

TOP-TEN REPORT FOR BUNGAY AND THE VILLAGES (DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024)
East Suffolk Councillors Toby Hammond and Anthony Specia

1. Both Anthony and Toby are keen to receive applications for their remaining 2023-24 Enabling Communities budgets. **Applications must be received by 29th February**. Please encourage community organisations in your areas to apply. Please also consider any community projects of your own as Town or Parish Councils/Meetings. Application forms are available at: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/community-grants-and-funding/enabling-communities-budgets/>.
2. Working together with Cllr Caroline Topping from Beccles, as well as ESC officers, Toby and Anthony ensured that a unique zero-carbon condition was applied to the operating permit for VC Cooke's proposed energy-from-waste incinerator in Ellough. Combined with the maximum air-quality conditions that legislation allows, we believe this makes the permit the toughest of its kind ever issued. With Suffolk County Council having granted planning permission for the incinerator in spring 2023, there was no legal route for ESC to withhold the permit. We will now work with VC Cooke to understand how they plan to meet our conditions.
3. In December, Anthony and Toby wrote to Suffolk County Council to object to proposals for a new anaerobic digester at Ellough on the grounds of odour, traffic movements, and environmental and cumulative impact. ESC has also now submitted formal objections to the proposals on multiple grounds, including contravening the Neighbourhood Development Plans of Worlingham, Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough, as well as the overall Waveney Local Plan.
4. As Cabinet Member for Transport, Toby has begun detailed reviews of parking regulations in Bungay and Beccles, supported by the ESC Parking Services team. The review aims to capture all issues of community concern. The team will then draw up plans for regulatory improvements, which will then be submitted to Suffolk County Council to take forward as highways authority over the following 18 months.
5. Anthony's upcoming Model District Council simulation has attracted great interest from schools. A total of 53 students from 7 secondary schools across the District will take part, including students from Bungay High and Castle EAST. Anthony initiated this innovative educational event as a centrepiece of his Chairship. He's looking very much forward to meeting the students, and to hearing their views on how to promote youth democracy in East Suffolk.
6. Storms and extraordinary rainfall has continued to hit our community, with floodwater persisting right along the Waveney Valley for much of the winter and affecting many residents. In response East Suffolk has published a permanent storm advice web page with useful emergency contacts: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/storms>
7. For those having trouble with cost-of-living issues, especially in these colder months, the ESC 'Ease the Squeeze' programme is still offering help. Information about services and support is available at: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/>.
8. Boots have announced the closure of the pharmacy co-located with Bungay surgery as part of many branch closures nationally. At a meeting of the Bungay Stakeholder Group, it was agreed that whilst the decision cannot be reversed, Bungay Community Support can offer help to those who have difficulty reaching the St Marys Street Boots branch.
9. As Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Toby met with Associated British Ports, Hutchison Ports and Scottish Power Renewables to discuss the huge potential in East Suffolk for high-quality jobs in renewable energy. Current Government policy encourages 'maxing out' North Sea oil and gas. By contrast, our Administration has been clear that this a dead-end, and that renewables are the way forward for both our climate and shared prosperity.
10. As Chair of Council, Anthony was delighted to attend the Bungay Town Dinner in December.