

The unions then consult with their members via a series of meetings with branches, representatives and members and when this is complete respond to the employers.

What happens if agreement isn't reached

Sometimes the offer made by the employers is a final one, i.e. they are unwilling to offer any more. The response from the unions can be either to accept that or have the employers change their minds by taking industrial action, or action short of a strike such as an overtime ban. To gauge interest and to test out members' appetite for either, there is an 'indicative ballot' first. If there is support, a formal industrial action ballot follows.

Implementing the pay award

Once the above have been completed and the acceptance is indicated the employers send out the details of the pay agreement together with the revised pay that applies for each spinal point. All local authorities are recommended to apply the increased pay rates from the agreed anniversary date.

NALC and SLCC agree the rates of pay and then details of the increase are circulated to members together with the pay rates.

Please note that LALC will inform its members once the pay award has been agreed, and the new rates will be published on the LALC website.



Action with Communities in Rural England: Helping rural communities prepare for flooding

Source: NALC

Flooding is one of the biggest challenges facing rural communities today. When rivers burst their banks or heavy rain overwhelms drainage systems, it's often parish and town councils that step in first, supporting residents, coordinating emergency responses, and planning for recovery. But how can parish councils become more resilient and better prepared for the future?

Last year, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) joined a meeting of the Environment Agency's Rural Flooding Resilience Partnership (RFRP) to tackle this very question. One key outcome was a commitment to help councils consider flood resilience when working with their communities, including when writing Neighbourhood Development Plans.

To ensure support is practical and relevant, NALC partnered with Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) to gather direct input from parish and town councils. Together, we launched a survey in July 2025 to ask parish councils about a range of issues related to flooding, including their experiences with flooding, the steps they have taken to reduce risk, the partnerships they rely on, and the support they need to strengthen resilience.

More than three-quarters of respondents reported that their area had experienced flooding at some point, underscoring the widespread nature of the issue across rural communities. Nearly half of councils have already identified flood risk as a priority in their local plans, indicating growing awareness and commitment to resilience planning.

[Read more about the initial survey findings](#) (NALC login required).



SLCC launch Smart Search in their Advice Library

Source: SLCC

We are delighted to announce the launch of Smart Search, a new feature within the Advice Library designed to help members find relevant guidance more quickly and efficiently.

Our comprehensive Advice Library contains hundreds of advice notes, guidance notes and model documents. While this breadth of information is one of its strengths, locating the specific detail needed can take valuable time, particularly for busy clerks and council officers. To address this, we have developed Smart Search.

This new facility for our advice library uses the power of AI to allow you to quickly access the information you need from the SLCC advice library, putting the answers you need at your fingertips. Each search gives you a summary of key points appropriate to your query, alongside direct links to the advice and guidance that you need.

The feature is now live within the Advice Library and available to all members with access to the library.

As this is a new development, we are keen to understand how it performs in practice. If you have used Smart Search, we would welcome your feedback via the form below the Smart Search box. Your comments will help us refine and strengthen the service over time.

Try Smart Search now at www.slcc.co.uk/advice (SLCC login required).



NALC invites parish and town councillors to shape the future of the 21st-century councillor

Source: NALC

We are calling on parish and town councillors across England to take part in a major national event examining what it means to be a 21st-century councillor and to help shape the future support, strategies and resources the sector needs.

As the national voice of parish and town councils, we recognise that the role of councillors is changing. Local government continues to evolve, with shifting responsibilities, increasing service pressures and rising community expectations. Parish and town councillors are at the forefront of responding to these changes, often stepping in to protect valued local services and strengthen community resilience.

This interactive event will provide councillors with the latest updates from the 21st-century councillor research and create space for them to influence the development of new sector strategies directly. Their insights will inform a forthcoming report exploring how the role is evolving and identifying what practical and structural support is required to ensure councillors can continue to lead effectively at the grassroots level.

Voters in these places will be able to visit central buildings across their area at a time that suits them, such as the Guildhall in Cambridge’s city centre.

[Read more.](#)

Many Local Planning Authorities Losing Control of Planning Enforcement Says Local Government Ombudsman

Source: SLCC

A report, published by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, paints a stark picture of the planning enforcement system in parts of England. Entitled, ‘Losing control: complaints about planning enforcement’ it warns ‘councils are “losing control” of planning enforcement as complaints increasingly reveal years-long delays.’ Adding, ‘If people don’t have faith that planning controls will be enforced, they are less likely to raise concerns. This also makes it more likely that only law-abiding individuals will comply with planning rules, while those that ignore or avoid them are allowed to act with impunity.’

[Read the report.](#)

BRAMM Cemetery Of The Year Awards 2026

Source: SLCC

The FREE to enter British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) Cemetery of the Year competition will once again be available from 31 March until 30 June 2026 and open to any burial authority (cemetery or churchyard) within Britain.

Awards are for: Large burial grounds above 10,000 graves; Small/medium burial grounds up to 10,000 graves; Parish, town and community councils; The Best New CYA Entrant Award; The BRAMM Memorial Masons Award.

Further detail available from BRAMM@Bramm-uk.org

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 £80. 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

SUPPORTING PARISH COUNCILS ACROSS LINCOLNSHIRE



At TQ Services, we're proud to work alongside parish councils to keep our local communities clean, safe, and thriving. From maintaining village greens and recreation areas to caring for memorial gardens, playgrounds, and pathways — we handle every detail with care, consistency, and pride.

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Our experienced team provides professional grounds maintenance tailored to the needs of each parish.

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We're not a distant contractor — we live and work here too. Our work extends beyond public spaces, with a strong presence in local schools and grassroots football.

Through our Platinum Partnership with Lincoln City FC, we proudly support the next generation, helping young people stay active, connected, and proud of where they come from.

Let's Keep Lincolnshire Looking Its Best

If your parish council is looking for a dependable, community-minded team to manage its outdoor spaces, we'd love to help.

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