

I took up the opportunity to be a member on a working party looking at our local and wider road signs etc and the issues surrounding what is compulsory/mandatory and why. I feel that it is important to represent rural communities and tourism. Although, many with our towns come under ESC I would appreciate it if people would let me know the locations of those that need repairs/replacing (please, still report using the online reporting tool if possible) I am hoping to complete the community self help training to compliment this.

I have also been verbally mentioning to our town and parish councils about adding "hot weather emergencies" to their local emergency plans. This year it is predicted that we will experience even hotter weather than last year, our grass, woodlands, heathlands etc were tinder dry. It may be useful to have discussions now with local farmers and experienced crew members from our local fire stations so that plans are in place ready.

The recent visit from Minster Bowie was extremely useful and it was felt that those attending were listened to regarding some concerns. As per the notices on Aldeburgh Gold Club and along Leiston Road in Aldeburgh, it appears that one of NG's agent, Dalcour Maclaren have notified more re Compulsory access. Their agents continue to use threatening words and behaviours rather than using the correct land agents etc. You would have also noted that SPR have planned survey works from the 5<sup>th</sup> June which are likely to cause some disruption, even though the decisions regarding the JR are unknown. (Screenshot below). I also attended an event with Cllr Fellowes regarding North Falls.

Many thanks TJ

Local road surfaces in villages and residential areas in Suffolk should be blitzed as part of a new £10 million programme, Suffolk County Council has announced today (25<sup>th</sup> May).

The extra funding will nearly double Suffolk Highways' £11 million annual roads maintenance budget but be targeted at smaller residential streets which are typically maintained less frequently than busier A and B roads.

The announcement was made by Suffolk County Council's leader, Cllr Matthew Hicks, at the authority's annual general meeting.

Speaking about the funding, Cllr Hicks said:

"Let me be clear, the state of some of our roads is not good enough. That is why today I am announcing a major investment to improve roads across the county where people live. Those smaller roads often in estates or off the beaten track in our villages that are rutted and in need of some love and attention. To do this we will set aside a further £10 million to be spent over the next 20 months reaching these locations across our county and I look forward to this being delivered with our new partner Milestone."

At the same time, Cllr Hicks also reiterated the council's commitment to improving services for children with special educational needs and disabilities, including £55 million to create 1,275 new SEND school places by 2025.

Cllr Hicks said:

“We are seeing improvements, but the pace of change is not fast enough and it is not being felt by families. This is a hugely emotional issue, and it is deeply upsetting. Yes, it is part of a national struggle - but we cannot and must not hide behind that. Suffolk must continue to step up regardless of the situation nationally.”

Highways and SEND will be areas of particular focus for Suffolk County Council over the next two years. There was also reaffirmed commitments to deliver:

- The Gull Wing bridge in Lowestoft
  - New homes on SCC land
  - Further help for Ukrainian refugees
  - A new highways contractor Milestone
  - Hundreds more EV charging points
  - A £20 million flood prevention and footpath improvement programme.
- To coincide with the annual general meeting, Suffolk County Council has published a list of its top 50 achievements since 2021, including:
- Our Cassius Digital Care work and innovation is going from strength to strength
  - An extra £2.5m for mental health services
  - 300 miles of road now designated as quiet lanes
  - New household waste sites in Ipswich and Haverhill
  - £13 million in funding secured for active travel
  - 3,000 environmentally friendly homes being delivered on SCC land
  - 250,000 trees planted
  - Over 100 new EV charging points
  - A new Highways Contract with Milestone starting in October
  - 43,400 streetlights converted to LED.

#### Support for Ukrainian refugees moving to private rented accommodation

We are grateful to all the hosts who have welcomed Ukrainian guests into our county and supported them to thrive in our local communities. This support will assist our Ukrainian guests to move on from their hosts and live independently in Suffolk.

Suffolk County Council has announced a one-off £2,000 support grant for Ukrainian refugees moving on from their host into their own accommodation.

The Independent Living Payment will be available to Ukrainian Refugees, who are moving into private rented accommodation after 1st April 2023. Guests must have been living in Suffolk for a minimum of two months and be registered on the Suffolk Homes for Ukraine scheme to be eligible for the payment.

The funding can be used for any associated housing costs, including furniture, moving costs or travel to work. The support can be used towards accommodation which is furnished or unfurnished, and accommodation can be in Suffolk or out of county as long as a copy of the new tenancy agreement is provided.

Ukrainian guests can apply for the Independent Living Payment by visiting [www.suffolk.gov.uk/ukraine](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/ukraine) and completing the application form. Application forms can also be requested by emailing [refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk) more info on the website.

Suffolk County Council Cabinet agreed to a revised infrastructure policy to support water security in the region.

As part of its focus on adapting to a changing climate, members agreed a revision to the Energy Infrastructure Policy to cover future projects needed to protect and maintain water resources, including reservoirs, pipelines, and water recycling plants.

This new policy addition lays out how future water infrastructure projects will be managed and the council's role with stakeholders, such as the water companies, Ofwat and the Environment Agency. It also sets out how the council will recover the money it has to spend in the planning process for infrastructure projects.

"In order to adapt to the changing climate, Suffolk will need to host new infrastructure that is critical to safeguard our water supplies. Sufficient water supply is critical to so much of what we do here in Suffolk. It is something we take for granted – we all expect to turn on a tap and see water come out, but to secure that supply for the future, new infrastructure on a substantial scale will be essential.

East Anglia has a huge role in delivering food security to our nation, and, for agriculture to be sustainable in our region, our farming community needs a guarantee that sufficient water supplies will be available.

This supply is important for not only residential, business, and agricultural use, but also to protect and enhance the environment of Suffolk by supporting river levels and groundwater. The existing energy policy has been very successful in shaping the council's response to new energy infrastructure and in guiding our engagement with applicants, regulators and government. This new addition will greatly enhance this policy and once again, shows how protecting and enhancing our environment is priority for Suffolk County Council." Richard Rout. Full report on the website.

Suffolk County Council has underlined its commitment to library services in Suffolk.

Suffolk County Council has underlined its commitment to library services in Suffolk, as it approved plans to increase its funding to Suffolk Libraries, to enable the service to continue operating at its current level, until the end of the contract in July 2024.

Suffolk Libraries currently receives £5.9m per year from Suffolk County Council, however the service is forecasting a deficit of £60k per month from April 2023. The service has cited increases in service costs, a reduction in income opportunities following the Coronavirus Pandemic and rising inflation, as causes of the deficit.

This means it is no longer possible for the service to continue operating at its current level of service, within its current contract value.

At Suffolk County Council's meeting, the council has approved plans to absorb this cost pressure, funding Suffolk Libraries an additional £720k per year, through to the end of the current contract in July 2024. This additional funding will support Suffolk Libraries to continue delivering its highly valued services to Suffolk Residents.

Suffolk County Council is supporting Dementia Action Week with a competition to produce virtual reality films for people living with the condition.

The competition is part of a nationwide initiative called VR Challenge UK and will be launched at a virtual event in the Metaverse on Thursday.

It is being run by Suffolk County Council in conjunction with Spark Emerging Technologies Ltd as part of the council's recently awarded contract to develop a new, bespoke virtual reality (VR) app to deliver therapeutic experiences to people living with dementia across all Suffolk care settings.

Young people and adults from across the UK will be invited to get involved with this opportunity to create meaningful and stimulating VR films for people living with dementia.

The competition is open to amateurs and professionals, as well as students from further and higher education, carers, and people living with dementia themselves.

It is hoped nursing and residential homes, day centres, as well as Further Education Colleges, universities, and charitable organisations from across the UK will grab this opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of people with dementia.

“Ten years of clinical research has shown that virtual reality experiences can provide people living with dementia with a fuller and more satisfying quality of life, and lead to improvements in well-being, cognition, and communication – but there are still relatively few care settings in which these experiences are available. This competition is an opportunity to help us develop a cutting-edge application which will allow more people with dementia in Suffolk to access these experiences.” BH

In the first round of the competition, entrants will simply be invited to submit a brief storyboard of their proposed film for one of the following six categories:

- Suffolk
- Nostalgia
- Nature
- Leisure
- Computer Generated Imagery (CGI)
- Carer content

The deadline for the submission of storyboards will be Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June. Shortlisted candidates will then proceed to the second round of the competition where they will receive exclusive support from Spark to go on and plan, film and produce their proposed films by the deadline of Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August.

The final VR films will be evaluated by people living with dementia before being judged by a specialist panel. The winning films will be showcased at an awards ceremony in mid-October.

Winners in each tier of the competition will have the opportunity of choosing from three prizes: a brand new Insta360 X3 360 camera kit; a top of the range Oculus Meta Quest 2 VR Headset; or to gift a year's subscription to the new VR app with all the required hardware to a care setting of their choice.

More details can be found on the competition website at <https://vrchallengeuk.co.uk>



A £7.9 million government funding package for Suffolk to promote active travel schemes has been welcomed by Suffolk County Council. \*Please note the final paragraph re future local plans.

The money has come from Active Travel England (ATE) and will be spent on seven projects encouraging cycling and walking through measures such as cycle lanes, shared-use paths, and improved crossing points on roads.

It forms part of a £200 million package for England announced (19<sup>th</sup> May), and first unveiled in March this year.

The £7.9m for Suffolk is the fifth highest in England and the most for a county council.

The full list of schemes is:

- Woodbridge (Town Centre) - £4,005,000
- Grange Road Felixstowe- £1,318,000
- Ipswich Hospital to University of Suffolk - £ 1,227,950
- Woodbridge (South) - £1,125,000
- Ipswich - £105,149 to be spent on developing 12 schemes including the east-west Ipswich town centre route, Crown Street to Ipswich Waterfront and general travel to school in the borough
- Developing Bury St Edmunds East/West Route - £105,149
- Developing Capel St Mary to Copdock route - £46, 967

Some of the schemes, such as Ipswich Hospital to the University, have previously had improvements made under previous ATE funding rounds but this new money will link up and enhance that previous work.

“We welcome this funding as it will enable us to continue to build on the hard work that has taken place so far in developing and enhancing active travel projects. These schemes make a real difference because they enable people to get around without having to rely on the car. By doing so we reduce congestion and free up road space for the traffic that really does need to be there, while also protecting and enhancing our environment by reducing emissions.” AN

\*The council will now launch public engagement schemes throughout 2023 with a view to starting work on all schemes in 2024.

A new campaign by Suffolk Waste Partnership is encouraging people to empty plastic bags and not throw them in recycling. Repeated, but important. (repeated)

The #ShakeltOut campaign has been launched by the Suffolk Waste Partnership to encourage households in Suffolk to help improve recycling rates across the county by making sure black bin bags and other plastic sacks are not thrown in with recyclable materials.

#ShakeltOut is encouraging people to shake out plastic bags and keep recycling clean, dry, and loose.

The Partnership, which comprises Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Suffolk County Council, and West Suffolk Council, says more than a quarter (26%) of the materials in Suffolk’s recycling bins in 2022/23 were not able to be processed as they were spoiled.

Items that contributed to spoiled recycling collections included:

- Materials that were not clean and dry, or contained food and drink residue
- Rubbish sacks or plastic bags containing recycling
- Non-recyclable items, such as nappies and food waste

Plastic bags and rubbish sacks are a particular problem – recycling handlers can't see what's inside them and they are often full of rubbish or other non-recyclable items.

This means bags are removed during the sorting process to avoid spoiling other good recycling. Any removed bags are then sent for disposal.

**Rob Cole, of Suffolk Waste Partnership, said:**

"We know from previous research that 73% of Suffolk residents are concerned about the environment and most people want to get their recycling right\*.

Our Shake It Out campaign aims to help residents better understand their recycling services and ensure items are clean, dry and loose when they are placed in their recycling bins. We appreciate that some households may collect their recycling in plastic bags, to make it easy to carry out. This great work can be wasted if recycling is then added to your wheelie bin in a plastic bag.

The Suffolk Waste Partnership has also released a new animation as part of the wider campaign to promote the #ShakeltOut message.

The animation aims to remind households across the country of the simple measures they can take to help improve recycling: <https://youtu.be/iBKOUFWxXdQ>

To find out more about the #ShakeltOut campaign and for more information on recycling in Suffolk, visit [www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/shake-it-out](http://www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/shake-it-out)

Entries for this year's Fire Ride are now open, enabling Suffolk residents to show their support for firefighters past and present by taking part in the event on Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup>.

Novice cyclists, seasoned pros, or those just looking to get back into the saddle are invited to sign up for the charity cycle ride in aid of The Fire Fighters Charity.

Riders will set off from Haverhill Fire Station before enjoying stunning scenery as they travel through west Suffolk's countryside, with participants able to choose from a 35 or 75-mile route.

On completion of the cycle, limited edition finishers medals will be awarded, and the Salvation Army will serve refreshments. The friends and families of participants can also stay for a drink and take a behind-the-scenes tour of Haverhill Fire Station – making it a great day out for both cyclists and spectators.

Of the £25 entrance fee, no less than 85% will go to The Fire Fighters Charity and, whilst fundraising isn't compulsory, any rider who raises £150 or more for The Fire Fighters Charity will receive a red jersey as a thank you.

Councillor Andrew Reid, Public Health and Public Protection, commented:

“Cycling is a great way for people to start their journey on to fitness and, like other exercise such as parkrun, supports Suffolk County Council’s ongoing ambition to look after the health and wellbeing of our residents. Suffolk is fortunate enough to host stage five of this year’s Tour of Britain, which I hope will inspire people to take up their own challenge and give this year’s Fire Ride a go in aid of a very worthy cause. I would like to thank Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service for staging the Fire Ride since 2013, the success of which has been a testament to staff’s willingness to help others, despite having incredibly demanding day jobs.”

Anyone wishing to join the Fire Ride should visit [www.suffolkfireride.co.uk/](http://www.suffolkfireride.co.uk/) for further information and to book their place.

Which leads nicely onto:

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service have launched its ‘Name the Fire Engine’ competition enabling the public to name a fleet of new life-saving vehicles.

Nine new fire engines are set to be ready for use by the end of 2023, following Suffolk County Council allocating over £5.3m in its 2023/24 budget to replace some of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service’s current vehicle fleet with state-of-the-art alternatives.

To help celebrate the service’s 75th anniversary this year, Suffolk residents are invited to play an important part in shaping its future by naming the new engines in a competition.

People can also enter online by visiting the service’s Twitter and Facebook pages.

After the competition closes on Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup>, a judging panel consisting of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service’s senior fire staff and Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, Councillor Andrew Reid, will decide on the winning names.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service donated two of its former fire engines to Ukraine in March 2022 to help their counterparts in the war-torn country, with six staff from the service travelling over 1,000 miles across Europe to deliver the vehicles, which remain in service in Ukraine.

A decommissioned fire engine was also given to Ipswich Transport Museum last year to support their efforts to preserve local history for future generations to enjoy.

### Feedback about rural transport in Suffolk 2023

Passenger Transport Team at Suffolk County Council are looking for feedback from people who use rural transport services in Suffolk.  
Your feedback will help shape and develop the future of our services.

Have your say <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/D03AE6/> Survey will close 18 June 2023.

The survey will be advertised on social media and Suffolkonboard.  
Please forward to anyone you think may like to participate.

- Sizewell Gap - Sizewell, 5 June
- Sizewell Gap, near King Georges Lane – Sizewell, 6 June
- Sloe Lane, off Snape Road, 7 June **(new location)**
- A1094/B1069 Junction – Friston, 8 June
- B1121 near Kiln Lane - Friston, 9 June
- Church Lane / Church Road – Friston, 12 June **(new date)**
- Snape Road - Friston, 13 June
- Aldeburgh Road – Aldringham, 14 June
- B1353, near Church Lane – Aldringham, 15 June
- Grove Road south – Friston, 16 June **(new date)**

The traffic management will include blue flashing lights and traffic lights to be set to red.

## Fire service urges people to stay safe this summer

After a record-breaking number of wildfires last year, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is asking everyone to be fire safety aware as the weather gets warmer.

Firefighters from the service responded to more than 500 fires in the open, which includes woodland, heaths, farmland, and fields, during July and August 2022. By comparison, there were only around 100 fires in the open in Suffolk during the same period in 2021.

Some of the large-scale incidents included a field fire at Knodishall, a blaze at Barham involving 45 acres of crop, and a forest fire near Thetford.

A significant increase in fires due to the extreme temperatures experienced last summer also resulted in the service declaring a major incident for the first time in decades on Tuesday, 19 July 2022.

To help avoid a similar spike in demand this year, the service is asking everyone to play their part in reducing the risk of fires. During hot and dry weather, people are encouraged to:

1. Put litter in the bin when out and about.
2. Avoid barbecues and campfires in public open spaces.
3. Ensure that any cigarettes are totally put out and disposed of properly.  
Pick up any glass items instead of leaving them lying around after a picnic.

**Jon Lacey, Chief Fire Officer for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, commented on the importance of being fire safety aware:**

“Suffolk is a predominantly rural county, so fires in the open are far more common during prolonged periods of dry weather as demonstrated last year.

“The increase in demand was immensely challenging for our fire service, with many firefighters who have been with us for their whole working life describing working in the peak of the heatwave as being like nothing they’d ever experienced before.

“Although we will always be there for our communities when they need us most, we would ask that people help us by preventing incidents from happening in the first place, reducing the chance of anyone being seriously injured or even killed in a fire.”

**Cllr Andrew Reid, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, added:**

“ is incredibly fortunate to have such a fantastic fire service whose forward planning enabled it to respond to a record-breaking number of fires in the open last summer.

“Sadly, many of these incidents could have been avoided by people being more careful, as it only takes one bit of thoughtlessness, such as throwing a cigarette out of a car window, to spark a major wildfire that requires our firefighters to spend hours putting it out.

“We all need to be mindful of these fire risks to help ease pressure on the service this year and avoid irreversible damage to our county’s open spaces at a time when we’re all working towards protecting and enhancing Suffolk’s environment.”

Farmers are also urged to slow the spread of fires by storing hay and straw with a break between stacks and away from other buildings, especially those housing livestock or containing fuels and chemicals.

Further advice on staying fire safe during the summer months can be found on [Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service’s website](#), with guidance also being shared regularly on their [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) channels.

