

The Jeffrey Greenwell Council of the Year Award

It is my pleasure to present the Northants CALC Council of the Year Award. For the first time, in honour of our retiring President, Jeffrey Greenwell, we present it as the Jeffrey Greenwell Council of the Year Award so he will be mentioned by name at Annual Conferences for years to come.

Each year, Northants CALC presents this award to a parish council that has not only delivered excellence but has also demonstrated resilience, innovation, and leadership. This year, we are proud to honour a council that has done all of that, and more.

This Council is one of the smaller councils in Northamptonshire, with 340 electors and a precept of just £10,500, yet it has shown what is possible when vision meets determination. In 2025, the council brought to life the Griffin Trail, a transformative walking, wheeling, and cycling route that connects the parish to Market Harborough. This £100,000 project, born from the council's Neighbourhood Plan, responded directly to community demand for safer, scenic and accessible travel routes. It replaced a hazardous route along the road with a gentle, all-weather path that now forms a vital link in the North Northamptonshire Greenway.

But The Griffin Trail is more than infrastructure; it is a symbol of community collaboration. Delivered in partnership with North Northamptonshire Council, local business, and supported by a

mix of grants and local contributions, the trail recorded over 5,000 crossings in just four weeks when it opened and has been nationally recognised as one of the UK's Best Community Projects by Active Travel England.

But Braybrooke Parish Council didn't stop there. Under the vision and leadership of Chair, Paul Hitchcock, the council has embraced Artificial Intelligence as a tool for modern governance. From exploring AI-generated reports to engaging with platforms like Google Notebook LM, Braybrooke has shown that every council can leverage digital transformation.

It's work has inspired other councils across the county and beyond. It has demonstrated that small rural councils can be bold, forward-thinking, and deeply rooted in their communities. They've shown that technology and tradition can walk hand in hand.

My congratulations to everyone involved, the councillors, the clerk, many volunteers, and partners. You have set a shining example of what local government can achieve if you dare to dream.

So, for its leadership, innovation, and unwavering commitment to improving life for its residents, the inaugural winner of the Jeffrey Greenwell Council of the Year Award goes to...

Braybrooke Parish Council!