and set out new statutory

guidance to promote meaningful local engagement', allowing changes to be made 'dynamically based on community feedback, reducing delays and potentially saving over £1 billion for industry and taxpayers this Parliament.'

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/3wtjbuwx>

Latest updates on the Planning and Infrastructure Bill: <https://tinyurl.com/bdfcykpc>

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One You Lincolnshire Outreach Bus

The One You Lincolnshire outreach bus project aims to bring essential health and wellbeing services directly into communities across Lincolnshire. The outreach bus provides a mobile, friendly, and confidential space where residents can access services such as smoking cessation support, basic health checks, wellness advice, and signposting to local resources. Their goal is to reach individuals who may face barriers to accessing traditional health services and offer them support in a convenient and approachable way.

They'll be visiting several locations over the coming weeks and would love to explore any opportunities to park the bus in areas where it can have the most impact. If you know of any suitable locations where they could park the bus, or are aware of any partners or local groups who would support this outreach effort, please contact georgia.green@oneyoulincolnshire.org.uk

Upcoming outreach bus locations:

- Boston - Week commencing 12th May
- Grantham - Week commencing 19th May
- Sleaford - Week commencing 26th May
- Skegness - Week commencing 2nd June
- Lincoln - Week commencing 9th June
- Mablethorpe - Week commencing 16th June
- Gainsborough - Week commencing 23rd June

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NALC in Westminster

NALC chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, was in Westminster this week to continue our engagement with the political parties and local government bodies. On 29 April 2025, he met with Kevin Hollinrake MP, shadow secretary of state for Housing, Communities and Local Government, David Simmonds MP, shadow local government minister and Vikki Slade MP, Liberal Democrat spokesperson for housing, communities and local government to brief them on a range of issues including the English Devolution White Paper. It was good to hear them recognise and support the role of parish and town councils and their shared view that reorganisation creates massive opportunities for them and their importance. They committed to working

with us on the English Devolution Bill and promoting parish and town councils in parliament. Later the same day, Keith met with the District Councils' Network, where he shared our views on the white paper and pressed them to urge district councils to engage with county associations on devolution and reorganisation. We agreed to explore ways to share insights and good practices with their network.

NALC Policy Committee

NALC's Policy Committee held its latest meeting at our offices on 24 April 2025. Some highlights include parish and town councils considering the reputational and financial costs of standards complaints, particularly for smaller councils. Our head of policy and communications, Justin Griggs, spoke on our draft response to the English Devolution White Paper and Louis McMahon from Connect Public Affairs provided an update on lobbying and public affairs work. Professor Gillian Peele shared insights from the new Committee on Standards in Public Life report, highlighting early warning signs for standards issues in public bodies and thanked NALC for its evidence, and we will work with the National Assembly and county associations to refresh the NALC manifesto over the coming months. We will set out key lobbying priorities as the Planning and Infrastructure Bill progresses through parliament. The committee confirmed that NALC does not support recommendation 27 of the Association of Election Administrators' Blueprint report, which suggests scrapping neighbourhood planning referenda. The committee also agreed that a discussion on abolishing parish polls would be added to the agenda for the next National Assembly meeting.

SLCC: Launch of Nature Towns and Cities Accreditation Scheme

Natural England is working in partnership with the National Trust and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver the Nature Towns and Cities Programme, launched in October 2024.

Within this work, the coalition launched the Nature Towns and Cities Accreditation Scheme on 1 April 2025. The scheme was co-designed with local authorities, voluntary organisations, independent experts and government agencies. It recognises towns and cities whose local authorities are collaborating with communities and partners to create greener, healthier places. Place-based partnerships, including the relevant local authority, can apply for accreditation.

Nature Towns and Cities coalition is also hosting an online conference on 5 June 2025, including practical workshops on how you can adapt and adopt strategies in your town or city, and virtual networking opportunities with people leading change. The conference is for leaders at all levels of local government, public sector, voluntary and community organisations, and businesses.

Find out more: <https://naturetownsandcities.org.uk/accreditation/>

Do you have news to share?

Get in touch via our website.

LALC will provide links but is not responsible for the content of external websites.

Unity Trust Bank: New website and guidance for local councils on mandate change (Account Change Management)

Unity Trust Bank have launched a refreshed new website for our Local Council customers, which we hope will be easy to navigate and to find useful documents. This can be found at:

<https://www.unity.co.uk/sectors/local-councils/>

We've also produced a brand-new guidance document for Local Councils, to guide them through the process of changing their mandate (Account Change Management). We often receive feedback at conferences and events, and this is one process which we felt we could assist a little further with. The latest guide is available via button on the above link on our webpage.

An email has gone out to existing customers with this information from our Marketing team, but there may be some who haven't updated their email addresses; or brand-new customers who have missed this.

Any problems, queries or concerns (non-transactional), please don't hesitate to contact our dedicated local council specialists in our Public & Third Sectors team – localcouncils@unity.co.uk

[illegible]

SLCC announce updated webinar programme to support with devolution

Following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper – Power and Partnership: Foundations for Growth, there will be many new challenges for local council clerks, and to support with this, we have implemented a programme of webinars to provide guidance for some of the key issues.

In addition to our two previous panel discussions, **‘What Does It Mean for Us? Reorganisation to Unitary Local Government’** and **‘What Does It Mean for Us? Mayoral Combined Authorities’**, upcoming webinars in this series now available for booking include:

- People Management
- Transfer of Assets
- Project Management
- Time management

And dates coming soon:

- Programme management
- Business planning
- Negotiation skills

Visit SLCC webinar page to see the latest listings and book your place (SLCC login required to book):

<https://tinyurl.com/536tnney>

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Do you have news to share?

Get in touch via our website.

LALC will provide links but is not responsible for the content of external websites.

Recent election results

Full results from the recent Lincolnshire County Council elections can be found here:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/elections>

The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority mayoral election results can be found [here](#):

<https://greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk/news/article/9/greater-lincolnshire-mayor-elected>

[illegible]

Copyright Infringement

County Association colleagues nationally have alerted us to several enquiries this week from councils who have been contacted by email from PA Media Group Infringements Team, asserting that the council has used a copyrighted image on its website or social media channels. It may be tempting for councils to use images found, for example, through a Google search to illustrate webpages and news stories on social media, but some images are copyrighted and using them without the appropriate licence could be an infringement. The emails ask the council to prove that it purchased a licence to use the image or to login into a portal and purchase a licence (one email requested £800) that would cover past use. The email states that “...removal alone does not resolve the matter.”

If you receive such an email, please contact LALC in the first instance to discuss your council's options. Note that there are various sources that include royalty free images that can be used on websites and social media such as Microsoft, Canva, and Unsplash. Or better still, create your own!

[illegible]

NALC: New webpage dedicated to advice and support services on communications and compliance

The service will help you navigate council communications and compliance issues such as data protection, Freedom of Information (FOI), and Subject Access Requests. The county association remains your first port of call for support. However, they can refer you to the service if needed. The service is provided by our partners, Breakthrough Communications, and funded by NALC.

Visit the webpage: <https://tinyurl.com/3rrymxad>

[illegible]

Breakthrough Communications FREE lunchtime webinars

Breakthrough Communications also runs free lunchtime webinars on council communications and information compliance. The webinars cover how to reduce the stress of data protection and FOI compliance and make more meaningful connections through best-practice community engagement. You'll leave each 45-minute session with practical resources, advice, and actionable steps to use immediately. Find out more: <https://tinyurl.com/2dbucwkb>

Do you have news to share?

Get in touch via our website.

LALC will provide links but is not responsible for the content of external websites.

LALC HR and Staffing Matters Advice

LALC has entered into contracts with specialist HR advisors to obtain advice and guidance on employment matters when they arise. When member councils contact LALC we will contact the specialist advisors with the details of the situation that has arisen for your Council, and we will relay that advice back to you. All of this service is provided free of charge to member councils at the point of delivery. LALC pays an annual fee to the specialist advisor to provide this free service to member councils.

LALC's contract does not permit councillors and clerks to obtain direct advice from our HR Advisor unless you have entered into a separate contract between the council and that Advisor and also GDPR agreements have been exchanged.

Chris Moses, Personnel and Advice Solutions Ltd, is one of our HR advisors and has stated that if the amount of advice and guidance becomes complex or requires specific tasks to be undertaken for the Council then there may be a charge. This may include:

1. Drawing up of Settlement Agreements - the safest and often quicker way to terminate an employee's employment.
2. Employment Contracts - we can work with councils to draw up contracts for staff.
3. Staff Handbooks - we can help to develop a handbook specific to the needs of a council.
4. Policies and Procedures - we can provide a wide range of policies and procedures and tailor them to specific needs.
5. Retained Service - most suitable for advice on an ongoing basis, to keep documents up to date etc, and provide ongoing support.
6. HR advice for an hourly rate - most suitable for a one-off issue, rather than ongoing support.
7. Staffing reviews - we can help Councils to conduct staffing reviews or re-structures.
8. Job Evaluations.
9. Zoom meetings with Councils to discuss specific issues, or to determine which service or course of action would be most appropriate.
10. Training sessions for Councils on HR/ Employment Law issues (times to be discussed).

In the first instance always contact LALC about an employment or staffing matter as we may already have access to the advice and guidance you need or can obtain it under our contract free of charge for our member councils.

Please contact Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd direct for prices for each of the services above. The prices are fixed from April to March, but they may increase each April.

Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd
Tel: 01529 305056

Email: p.d.solutions@zen.co.uk
www.personneladviceandsolutions.co.uk

The Practitioner's Guide 2025-26

The Practitioners' Guide 2025-2026, issued by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP), formerly the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG), is a critical resource for smaller authorities in England, including parish and town councils, to prepare statutory annual accounting and governance statements as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

While the Guide itself does not have direct legal authority to enforce compliance, its influence stems from its role as the definitive source of "Proper Practices," which are legally binding under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Every local council should use it to check its compliance with Proper Practices when considering its responses in its Annual Governance Statement in the AGAR.

Below is an explanation of how it facilitates compliance:

1. Definition of Proper Practices

- The Guide outlines "Proper Practices" in Sections 1 and 2, detailing governance and accounting requirements for smaller authorities. These cover financial management, internal controls, risk management, budgeting, and reporting.
- Proper Practices are mandatory for the financial year ending 31 March 2026, and the AGAR for that year must adhere to these standards. Comparative figures for the prior year (ending 31 March 2025) must also align with these practices.
- By clearly defining these standards, the Guide provides a framework that councils must follow to meet statutory obligations. (<https://www.slcc.co.uk/sappp-formerly-jpag-practitioners-guide-2025-available-now/>)

2. Statutory Framework and Legal Obligation

- Parish and town councils are legally required to prepare their accounts and governance statements in accordance with Proper Practices as set out in the Guide, under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, which mandates compliance with the AGAR process.
- Failure to comply can result in penalties, enforcement actions, or qualified audit opinions from external auditors, which can damage a council's reputation and trigger further scrutiny.
- The Guide's authority is reinforced by its endorsement by bodies like the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), the Association of Drainage

Authorities (ADA), and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, making it the standard reference for auditors and councils. (<https://www.slcc.co.uk/jpag-rebranding/>)

3. Role in Audit and Accountability

- The Guide serves as the benchmark for internal and external audits. Internal auditors use it to evaluate a council's risk management, control, and governance processes, while external auditors assess compliance with AGAR requirements. Ensure your internal auditor is using it.
- Amendments in the 2025-2026 Guide, such as requirements for generic email accounts hosted on authority-owned domains (e.g., clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk) and clarifications on internal audit independence (Paragraph 1.35) and publication of financial reports (Paragraphs 4.23, 5.80, 5.83, 5.85), set specific expectations that auditors will check.
- Non-compliance identified during audits can lead to recommendations for corrective action or public reporting of deficiencies, compelling councils to align with the standards set out in Proper Practices in the Guide.

4. Practical Guidance and Clarity

- The Guide provides detailed, practical instructions to ensure councils understand their responsibilities. For instance, it clarifies segregation of duties (Paragraph 5.11) and handling of trust finances (Paragraph 1.37), reducing ambiguity in compliance.
- An addendum to Paragraph 1.524 addresses uncertainties about data protection officer requirements, ensuring councils have clear guidance to avoid breaches of the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- By offering templates, best practices, and examples, the Guide makes it easier for clerks, Responsible Financial Officers (RFOs), and councillors to implement Proper Practices effectively.

5. Support Through Training and Resources

- The Guide is complemented by resources from NALC, SLCC, LALC and other organizations, such as training courses, budgeting toolkits, and advisory services, which reinforce its standards.
- These resources empower councils to build capacity and ensure compliance, particularly for smaller authorities with limited staff or expertise. While providing assurance to taxpayers and local residents.

6. Encouragement of Transparency and Public Accountability

- The Guide emphasizes transparency, requiring councils to publish AGAR documents, including governance statements and external auditor reports, on their websites by 30 September. This public scrutiny incentivizes compliance to avoid criticism or legal challenges from residents.

- For instance, Paragraph 5.80 advises publishing financial reports on an easily accessible part of the council's website, enhancing public access and accountability. (<https://www.slcc.co.uk/sappp-formerly-jpag-practitioners-guide-2025-available-now/>)

7. Influence Through Sector-Wide Adoption

- The Guide is widely recognized across the local government sector, with NALC, SLCC, and ADA urging councils to adopt its standards. For example, NALC's advocacy for financial sustainability and its response to government inquiries reference the Guide's Proper Practices.
- Its adoption by over 10,000 parish and town councils, representing approximately 100,000 councillors, creates a sector-wide expectation of compliance. (<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/jpag>)

Limitations and Considerations

- While the Guide sets out Proper Practices, enforcement relies on audits and local accountability mechanisms, such as complaints to the monitoring officer, ICO or the external auditor.
- Compliance can be challenging for smaller councils with limited resources, but the Guide's clarity and supporting resources aim to mitigate this.

Conclusion

- The Practitioners' Guide 2025-2026, issued by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP), holds significant influence over parish and town councils by defining mandatory Proper Practices, serving as the basis for statutory audits, and providing clear, practical guidance. Its authority is rooted in the legal framework of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, reinforced by audit processes, sector-wide adoption, and public accountability requirements.

University of Lincoln - Annual public lecture on Ageing Alone

You are invited to attend the Healthy Ageing Research Group HARG in partnership with Lincs YMCA & Age Friendly Communities East Lindsey District Council on 5th June 2025, 12 noon – 3pm in the Minerva Building, Rm MB1014, University of Lincoln.

Guest speakers include Dr Robin Hadley (talking about how demographic shifts indicate a growing population of childless older adults, who face an increased risk of loneliness and social isolation) & Dr Cat Forward (speaking about her research about the health and wellbeing older women living alone).

For any enquiries or to register, contact: LMarsh@lincoln.ac.uk

A selection of photos from VE80 celebrations around our parishes

Thanks to the following parish and town councils for the photos of their VE80 celebrations: Pinchbeck, Heighington, Pointon & Sempringham, Market Rasen, Sutton Bridge, Deeping St James, North Somercotes, Welton.

Activities included tea parties, 1940's music, dancing, the Lantern of Peace, lit beacons, picnics, war memorial services, knitted poppies, and singing of "I Vow to Thee My Country".



