

As we all know the Secretary of State decided to grant permission for Sizewell C to be built with significant numbers of conditions. Since then, many are spending time wading and looking through the long report. The main question people understandably are asking is why the Secretary of State went against the recommendation of the Planning Inspectorate. Put to our MP, she has written to the Secretary of State to seek a meeting to discuss this further and how he intends to ensure the conditions of the order will be fulfilled. This is critical after other significant projects, including windfarms, managed to change their conditions without any particular public involvement. While there is no formal appeal process against the decision made by the Secretary of State under the 2008 Act, she and others expect that applications will go to the High Court for a judicial review of the process.

I will briefly mention my ongoing thanks to all our local volunteers that we have, most work quietly behind the scenes, however, we all know that our local Fire and Lifeboat crews have been kept extremely busy in the recent weeks and it is important that we all do our bit to keep our residents and communities safe. The fire in Knodishall highlights how vital our local emergency services are and how every day they people in our area put themselves on the line selflessly, Thank you.

My apologies for the late report this month but I have been extra busy with fostering panels and appointments etc. We are always looking for new foster/kinship carers, please do share this link <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/fostering-and-adoption/fostering>

Officers will be attending in September to do a head count regarding a potential 'crossing guard' in Leiston, this has the backing of local parents, myself, and the schools. It is paramount considering the potential increased traffic in Leiston that we all support this. The crossing guard in Knodishall works particularly well and is much appreciated.

My best wishes to all that are attending the Aldeburgh Carnival and other local fetes and events throughout August, other wonderful examples of our great, dedicated volunteers.

TJ

### **Suffolk supports you with the cost of living**

With the current cost of living pressures affecting us all, it has never been more important to ensure that people are supported to receive the right help, when they need it. In Suffolk we have a number of support services ready to help you, your friends or your family, if you are struggling.

The Local Welfare Assistance Scheme helps those experiencing financial hardship, including access to items like household furniture and white goods, fuel vouchers for electricity and gas top-ups, supermarket vouchers, and contributions towards increasing costs during the winter months.

Local organisations across Suffolk can submit an application for support, on behalf of an individual or family. These organisations include Citizens Advice Bureau, district and borough councils, health services and voluntary organisations. A list of these organisations, who will assess your circumstances and submit an application for you, is available at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/FinancialHardship](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/FinancialHardship)

After the recent spell of warm weather it may feel a long way off now, but Autumn and Winter can be a time when energy and fuel costs rise. Suffolk's Warm Homes Healthy People is a project designed to help vulnerable people and families make their homes more energy efficient cheaper to heat. It can help you to access grants to help pay for insulation, basic draught proofing, or first-time central heating. It can also offer emergency support if you need it in the form of temporary heaters or support with emergency boiler repairs.

If high energy bills are preventing you from putting the heating on, or you know any friends, family or neighbours who need extra help heating their home, please contact Warm Homes Healthy People on **03456 037 686** or email [whhp@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:whhp@eastsoffolk.gov.uk)

There's also a wealth of support in Suffolk for families with young children.

Healthy Start vouchers help parents of children under four years old, to access healthy food and milk. Through the county's Tackling Poverty Strategy, we have been working with health visitors, and partners in the voluntary sector to support eligible families to take up the offer. We identified potential barriers to families accessing services, such as language barriers, and developed promotional materials to make the vouchers more accessible to families in need.

Since work began to promote the Healthy Start vouchers in November 2021 we've seen an 11% increase in those taking up the offer. The most recent data March 2022 shows 72% of those eligible are now taking up the offer.

You may be entitled to Healthy Start Vouchers if you are more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4. To check if you can apply or to find out more speak to your Midwife or Health Visitor or visit [HealthyStart.nhs.uk](https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

The Holiday Activities and Food programme, provides enriching activities to children and young people, as well as free meals during school holidays.

The programme launched in 2021 following a successful pilot in Suffolk in 2019 and 2020 and is backed by government funding of £200 million per year for the next three years.

In 2021, more than 44,800 meals were provided to children in Suffolk through the scheme and more than 48,400 face to face activity sessions took place. These Holiday club activities introduce young people to new experiences and skills, from dance and drama to cooking and gardening, as well providing opportunities for physical and social activity.

More than 33,700 offers of support were offered remotely to children who could not attend the clubs in person. These offers included activity booklets and food packs.

If your child is in receipt of Free School Meals, you may be entitled to support during future school holidays, speak to your school to find out more.

Suffolk County Council recently published its Tackling Poverty Strategy and action plan. The strategy, which has been coproduced with District, Borough and Voluntary Sector partners, along with people with lived experience of poverty, pulls together the many strands of work that have been helping people for many months, as well as looking to the future. You can view the strategy and action plan at: [www.suffolk.gov.uk/poverty](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/poverty)

Tackling poverty is a system-wide challenge and as such, the work of the Poverty Strategy will report into the Health and Wellbeing Board and Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and Suffolk's Collaborative Communities Board. Suffolk Public Sector Leaders have provided £1 million in hardship funding to support this work.

A huge thank you to the voluntary community and people who came forward to tell us their stories, which helped us to develop the Strategy and Action Plan. Finally, if you are struggling or know someone who is, then please look into what help is available.

Visit [www.suffolk.gov.uk/FinancialHardship](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/FinancialHardship) where you can find a list of the support services in Suffolk.

### **Support our fire service and stay safe this summer**

According to the Met Office, Suffolk is one of the sunniest areas in the UK, and it's certainly felt that way over recent weeks when our county has been able to benefit from some glorious weather.

We're incredibly fortunate to have some fantastic places to enjoy when the sun starts to shine, including Southwold beach and Constable Country, but we must make sure that we do all we can to protect these open spaces from the risk of fire.

On a warm day, litter and grass can become very dry, leading to an increased likelihood of a fire catching and spreading. Sadly, we are not immune to this in Suffolk, with firefighters recently attending a large heath fire in Rushmere.

Please help our fire service this summer by following some simple steps to minimise the risk of fires in the open. You can make a real difference by:

- Putting your litter in the bin when out and about
- Avoiding barbecues and campfires in public open spaces
- Ensuring that any cigarettes are totally put out and disposed of properly
- Not leaving any glass items lying around after a picnic

Of course, the good weather may also tempt you to take a dip in a lake or river in the hope of cooling down, but before you take the plunge you should be aware that around 85% of drownings take place in open water. Many people don't realise the danger to life posed by the shock from cold water temperatures, strong currents and uneven banks and riverbeds, and I'd urge everyone to follow guidance from the Royal Life Saving Society to help prevent death or serious injury.

Hopefully, with your assistance, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service won't need to attend as many water rescues and fires in the open this summer – but responding to incidents is just part of their invaluable role. A lot of the service's work involves preventing fires from happening in the first place by educating people on what they can do to stay safe, including testing their smoke alarms weekly and taking care when cooking. They are also on hand to provide fire guidance to local businesses and organisations to ensure the safety of customers, those attending events, and residents of shared buildings such as apartment blocks.

Whilst Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service always looks to work with companies in the first instance – offering them the opportunity to make necessary adjustments to comply with fire

regulations – sometimes we are left with no option but to prosecute. There have already been two significant prosecutions this year because of the service’s tireless efforts to protect Suffolk. Recently, the company responsible for Worlingham Hall – a popular wedding and events venue in Beccles – pleaded guilty to a string of serious fire offences and will face sentencing later this year. Their blatant disregard for safety put hundreds of people at risk and the intervention of our Protection team will have doubtlessly prevented injury, or even death, in the event of a fire at the property.

Despite being incredibly busy with responding to incidents and their prevention and protection work, staff from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service continue to raise much needed funds for charity. Earlier this year, the service donated over £8,000 to Ukraine and The Firefighters Charity following a day of car washes held at stations across the county.

### **Hundreds of local businesses show sustainability is achievable and profitable**

462 businesses are leading the way across Suffolk and Norfolk, actively reducing their carbon emissions.

All of these companies are holders of a Carbon Charter award, a scheme which recognises businesses across Suffolk and Norfolk which are actively reducing their impact on the environment.

These businesses were acknowledged at the annual Carbon Charter event (6 July 2022), organised by Suffolk County Council, and held at Anglia Car Charging’s base in Broome - themselves a recent recipient of a Silver Carbon Charter Award.

Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Environment, said:

“The Carbon Charter has proved an incredibly successful scheme, which Suffolk County Council set up 12 years ago, in partnership with the Environment Agency. It highlights the hundreds of enterprises across Suffolk and Norfolk who understand how important it is to tackle climate change.

“These businesses are changing the way they operate, influencing their supply chain and educating their staff – all of which shows a business can be sustainable and successful.

“The council and all authorities across Suffolk are actively investing in reducing carbon emissions, through the work of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan with the aim of being a Net Zero county by 2030. We are proud to lead by example in Suffolk, and are nationally recognised for doing so.

“But this isn’t something that the council, or Suffolk’s local authorities can do alone. The key players are the businesses like the ones recognised here today.”

Denny Brothers Printers, based in Bury St Edmunds, were presented with their Gold Carbon Charter award at the event. They have long been a vocal advocate of the low carbon technologies that all printers should utilise to stay competitive in an increasingly green-conscious market.

Beckett Invest Management Group received a Silver Carbon Charter award, which was presented to Director, Samantha Owen.

The hosts, Anglia Car Charging, also received their Silver award.

The event was funded by the BEE Anglia project, which has provided free consultancy and £1.6 million in grants to over 1,000 businesses across Suffolk

and Norfolk, to support them in leading the way towards a Zero Carbon economy.

For more information on the Carbon Charter scheme, visit [www.carboncharter.org](http://www.carboncharter.org)

### Unpaid family carers urged to have their say on a new All Age Carer Strategy for Suffolk

On July 14th, Suffolk's Health and Wellbeing Board received a report outlining progress of a new All Age Carers Strategy for Suffolk.

There are an estimated 98,000 carers across Suffolk who provide unpaid care for their loved ones. In the UK, according to research from Carers UK conducted in 2020, this figure rises to 13.6 million. Their contribution is believed to have saved the country somewhere in the region of £193 billion during the Covid-19 pandemic alone – during a time when many have faced unprecedented pressure, taking on new caring responsibilities for some of the most vulnerable in our society.

These carers give up their time, money, education, careers and relationships to support those they care for, often impacting their own health too. The All Age Carers' strategy will also help support young carers in their current roles and through transition to adulthood, so they can continue their education, employment and goals in life. A consultation on the draft strategy has been launched and it is hoped carers of all ages will have their say on the strategy and its five priorities which focus around; early identification of unpaid or family carers, improved information and advice for carers of all ages, ensuring younger carers have the same priority as adult carers, creating systems which work to support carers and help to improve the health and wellbeing of carers.

The work of unpaid and family carers must be better understood and supported, and the new All Age Carers Strategy will certainly help to do that. We hope all carers across Suffolk take this opportunity to have their say and add their views to help build upon the co-production with carers which has already been fundamental in the strategy's development.

Details of the consultation, including a downloadable version of the draft strategy and both surveys (for adult or young carers) is available on the County Council's website.

### **Council looks to protect Suffolk following Sizewell C decision – Previously in the EADT & online**

Suffolk County Council will now focus its attention on protecting Suffolk, ensuring that the county sees the maximum benefits from Sizewell C project.

On July 20th, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy granted the Development Consent Order to build and operate a new nuclear power station, Sizewell C.

The council remains disappointed that a number of key issues have not been fully resolved but is now looking ahead to the boosts for the local economy and protecting the local environment.

Whilst the council has been successful in securing many improvements to the scheme, it had raised several concerns where the impact on the natural environment could have been improved:

- The blight of the additional pylons at the main site
- Unnecessary and damaging outage car park at Goose Hill
- Sizewell Link Road should be removed after construction to prevent lasting damage to the environment.

Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment, said:

“During the process, the council's voice has been strong, and our influence has resulted in a number of significant improvements to the proposals, to make them more acceptable for Suffolk.

“We have taken the concerns of Suffolk residents to the highest levels, from the Planning Inspectorate to the Secretary of State. We are disappointed that, in our opinion, some of these have not been listened to.

“It is now our role to ensure that as Sizewell C proceeds, it does so with the least possible impact on Suffolk's residents and unique natural environment, whilst doing all we can to maximise the economic opportunities for our county.”

The council has been instrumental in recent changes made to the proposals, which will see Suffolk benefit from nearly £200m of investment to mitigate the impact on communities, the environment and infrastructure. Assurances have also been secured to see a far greater quantity of construction materials will be delivered by rail and sea, reducing the number of lorries on the county's rural roads.

Following the decision to grant the Sizewell C Development Consent Order, there is now a six week\* period in which judicial review challenges may be made. Subject to any legal challenges, Suffolk County Council will work with EDF Energy, local communities and local authorities, to ensure that the scheme is constructed accordingly and that opportunities for Suffolk are maximised. \*end of August

### **New routes added as Suffolk County Council issues updated HGV map**

A new map for hauliers plotting routes for journeys across Suffolk has been drawn up.

The Suffolk County Council Lorry Route Plan now incorporates new developments and roads, schemes such as Air Quality Management Areas, and changes in road safety on lorry routes.

Changes to the map include utilising new by-passes and link roads at Beccles, Eye and Haverhill to divert traffic away from town centres, and downgrading of routes at Leiston and Stowlangtoft. The new edition also features, for the first time, routes in Ipswich.

The map, compiled following a three-month consultation with all parish and town councils in Suffolk, was last updated in 2011 although a minor review was held in 2017.

While hauliers are not compelled to use the routes it does help them identify the best roads for their journey. It also discourages them from taking routes that can cause disruption, road safety concerns and environmental concerns to local communities.

Councillor Richard Smith, Suffolk County Council Cabinet member for Economic Development, Transport Strategy and Waste, said:

“We have consulted with town and parish councils across Suffolk to establish what changes they would like to see. Where possible and practical to do so we have made changes but, inevitably, some people are going to be disappointed that changes they proposed could not be implemented. Suffolk is a predominantly rural county and we can only work within the road network available to us to accommodate modern-day traffic requirements.”

Councillor Smith advised that parishes who feel that local HGV weight restriction traffic orders were not being adhered should sign up to the Suffolk Lorry Watch scheme. This is run by Trading Standards, in partnership with Suffolk Highways, who ensure weight restriction orders are enforced. These orders are in place to protect old or weak structures and minimise use of a route unless access is necessary. Read more about the review and view the new map here:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/lorry-management/lorry-route-plan-review-in-suffolk/>

### **Recent hot weather and steps towards a net zero future**

This month, we experienced some of the hottest temperatures that Suffolk has ever seen and, due to climate change, these record-breaking hot spells are likely to become more frequent and last longer.

It's not just hot days in the summer that we will experience - winters will become more severe, winds become stronger, rain becomes more intense and flash flooding becomes a greater risk. In short, we will see more extreme weather.

These extremes were witnessed first-hand last Wednesday at Carlton Marshes in Lowestoft, which saw a devastating fire take hold of 5 acres of grassland and hedgerow. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service firefighters joined colleagues from Norfolk to successfully tackle the blaze, and they were due to reinspect the site later in the evening to make sure it was safe. But they were denied from doing so due to heavy rain and thunderstorms just hours later, which caused flash flooding at the visitor's centre, as the ground was so dry. We also witnessed other local field and heath fires which highlight what I reported on at the beginning of this report.

Fires and flooding affect so much more than the physical environment. There is potential disruption, damage, and distress to those living nearby, businesses, schools, transport links and not least the firefighters who put themselves at risk to save people and property – as ever, we owe them a debt of thanks.

Of course, nature is also hugely affected, with habitats lost and animals suffering in these extreme weather events. Suffolk and the UK has lost so much of its biodiversity in the last century, whether habitats like grasslands, pollinating insects like bees, or animals like hedgehogs. If nature is not allowed to thrive, our way of life will be drastically affected. Sir David Attenborough said:

“If we and the rest of the back-boned animals were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well. But if the invertebrates were to disappear, the land's ecosystems would collapse.”

But beyond the natural world, it is important to acknowledge that it is the poorest and most vulnerable who are most at risk from our changing climate. Whether that's people living in areas with poor air quality and poor health outcomes due to a lack of access to green space, those who struggle to heat their homes in winter and keep them cool in summer, the rising cost of energy, installing flood prevention, or living with health conditions that are exacerbated by extreme temperatures. Not tackling and adapting to climate change would be a failure felt most acutely by those most in need. It is not separate to the cost of living challenges we face but a fundamental part of it.

So what can we do?

The vast majority of us now acknowledge that the Earth is warming up because we all emit too much carbon into the atmosphere.

We all have a responsibility to look at our energy use, and try to be more efficient. There are so many ways we can do this, from the food choices we make, the clothes we wear, the cars we drive, the journeys and vacations we choose to take, through to switching off electrical items when we don't need them.

These may sound like drops in the ocean, but if we all make small changes, it soon adds up to something which has a big, positive impact.

The council, of course, has its part to play and I'm proud that there is a lot we're doing – and we are constantly working to do more.

Together with other local authorities and organisations in the county, we have the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan, which helps us all work together to achieve our ambitions of being Net Zero in Suffolk. This means that in Suffolk we have a co-ordinated approach to reduce emissions, on everything from transport to homes.

As Suffolk County Council, we are investing £12.8m to decarbonise our buildings, improving the biodiversity on at least 30% of our estate, moving our vehicles over to electric, installing rural charging points, supporting businesses on their Net Zero journey, generating our own energy from solar panels, planting trees and hedgerows, and so much more.



Suffolk is often highly regarded for how it is leading the way with its Net Zero ambitions, and as a council we were recently ranked as a Gold Tier authority in Uswitch's Green Council Report 2022.

### **UK's leading digital care technology sees huge results for social care and the NHS**

The data, released on July 25th by the Cassius service, highlights the benefits of a digital care technology service, which is the most advanced in the country.

Launched in July 2021, Suffolk County Council's Cassius service has:

- Changed the lives of 1,600 people with over 2,600 pieces of digital technology installed
- Avoided 118 ambulance call-outs at a time when pressure on the NHS is at an all-time high\*
- Prevented hospital admissions saving 170 hospital days, freeing up beds for those most in need\*
- Estimated saving to social care of £4.2 million and cashable savings of £430,000 and £160,000 to the local NHS

One resident said: "The technology literally saved my mother's life"

Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, said:

"Cassius has exceeded all our expectations and our social work practitioners are quickly becoming the most digitally advanced in the country. We have developed this service from scratch and this data is a testament to how you can transform services and continue to provide positive experiences and benefits to all. We are very pleased to see the added value to the wider health system too.

"Most importantly, however, is the impact on people's lives which has been wonderful to see, and we are getting some fantastic feedback from people using the technology."

Cassius provides digital care technology to people in Suffolk to help them to remain independent for longer and to support them to live safe and well at home. The types of technology includes movement sensors, smart watches, wearables, falls prevention devices and technology to address specialised needs.

One of the success factors is that the technology is customised to a person's individual circumstances ensuring that addresses specific requirements.

For example, Phil, who has Parkinson's, has been in hospital for two months. The hospital team felt he needed to be in a care home due to his poor mobility; however, Phil really wanted to be at home with his wife.

The Cassius service was able to provide him with digital care technology to keep him safe, including sensor mats, a falls button and Video Carephone should he

wish to raise the alarm if he needed help. This meant Phil could safely be discharged into his own home, saved longer-term care requirements, and meant he didn't need to remain in hospital longer than he needed to.

### **Putting Suffolk on the big screen**

Public Sector Leaders have agreed steps to continue to attract filmmakers to the region – putting Suffolk on the big screen.

Since investing in Screen Suffolk in 2016, the county's profile has rocketed, with filming days in the region increasing from around 30 days a year to over 800 – and Suffolk landscape and locations featuring in recent blockbusters such as Yesterday, The Dig, The Personal History of David Copperfield and Downton Abbey, plus hit TV series such as BBC 4's The Detectorists. The county's scenery has also attracted brands such as Burberry, Barclays Bank and Marks and Spencer to film adverts locally – bringing an estimated direct spend of £11.5m into the Suffolk economy.

At the meeting of the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders (SPSL) Group – which includes the county's local authorities, Suffolk Police, the Integrated Care System and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) – the partners agreed to extend the current contract with Screen Suffolk by five years and invest a further £16k per year.