

LEADER'S MONTHLY BULLETIN

January 2024

Welcome to the first edition of my monthly bulletin for 2024. This bulletin aims to keep councillors, officers and town and parish councils up to date on the month's main news stories and any emerging issues from the district.

Caroline



LOWESTOFT TIDAL BARRIER

Following the emergence of a £124m funding gap caused by crippling cost increases, and with no immediate prospect of additional funding being secured, the decision has been taken to halt work on the project to construct a tidal flood barrier in Lowestoft.

This scheme forms part of the Lowestoft Flood Protection programme, which has already seen the completion of 1.5km of tidal walls to help mitigate the impacts of weather events.

The project team has engaged with both the Government and the Environment Agency to seek the additional funding needed. Although discussions have been ongoing for more than a year, it is clear a decision by the Government and EA will not be made before additional spending must be committed to by the Council. Therefore East Suffolk Council has been left with no alternative but to halt work on the tidal barrier element of the scheme.

AWARD WINNING COUNCILLOR SUPPORT

As a result of its commitment to member development and excellent support to councillors, East Suffolk Council has once again been accredited with the coveted 'gold standard' Councillor Development Charter Plus Award.

The Charter Plus Award is only given to those councils that can demonstrate their strategic approach and continuous commitment to councillors' learning and development needs.

I am delighted that East Suffolk Council has, again, been recognised for continuing to be at the forefront of member development. Now more than ever, councillors have an extremely important role to play in our communities and the Council is committed to ensuring that all members receive the training and development they need to fulfil their roles whatever their circumstances or experience.



LEARNING CENTRE FUNDING BOOST

East Suffolk Council has committed £110,000 of grant funding towards the Green Light Trust's vision to provide health and wellbeing programmes from a new building at Castan Wood in Martlesham, for children, young people and adults with complex needs.

The Green Light Trust hosts a range of outdoor activities and the funding will support the completion of a carbon negative, cement-free learning centre, built using a hemp-based modular construction system.

FORMAL RESPONSE TO SEA LINK

East Suffolk Council has raised a number of key concerns in response to consultation on proposals for a major energy infrastructure project.

The Council submitted its written response, agreed by Cabinet, to National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) as part of statutory consultation into the Sea Link project, which is one of several reinforcement projects proposed as part of the Great Grid Upgrade.

The objections include that the proposals provide insufficient levels of coordination with other nationally significant infrastructure projects proposed in the locality and that the proposals are likely to result in further unacceptable harm, alone and in combination, to the communities, environment and economy of East Suffolk.

CONSTRUCTION OF SIZEWELL C

Cllr Tom Daly, Cabinet Member for Energy and Climate Change issued a statement following the commencement of construction for Sizewell C.

The development will be built in accordance with the Development Consent Order (DCO) which was granted in July 2022 by the Secretary of State and the Deed of Obligation, a legal agreement between East Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council and Sizewell C.

East Suffolk Council will ensure that Sizewell C adheres to the commitments and obligations made within the Development Consent Order and Deed of Obligation to make certain that, where possible, the adverse impacts are appropriately mitigated.

[Full statement.](#)

OPERATING PERMIT ISSUED

East Suffolk Council has put air-quality and climate at the core of an [operating permit for a residual-waste incinerator](#).

Planning consent for the incinerator, to be operated by VC Cooke Ltd, was granted by Conservative-controlled Suffolk County Council last year. An environmental permit is also required before operation can commence, which East Suffolk Council have now issued in accordance with statutory obligations.

Having commissioned legal counsel to examine the permitting process in detail, the Council has added conditions to the permit enforcing all applicable regulations regarding air-quality. The Council has also included a condition in the permit requiring VC Cooke to submit a carbon-management plan showing that the incinerator does not contribute to climate-change.

LOWESTOFT MEN'S SHED FUNDING

Six East Suffolk Councillors have donated £3,543 from their Enabling Communities Budgets to support Lowestoft Men's Shed, which provides a space for men to share conversation, hobbies and skills.

Kirkley and Pakefield ward councillors Peter Byatt, Louise Gooch and Malcolm Pitchers, and Oulton Broad councillors Edward Back, André Gee and Keith Robinson [allocated funding for improvement works](#) to the Men's Shed venue in Stradbroke Road.



NORTH FELIXSTOWE GARDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD

Felixstowe residents are invited to join a new panel which will enable the views and needs of local people to be considered in the development of a new garden neighbourhood in the north of the town.

East Suffolk Council is leading the master-planning process for a new neighbourhood. Approximately 143ha of land to the north of Felixstowe and Trimley St Mary were identified in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan 2020 as being suitable for a garden neighbourhood comprising green infrastructure, community facilities and employment land alongside residential development.

Community engagement is key to the master-planning process and a range of events and ways to comment will be developed to ensure the local community is kept up to date and that local needs are being considered.

An important element is the formation of a Citizens' Panel, a demographically representative group of local people brought together to learn about the project and provide their thoughts.

Residents can register their interest in joining the panel, and find out more about the garden neighbourhood at www.northfelixstowe.co.uk

Residents are also invited to attend the first engagement event at The Orwell Hotel on Saturday 3 February (10am to 3pm), with presentations from 11.30am.



SEAFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

Plans to regenerate Royal Plain, Royal Green, and South Quay Wharf in Lowestoft to further improve the area as a destination for local communities and visitors are set to progress this spring following planning consent given by East Suffolk Council's Planning Committee.

Phase 1 of the Seafront Vision project will see works to the popular areas of Royal Plain, Royal Green, and South Quay Wharf begin from late February, funded through Lowestoft's £24.9m allocation from the Government's Towns Fund, which was awarded in 2021.

JUBILEE PARADE

Work on an exciting new development at Jubilee Parade in Lowestoft will begin in February, following planning consent also given by the Council's Planning Committee.

A new two-storey complex will comprise an indoor café on the first floor, offering uninterrupted views of the sea with outdoor seating, five concession units on the ground floor, new toilets, outdoor showers, and a Changing Places facility. A lift and staircase between the Esplanade, restaurant, and Lower Promenade levels will provide improved access to the seafront for everyone.



WILD ABOUT WICKHAM

Residents in Wickham Market are invited to a free event to learn more about making space for nature in their gardens.

Organised by the Framlingham, Wickham Market, Kelsale, Yoxford and villages Community Partnership, the first Wild About Wickham event takes place on Saturday 3 February at Wickham Market Village Hall (12-4pm). Residents are encouraged to come along and find out more about increasing biodiversity in their own gardens, and across the village.

A range of community groups and organisations will be present, including the RSPB, Transition Woodbridge, Hedgehog Help, Wickham Green Gym, Wickham Market Gardening Club and local tree warden Anne Westover.

GREENPRINT FORUM

The next Greenprint Forum event takes place on Wednesday 28 February, at the Market Hall in Saxmundham.

'Regenerating Food Systems and Natural Capital – a forum on food and farming will explore the benefits of a regenerative food production system that nourishes people whilst bringing net positive benefits for natural capital, and examine the barriers to change.

Anna Beames, Chief Executive of Suffolk Farming Wildlife Advisory Group, will be joined for the event by fellow guest speaker John Pawsey of Suffolk-based Shimpling Park Farm. There will also be an interactive workshop session to enable the audience to participate in a discussion around this important topic.



CONSULTATIONS

East Suffolk residents are invited to give their views on [plans to upgrade some play areas in the district](#), providing high-quality play spaces for children of all ages and abilities.

The Council's Play Strategy 2023 – 2027 makes a series of recommendations and identifies play areas which could be upgraded to provide modern, high-quality play equipment for local families to enjoy. As part of this, the Council has already upgraded play spaces in Beccles, Carlton Colville and Felixstowe.

Currently, views are being sought on play areas in Beccles, Felixstowe, Kesgrave, Trimley St Mary and Wrentham.

The consultation closes on 1 March.



STAY UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST EAST SUFFOLK NEWS!

The Communications Team shares all [media coverage daily on SharePoint](#), so you can easily stay up to date on media stories relevant to East Suffolk Council, whether on local, regional or national news outlets, tv, radio, print or online.

We do a lot of great work in East Suffolk, and we want everyone to know! I would therefore like to encourage all Councillors to share their own good news stories with the Communications Team so they can help showcase some of this work, whether this is from projects funded through your Enabling Communities Budget or supporting an initiative which will benefit our local communities.

We keep our communities up to date in a variety of ways and social media has an important role to play. Please follow us and share our posts with your audiences.

If you have any questions or need any help with communications and promotion, please [email the team](#).

DIARY DATES

Monday 5 February 10am	Licensing Sub-Committee	East Suffolk House
Tuesday 6 February 6pm	Cabinet	East Suffolk House
Tuesday 13 February 2pm	Planning Committee North	Riverside
Tuesday 20 February 3.30pm	Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and villages Community Partnership	Middleton Village Hall
Wednesday 21 February 6.30pm	Full Council	Riverside
Thursday 22 February 6.30pm	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Riverside
Tuesday 27 February 10am	Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and villages Community Partnership	Carlton Marshes Visitor Centre
Tuesday 27 February 12.30pm	Strategic Planning Committee	East Suffolk House
Tuesday 27 February 2pm	Planning Committee South	East Suffolk House
Thursday 29 February 11.30am	Licensing Sub-Committee	Riverside