

## Marbury Update May 2025

As your Marbury ward councillors, we're pleased to share this month's update as spring brings fresh energy across our villages. May has been marked by a particularly poignant and welcome sight - communities across Marbury coming together to remember the 80th anniversary of VE Day. It's been heartening to see residents of all ages honour the service and sacrifice of the wartime generation.



We've been active across the ward — supporting local consultations, raising ward-level concerns with Highways and Planning, and working with officers on casework from residents. We know the next few months will be a critical time for influencing budget priorities and shaping future investment, and we're determined to ensure rural voices are represented in borough-wide decision-making.



As always, thank you for the work you do as Parish Councils. We're here to support you — whether on infrastructure, policy, or representing your views to officers at Cheshire West and Chester.

With best wishes,

**Cllrs Lynn Gibbon, Phil Marshall, Norman Wright**

[Marbury Ward, Cheshire West & Chester Council](#)

## National Planning Framework

Questions still outstanding regarding the impending NPPF - Rural communities, including those in Marbury Ward, should be particularly alert to several aspects of the proposed changes to the English National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

### 1. Pressure for Increased Rural Development

The proposed NPPF revisions aim to boost housebuilding, including in rural areas. While addressing housing need is important, for rural communities these risks:

- **Loss of greenbelt and countryside:** Relaxed restrictions could lead to urban sprawl and erosion of the rural character.
- **Development on agricultural land:** Threatening local farming viability and food security.
- **Overburdened infrastructure:** Roads, schools, GP services, and utilities could be stretched beyond capacity, without guaranteed infrastructure upgrades beforehand.

We continue to stress the need for infrastructure-first development and protection of high-value agricultural land.

### 2. Weakened Local Voice in Planning Decisions

Under the new framework:

- **Local Plans must align tightly to central targets**, and councils face penalties if they cannot meet “objectively assessed” housing need.
- **Neighbourhood Plans** – which have empowered villages to shape growth – may become more limited in resisting unwanted developments if housing delivery targets aren’t met.

It is imperative that we defend local democratic control of planning and reinforce the status of Neighbourhood Plans.

### 3. Strain on Environmental Protections

Although the Government is promoting “beautiful and sustainable places,” in practice:

- **Biodiversity and environmental protections** could be side-lined if councils are under pressure to grant permissions quickly.
- **Carbon neutral aspirations** for rural developments could be sacrificed for speed and volume.

### 4. Unclear Impact of the “Infrastructure Levy”

The Infrastructure Levy, which replaces Section 106 agreements, could:

- **Reduce the ability of local councils to negotiate specific local benefits** (like funding for a new community hall or play area).
- Result in **smaller rural developments paying less proportionally**, leading to fewer public benefits being delivered in rural villages compared to urban areas.

We must push for a fair share of infrastructure investment into rural areas tied to any new developments.

## 5. Risk of “Cookie-Cutter” Developments

The drive for faster housing delivery could favour large volume housebuilders, risking:

- **Identikit housing estates** poorly suited to local rural character.
- Loss of the **distinctive architecture and heritage** that defines villages and rural settings.

We must advocate for design codes that reflect and enhance local rural character, not obliterate the charm of our rural villages with cheap building materials, method and design.

For rural communities like Marbury Ward, the big concern with the new NPPF is that while it claims to “streamline” planning, it risks:

- Losing local say
- Damaging the countryside
- Delivering inappropriate or poorly supported growth

**Our position is clear: support appropriate, sustainable development** that meets local needs (especially affordable homes for young families and downsizers) — **but resist top-down, volume-driven development** that harms community character and infrastructure resilience. We'll share more information once received.

## Devolution – Cheshire & Warrington

Another key topic - Devolution offers Cheshire West and Chester the potential for greater local control, funding, and flexibility to shape services around community needs. But with opportunity comes challenge — from accountability concerns to fears of added bureaucracy. A few further general thoughts below, whilst more specific information is published:

### Potential Pros of Devolution:

#### 1. Greater Local Control and Decision-Making

CW&C would gain more direct control over key powers like transport, skills, and economic development.

Faster, locally sensitive decisions could be made without waiting for national government approval.

#### 2. Targeted Investment and Funding

The devolution deal would unlock additional funding streams that could be invested in local priorities (e.g., town centre regeneration, skills training, green initiatives).

It can help address specific borough challenges like housing, infrastructure, or poverty.

### 3. Stronger Voice in the Region

CW&C would have a bigger influence across the sub-region (Cheshire & Warrington) through the devolved arrangements, shaping larger strategic projects (e.g., transport corridors, inward investment zones).

### 4. Joined-up Public Services

Devolution enables better alignment between councils, health services (NHS Cheshire West), education providers, and the private sector <sup>[O&B]</sup>.

For example, improvements in health outcomes (Marmot priorities) could be pursued more effectively through a locally-driven model.

### 5. Economic Growth Opportunities

Cheshire West has a strong industrial base. Devolution could help deliver projects that boost business growth, innovation hubs, rural economy diversification, and improve local productivity.

## Potential Cons of Devolution:

### 1. Financial Risks and Unfunded Responsibilities

Central government may transfer powers without transferring enough funding (“devolution on the cheap”), leaving CW&C financially exposed

Savings targets could be made harder if new devolved powers bring extra costs)

### 2. Complexity and Duplication

More local powers can mean more complexity: risk of overlapping governance structures, confused accountability, or ‘postcode lotteries’ where service quality varies across areas.

### 3. Capacity Challenges

CW&C would need strong leadership, skilled officers, and systems to manage new responsibilities well (e.g., complex areas like transport franchising, skills commissioning).

Senior officer capacity is already stretched

### 4. Public Engagement and Accountability Issues

Residents may feel disconnected from new devolved bodies (e.g., Combined Authorities or Mayor-led models) unless there’s clear communication and democratic oversight.

A risk of “elite capture” where a small group shapes decisions without broader community input.

**Devolution offers CW&C significant opportunity** — greater influence, better-targeted investment, and stronger local control — but only if capacity, funding, and governance are managed well. It aligns with your leadership instincts: fast, decisive, pragmatic action could deliver real outcomes for residents but would need careful handling of risks and strong teamwork across the borough. With local pressures in Cheshire West & Chester, Cheshire East and Warrington raising concerns, we still feel that 2026 is too soon and would recommend that any plans be postponed to 2027. This would also coincide with Cheshire West & Chester’s Borough elections.

[More information on the link](#)

## Highways

**Ongoing statutory undertaker works** (i.e. gas, electric, B.T. and water) on the highway network are all on this [Link](#)

**Live roadworks | Cheshire West and Chester Council:** [Link](#)

**Highways | Cheshire West and Chester Council:**  
Highways [Link](#)

## Planning

### **Winnington Lime Bed Solar Park – (Appeal)**

Planning Appeal: APP/A0665/W/25/3359308

Application Reference: 23/02766/FUL

The applicant has appealed the decision to refuse the development by CWaC. As much as the proposed development is outside Marbury Ward, the impact on our communities and infrastructure is significant. A response to the Appeal has been submitted by Marbury Cllrs representing the villages effected in Marbury.

#### **The key concerns included:**

1. Infrastructure – Harm to Communities
2. Impact on Health and Well-being
3. Congestion and Emergency Access Risk
4. Environmental and Economic Damage
5. No Community Benefit

**Further updates to follow.**

## Northwich Regeneration Update

### **Weaver Square**

- The Council is currently in the process of procuring a development partner for Weaver Square.
- The development partner will work with the Council to deliver a residential-led scheme on this key regeneration site in Northwich town centre.
- As the procurement process is a commercial sensitive stage of the project, there will be no further updates until a decision has been reached.
- CWaC are currently targeting July 2025 for a Cabinet decision.

## **Northwich Market**

- Public engagement on plans for the new market at Barons Quay has commenced and will run from Tuesday 6th May until Monday 9th June 2025.
- The engagement will consist of an online survey [A new market for Northwich - join the conversation | Participate Now](#) and two drop-in events in the proposed market space at Barons Quay on 22nd May between 12 and 7pm and on 23rd May between 12 and 5pm.

For more information contact: [markets@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:markets@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

## **Northwich Library**

The required scaffold/propping installations on the third gable are in place on the west elevation.

- CWaC have received the RIBA stage 3 design outcome and are now progressing to planning application.
- To fully understand any further limitations of the existing building, and to further de-risk the refurbishment phases, some soft stripping works will soon be undertaken throughout the building. Anticipated to begin in April following contractor appointment in March.
- [Plans for Northwich Library renovation to be shared at drop-in event | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)
- Following the drop in event the planning application based on Stage 3 designs will be submitted.
- The full repair and refurbishment works are expected to be completed Summer/Autumn 2026.
- Updates and images following the drop in session will continue to be shared on the project webpage: [Northwich Library renovation | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#).
- The library team are working hard to continue to build the audience at Weaver Hall Museum and have many events and activities bringing people into the library and museum. Forthcoming events: [Library events | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#).

## **Barons Quay Glazing Works**

- Update at : [Barons Quay | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

## **Moss Farm**

### **Buildings/Surveys**

- Topographical survey has been commissioned (of the whole complex) to aid further refurbishment works on the wider site.
- A Contractor has now been appointed for the refurbishment of the barns, works will start this week and take 12 weeks to complete.
- Dialogue taking place with the Sub Aqua Club to relocate to one of the refurbished barns, this will also facilitate the new ancillary car park works
- Demotion approval has been granted for the red brick 'Children's Nursery building' this will be removed during June



## **Lease Negotiations**

- Property specialists Cushman & Wakefield will be sending out a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the new management model, to all clubs to sign up to prior to HoT's negotiation.
- There has been positive feedback from the clubs from these meetings who have appreciated that this element is progressing.

## **New Artificial Grass Pitch's (AGP)**

- The new 3G AGP is complete with a temporary licence is being drafted with Cheshire FA to operate the facilities whilst the long-term lease agreement are negotiated.
- The Sand AGP (opposite the Rugby Social Club) refurbishment will be complete in a couple of weeks time again with a temporary licence being drafted with operator Sporting Communities.

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

- The May 2025 Newsletter will be circulated to adjacent residents, clubs and stakeholder later this week (attached)

## **Wider Programme- next phase**

- Continued building viability assessments taking place, new car park construction later in the year and improvements to changing facilities out of sports seasons over the next 12 months.

See website: [Moss Farm | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

For up-to-date information please use the link: [Northwich regeneration | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

## **Policing:**

### **Northwich and Winsford (Police) Problem Solving Group (PSG)**

#### **Last PSG was held on 11 April 2025**

- Community Safety continue to work with Northwich BID, Baron's Quay and Winsford Cross Shopping Centre to provide a joined-up approach to anti- social behaviour within our shopping areas
- Likewise with the fire service to information share on fires being started in key locations across the area, especially in light of the recent warmer and drier weather
- Problem Solving Group continues to meet once a month with colleagues from Housing providers and the local Police unit to information share
- Designing Out Crime reports completed by Police for both Winsford Cross Shopping Centre/Public Realm and Town Park Winsford in light of recent ASB and how this can best be mitigated on a multi-agency basis.

Chris Doyle has now retired and has been replaced by Sam Chapman as the Community Safety Officer for Northwich and Winsford areas.

## Northwich

Slight increase in ASB in the town centre, the issues around the homeless and street teams hopefully have died down after the arrest of suspects for shoplifting offences.

Week commencing 19th May will see a week of focus force wide on Knife crime under Op Sceptre which is aimed at reducing knife crime.

### Contact details:

Inspector 4517 Paul Heatley, Northwich LPU Beat Inspector takes over from Dave Levins.  
[paul.heatley@cheshire.police.uk](mailto:paul.heatley@cheshire.police.uk)

Matt Charnock has also taken over as the new CI for the area taking over from Leeroy Moss,  
([Matt.Charnock@cheshire.police.uk](mailto:Matt.Charnock@cheshire.police.uk))

Please see below residents' voice link. Please pass onto the public/ any groups as relevant this will help shape what the police do in the future, based on the public's wants/needs

[Resident's voice | Cheshire Constabulary](#)

## Consultations:

Cheshire West and Chester Council is actively seeking residents' input on several key consultations. Engaging in these consultations ensures that community voices shape local policies and services.

Below is a summary of current consultations and reasons to participate:

### Education & Schools

#### 1. Archers Brook SEMH Residential School – Increase in School Places

- Why Engage: Share your views on proposals to expand capacity at Archers Brook School, which supports students with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health needs.
- Closing Date: Not specified.
- Link: [Archers Brook SEMH School Consultation](#)

#### 2. Dee Banks School – Satellite Site Expansion

- Why Engage: Provide feedback on plans to increase school places through a satellite site, enhancing educational opportunities for students with special needs.
- Closing Date: Not specified.
- Link: [Dee Banks School Consultation](#)



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### **3. Dorin Park School and SEN Specialist College – Satellite Site Expansion**

- Why Engage: Contribute your opinions on expanding Dorin Park School to accommodate more students requiring special education services.
- Closing Date: Not specified.
- Link: [Dorin Park School Consultation](#)

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## **Community & Public Services**

### **4. New Northwich Market**

- Why Engage: Influence the redevelopment plans for Northwich Market to better serve local businesses and shoppers.
- Closing Date: Not specified.
- Link: [New Northwich Market Consultation](#)

### **5. Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025–2028**

- Why Engage: Help assess and plan for future pharmaceutical services to meet community health needs.
- Closing Date: Not specified.
- Link: [Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Consultation](#)

### **6. Planning Policy Consultations**

- Why Engage: Provide input on planning policies that will shape development and land use in the borough.
- Closing Date: Varies by specific consultation.
- Link: [Planning Policy Consultations](#)

### **7. September 2026–27 School Admission Arrangements**

- Why Engage: Share your thoughts on proposed admission arrangements for the 2026–27 academic year.
- Closing Date: Not specified.
- Link: [School Admission Arrangements Consultation](#)

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## **Licensing & Regulation**

### **8. Charitable Street Collection Policy**

- Why Engage: Comment on the draft policy governing charitable collections on the streets, ensuring it reflects community values and needs.
- Closing Date: Not specified.

- Link: [Charitable Street Collection Policy Consultation](#)

## **9. Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Licensing Principles**

- Why Engage: Review and provide feedback on the Council's licensing principles related to gambling, aiming to promote responsible gambling practices.
  - Closing Date: 4 August 2025.
  - Link: [Gambling Licensing Principles Consultation](#)
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## **Environment & Public Spaces**

### **10. Shotwick Park Engagement**

- Why Engage: Participate in shaping the future of Shotwick Park, ensuring it meets the recreational and environmental needs of the community.
  - Closing Date: Not specified.
  - Link: [Shotwick Park Engagement](#)
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For a comprehensive list of all current consultations and to participate, please visit the Council's consultation page:

 **[Cheshire West and Chester Council Consultations](#)**

## **Events**

### **Northwich event web link**

[Visit Northwich - A Destination With A Difference](#)

## Members Budgets 2025-2026 / Space Hive

The **Member Budget Award Scheme** for 2025/26 allocates £5,000 to all Members to support local projects and initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life and wellbeing of their communities. Funding is provided to recipients as a discretionary award and is aimed at addressing local priorities for action.

**Member Budgets** Applications are now back open following the election purdah period.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/councillors-allowances/member-budgets>

The **Cheshire West Crowd** is the Councils partnership with Spacehive to deliver civic crowdfunding. The approach allows communities to play their part through gaining funding to deliver projects that are aligned to the Council's Borough plan.



### Cheshire West Crowd: helping bring community projects to life



A sixth funding round of the Cheshire West Crowd, with funding pots totalling £230,000 available to community projects across west Cheshire.

Run by the Council in partnership with Spacehive, the Cheshire West Crowd enables community-led projects to bring ideas to life, making the borough more vibrant, resilient and connected.

Since the Cheshire West Crowd first launched in 2021, 159 projects have successfully raised £2.5 million, calling on the support of almost 9,000 backers.

[Find out more](#)



**For Cheshire Crowd** The deadline for projects to submit for verification is Wednesday 4th June 2025. Campaign dates are set by the project creator.

<https://www.spacehive.com/movement/cwc>

## Other Funding Opportunities:

**Funding Opportunities:** [Funding opportunities | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

### Youth Opportunities Grant 2025-26 funding

I hope this email finds you well. I would like to make you aware of a funding opportunity that may interest you.

Cheshire West and Chester Council are inviting voluntary and community organisations, charities and other groups focused on providing opportunities for children and young people in our borough to apply for the Youth Opportunities Grant (YOG) 2025-26 funding. The YOG funding is seeking innovative and unique applications that provide a response to emerging needs and priorities set out in local and national strategies, in particular Make Your Mark! as well as providing effective outcomes that supports the Children and Young People Plan to make the best start in life.

### Criteria for the grant funding:

- Benefit a group or organisations that supports children and young people to make the best start in life
- Provide targeted support locally and flexibly; based on evidence of need and intelligence
- Works within our ways of working and think family
- Offers and support varied delivery of youth work in Cheshire West
- Supports Children and Young People Plan and All Age Carers Plan
- Supports Youth Senate Challenges and Priorities
- Keep children and young people protected under Cheshire West Safeguarding Children's Partnership

Applicants are invited to submit an application through The Chest: North West Procurement Portal via the following link: <https://forms.office.com/e/KSD2d3GDnq>

You will be required to submit monitoring information at the end of your offer if you are successful in your application as well as provide a financial breakdown to the local authority. Projects will be subject to unannounced monitoring by members of the YOG Board which is made up of members of the Youth Senate and Cheshire West and Chester Council.

The window for applications is 01st April 2025 to 30th May 2025. It is anticipated that applications will be considered by the YOG Board week commencing 23rd June 2025.

- **Tackling Food Surplus** [£15 million food surplus fund now open for applications - GOV.UK](#)
- **Healthy Hearts Grants** [Healthy Heart Grants - Heart Research UK](#)
- **Energy Efficiency Funding** [Energy Efficiency Sharematch | Crowdfunder.co.uk](#)
- **Network Rail Community Tree Planting** [Network Rail Community Tree Planting Fund - The Tree Council](#)
- [The Stobart Sustainability Fund | Stobart \(eddiestobart.com\)](#)
- **Rural Countryside Fune** (some parts of NW will be eligible for this) [Supporting Rural Communities - The Royal Countryside Fund](#)

- **Grants for Charities or CIO's** - [What We Fund - Bernard Sunley Foundation](#)
- [Grants for historic church interiors and churchyard structures | The Church of England](#)
- [Small Grants | Trusthouse Charitable Foundation](#)
- **Climate Action Fund: Our Shared Future** ([tnlcommunityfund.org.uk](https://tnlcommunityfund.org.uk))
- **Aviva Community Fund** [Aviva Community Fund](#)
- **Veolia Funding** ([veoliatrust.org](https://veoliatrust.org))
- **Biffa Funding** [Home Page - Biffa Award](#)
- **Blue Spark Foundation** – grants for projects supporting children and young people [Home - Blue Spark Foundation](#)
- **Energy Resilience Fund** – Power to Change

The Energy Resilience Fund is an initiative assisting community businesses in retrofitting their buildings with energy-saving measures. [Energy Resilience Fund - Power to Change](#)

- **Neighbourhood Planning Grant Funding** – Locality. [Home - Locality Neighbourhood Planning](#)

- **Electricals Recycling Fund – Material Focus**

The Electricals Recycling Fund aims to grow existing methods or test new creative and practical ones for recycling small household electricals. If you have a project that would make it easier for the public to repair, reuse or recycle their electricals, you can apply for funding. [Electricals Recycling Fund - Material Focus](#)

- **Village Halls Main Grants**

Grants are available up to £75,000 to support larger improvement projects to rural community buildings in England such as full refits and extensions (this will cover some of the rural areas in the Northwich/Winsford area). [Main grants scheme for village halls - ACRE](#)

**London Hearts has launched this scheme with the aim of increasing the number of AEDs to help save lives.** “As a charity we understand it is not always possible to install a public access Defibrillator and people’s needs differ particularly in the workplace.”

The fund is moving far quicker than they initially anticipated given the limited funding requirement, so they are allocating on a first come first basis as to avoid any disappointment. Anyone can apply, including the council.

Would you be so kind to circulate with residents in your constituency? Funding of circa £660 per unit is required.

**Interested? Apply using the link below! —**  
<https://londonhearts.org/defib-scheme/>

<https://londonhearts.org/article/lh-launches-new-defibrillator-scheme-to-help-save-lives-across-the-uk/>

Facebook Link to the Scheme to Share -

<https://www.facebook.com/LondonHearts1/posts/pfbid0VtehyLLPq8U3yWF5xuoztJTA5r1vrMasnEdNnnYjxRk5kPQukH3XAvZQbkKn9XTWl>

Link

[VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme - Groundwork](#)

Communities Team Web Page: [Communities in action | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

**If you could direct any enquiries to**

[NorthwichWinsfordLocality@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:NorthwichWinsfordLocality@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) **it will help us allocate the appropriate resource.**

**End**

