

Council Tax Frozen For Fourth Year

Longer-term planning and continued efficiency savings are paying dividends for the people of Suffolk Coastal – where Council Tax is being frozen for the fourth consecutive year.

Suffolk Coastal District Council has set a budget for 2014/15 of £12.125million – a net reduction of just over half a million pounds on 2013/14.

And it has pegged Council Tax at the same level as 2010/11 – with a Band D home paying £149.40.

This is despite facing a reduction of just over £2million in its central Government funding since 2010.

“Like all councils across the country, Suffolk Coastal is faced with its share of financial challenges and opportunities when it comes to setting the budget. However, we are helped by having adopted a proactive, longer-term approach to financial planning,” said Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council.

Suffolk Coastal agreed its Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in December 2013, which provides a framework for developing its spending plans within the overall financial climate.

“All the reorganisations and efficiency drives we brought in during previous years are really starting to have an impact now.”

“We are really seeing the benefits of long-term strategic decisions, such as us being one of the first

councils in the country to move towards reducing our administration costs by providing shared services with our partners in Waveney,” said Cllr Herring.

“The key is our policy of consistently driving down costs. We are committed to preserving frontline services, but we want to provide them more efficiently and effectively, using new technology where possible to ensure there is a quality service available to our community.”

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Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council

Cllr Herring points to two good examples of getting improved value for money. Suffolk Coastal recently renewed the contract for providing leisure services at its four leisure centres. The new contract will bring £500,000 savings a year.

And efficiencies created through its partnership with Suffolk Coastal Services, who provide essential services such as waste collection, will create extra savings of just under £700,000 in the budget.

But Suffolk Coastal is also investing directly into improving our communities.

“The Government provides a financial incentive from the new homes being built in the District. This is not part of our core funding and could cease at any time,” explained Cllr Herring. “So we are allocating the money towards projects that directly improve our communities, such as

providing the funding for the Community Enabling budget where £220,000 has been set aside to allow each Ward Councillor to directly fund community improvement projects in their area.”

“Similarly, the New Homes Bonus money is being used to fund the Community Grants provided to support local initiatives. At the end of the day, it is the local communities that see the effects of this growth in housing, so it is only right that the money is used to directly support them in the future.”

This is another example of the long-term approach being adopted by Suffolk Coastal.

“Having an over-arching, medium-term financial planning process in place, means we do not just focus on each annual budget. We are not afraid of making radical decisions, which stand the test of time,” explained Cllr Herring, who is one of the longest-serving Leaders in the country, having taken the helm at Suffolk Coastal in 1999.

“We have an established Cabinet and a sense of ownership around our decision making. We are committed to supporting the planned, long-term development and prosperity of Suffolk Coastal for the benefit of all our communities.”

Where the money goes...

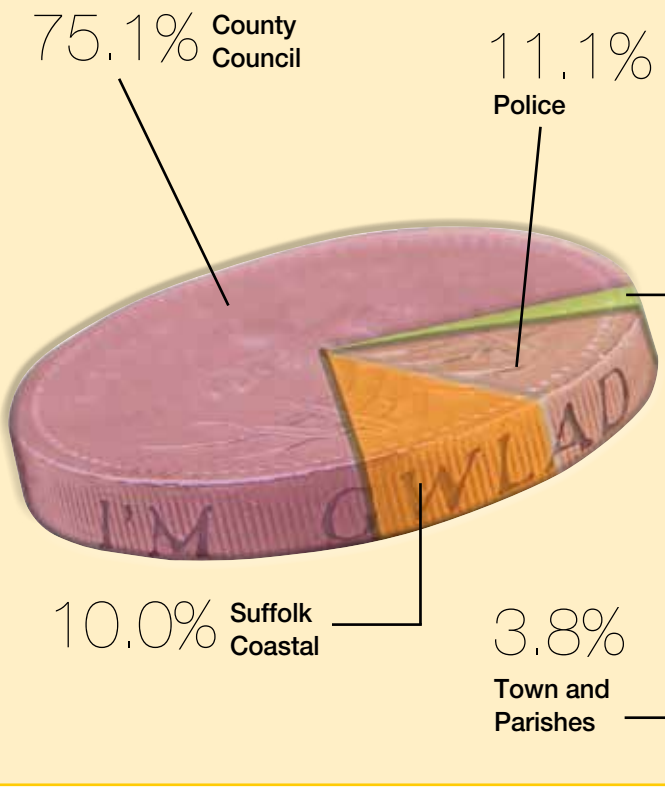
Most people don't realise where their Council Tax goes.

Although Suffolk Coastal is responsible for collecting the Council Tax in the District, only one pound in ten actually goes into our budget.

So, when an average Band D Council Tax bill in the District is nearly £1,500, less than £150 goes towards paying for all the services provided by Suffolk Coastal District Council.

The vast majority of the Council Tax (75.1%) goes to the County Council, with the Police getting a further 11.1%.

Suffolk Coastal then gets 10%, with the Town and Parish Councils getting 3.8%.



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Fit For The Future

The leisure management company, DC Leisure (DCL), has proved it is fit to run the District's leisure facilities in the future – by winning the contract for a further 15 years.

DCL has been running the leisure facilities in Suffolk Coastal for the last decade. However, its current contract is due to run out at the end of this month (March 2014).

Earlier this year, Suffolk Coastal District Council went out to the market to find the best contractor to operate its leisure facilities for at least the next 15 years.

And, following an exhaustive procurement process, DCL successfully bid for the leisure contract and achieved 'preferred supplier' status.

"We carried out a competitive procurement process

to ensure we got the best possible value for money, whilst also meeting the challenge of increasing participation in sport and improving the health and fitness of local people," said Cllr Geoff Holdcroft, Cabinet Member leading this project.

"Although we have achieved significant financial savings through this new contract, cost was not the only factor. In fact cost was not even the major factor. We were very impressed by the quality of DCL's offering, with its plans to invest and improve the leisure provision in the District."

"We will now work in partnership with DC Leisure to improve and modernise what we offer through our leisure facilities, whilst continuing to raise service standards and improving access to facilities for local people and visitors."

Initial figures indicate that the new contract will 'save' Suffolk Coastal in the region of £500,000 a year – or about £2.5million over the first five years (2014-19).

DC Leisure will have overall responsibility for the leisure facilities, and will be the contracting entity with the Council, its subsidiary called Places for People Leisure (which is a social enterprise) will actually run the day-to-day operation at the existing facilities at Felixstowe Leisure Centre; Brackenbury Sports Centre; Deben Swimming Pool and Leiston Leisure Centre.

DCL and Suffolk Coastal have now entered into detailed contractual negotiations to agree terms for the final contract signing, which is likely to happen in the next few months.

On The Move?

Suffolk Coastal's search for better office accommodation has now moved forward – with a preferred option being identified for the future.

In January, Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet received a confidential report on the progress of the Accommodation Project Board.

A previous report had revealed that the Council's Melton Hill headquarters is no longer fit for purpose, because it is increasingly expensive to maintain and it is too big for the council's current staffing level.

"Following in-depth feasi-

bility studies, we have now reached the stage where we have identified a preferred option for our new office accommodation and Cabinet has given its authority for us to begin negotiations to try to agree terms" said Cllr Robert Whiting, Chairman of the Accommodation Project Board and Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet Member for Resources.

"I would stress that no final decision has been made. We will carry out the negotiations, then return to Cabinet for any final decision to be ratified."

"All this work is being



conducted within our aim of providing office accommodation, which supports our staff in offering the best possible service to the community, at the least possible cost to our taxpayers."

Play Your Part

Suffolk Coastal has launched a wide-ranging leisure review – and we need local people to play their part.

This council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of people in this District.

To make a real difference, we are developing a clear strategy to provide direction to our chosen leisure development partner for the next decade.

We need to stress, this wide-ranging review is about all forms of leisure and recreation, not just sport. Our guiding principle is that we are including leisure and recreation pursuits that people 'do' rather than those that they 'view'.

Our aim is to engage with local people to develop a strategy for how we deliver our services to help improve the health, wellbeing and fitness of our communities.

Local residents have the opportunity to shape this direction by attending one of our drop-in sessions which will be held across the District or completing our online questionnaire.

Further information about the leisure strategy, drop-in sessions and online questionnaire can be found on the SCDC website: www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/your-freetime/leisurestrategy/.

Support for **City Deal**

The Leader of Suffolk Coastal, Cllr Ray Herring, has voiced his support for a scheme to bring jobs and investment into the greater Ipswich area.

The deal, signed by Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, Minister for Cities Greg Clark, local businesses and council leaders is the latest City Deal to get the green light from government.

The Greater Ipswich City Deal aims to make Suffolk more prosperous by:

- Supporting 3,500 young people into work in the Greater Ipswich area.
- Creating and piloting a Youth Job Centre.
- Increasing local private and public investment in skills by at least £10 million.
- Creating 5,000 new apprenticeships by 2019.
- Creating 3,000 additional high-value jobs and 400 new businesses across Suffolk and Norfolk.

‘Suffolk Coastal strongly supports this positive development. A vibrant economy in the wider Ipswich area will have obvious benefits for people in our District, particularly the young people, by providing them with the skills and opportunities they need to stay and build their careers in this area’ said Councillor Herring.

“The City Deal complements Suffolk Coastal’s own long-term strategies to provide much-needed new jobs and affordable housing in our District and is an excellent example of how the authorities are working together across Suffolk to improve the environment for young people.”

ESP Forum Success

More than 200 key people from groups across East Suffolk attended the first East Suffolk Partnership (ESP) Forum, staged at Trinity Park Conference Centre.

The aim of the conference was to help build better partnership working in East Suffolk, allowing the delegates the opportunity to meet members of the East Suffolk Partnership Board and hear about progress in developing a collaborative approach to working across East Suffolk.

And the delegates also took part in a series of workshops, with expert practitioners giving their advice, which will also help to develop the ESP’s priorities for the future.

“This Forum is being staged at a time when many local organisations are under increasing pressure to work together to deliver their products or services. The strength of the turn out today shows that local organisations and business leaders recognise the need for more



effective collaboration in this area,” said Ray Herring, Chairman of the East Suffolk Partnership.

“The ESP represents a new start for collaborative working in East Suffolk and this Forum gives people the chance to learn more about our work, while also helping us to develop our priorities for the future.”

“There is a growing commitment to collaboration at all levels. We want to harness that commitment, build a better understanding of the challenges facing these organisations and

work together to find a way forward.”

Delegates have been drawn from voluntary organisations, the private sector, community groups, local authorities and other local public sector organisations, town and parish councils, young people, faith groups, health-care professionals, older people’s representatives and other local organisations as well as central Government departments and bodies.

The keynote speaker for the Forum was Dr Andy Wood, chairman of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

On Track For **New Beginning**

An exciting new project is underway to try and breathe new life into the disused Saxmundham station building.

A group of local residents have come together to revitalise the now-empty station building at Saxmundham, giving birth to ‘The Friends of Saxmundham Station’, with the intention of bringing the station to the community and the community to the station.

Their vision is for one main occupant of the building, with a cafe/coffee shop, meeting rooms for local groups and friendly faces.

They are currently talking to a number of partners including Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council, the Town Council, Greater Anglia, Network Rail and businesses of Saxmundham.

And they have taken their

ideas to the Town Council, which requested a feasibility report to be submitted, so that it could consider the development of the building as part of their wider plans and obligations to best serve the town and its residents.

Now Suffolk Coastal, represented by Deputy Leader, Cllr Andy Smith, has agreed to fund the feasibility study to the tune of £1,050. For more information, see: www.saxstationfriends.org.uk/

Have your say

Local people are being encouraged to have their say about plans to cut the number of councillors in Suffolk Coastal District Council.

The suggestion is that the number of councillors should be cut from 55 to 42 in the future - a reduction of 13, which could save the Council up to £100,000 a year.

The Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council, Cllr Ray Herring, said: "We are pleased that the review team has followed our suggestion that we move to having 42 councillors in the future."

"With a population of 125,000 people, Suffolk Coastal is a very busy District and this obviously places greater pressure on our councillors, so it is important that we get the balance right. So, as the future structure of

our Council begins to take shape, local people need to use this opportunity to have their say on this proposed structure, before it is too late."

The recommendations are the result of a review carried out by the independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England. It has now launched an 11-week consultation on the new wards (including the ward boundaries and names), which will end on 28 April.

The consultation is open to anyone who wants to have their say on new council wards, ward boundaries and ward names across the district.

Professor Colin Mellors, Deputy Chair of the Commission, said: "We are publishing proposals for a

new pattern of wards across Suffolk Coastal and we are keen to hear what local people think of the recommendations. We are asking local people to tell us if they agree with the proposals or if not, how they can be improved."

"Our review aims to deliver electoral equality for local voters. This means that each councillor represents a similar number of people so that everyone's vote in council elections is worth roughly the same regardless of where you live."

Hard copies of the Commission's report and maps will also be available to view at council buildings and libraries.

For more information, see the Commission's website at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk and www.lgbce.org.uk.

As part of the work to transform and modernise IT services, creating greater efficiency and saving money, staff at two councils will shortly share the same email address 'domain'.

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils are pioneers for partnership working having agreed to share a Chief Executive in April 2008, establishing a shared senior management team in October 2010 and subsequently merging all teams across both councils.

Now, they are establishing a single IT function which will see all council officers migrate to one, upgraded and improved email system. The email upgrade means that every officer will be provided with a new "@eastssuffolk.gov.uk" email address, whether they work at Suffolk Coastal or Waveney.

Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal said: "This is the first of a number of changes and improvements to our IT systems which are vital to meet the needs of a progressive 21st century partnership. It reflects changes in the way that we work and further underlines the strong relationship between the two councils."

Stephen Baker, Chief Executive for both councils stressed the changes would not affect the sovereignty of the two councils, saying "This is not a step in the direction of fully merging the two councils. There are no plans whatsoever for that to happen. We remain two independent, sovereign councils and all councillors will keep their current Suffolk Coastal or Waveney addresses."

Martello Park Forges Ahead

The multi-million pound project to regenerate the southern seafront at Felixstowe has reached another milestone, with the opening of the public car parks.

Suffolk Coastal entered into a development agreement with Bloor Homes to bring much-needed new homes and leisure facilities to the South Seafront in Felixstowe.

As part of the agreement with the Council, Bloor Homes is paying for the repair and refurbishment of the Martello Tower. Also leisure and recreation space will run from Sea Road to Manor Terrace and will include play areas,

picnic areas, wildlife areas and pedestrian routes.

The Martello South and Martello North car parks opened to the public at the end of February. The car parks, which provide 261 pay and display parking spaces, offer extra parking facilities at the southern seafront.

"It is good to see that the Martello park development is reaching the stage where the public will start to see the benefits of this project," said the Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council, Cllr Ray Herring.

"People can now also see the



public spaces, including play equipment, being prepared, while work will be carried out to refurbish the Martello Tower to make it more attractive to visitors."

"Importantly for the area, the project will also be delivering much-needed affordable homes for Felixstowe."

Flooding Round-Up

The people of Suffolk Coastal were still reeling from the St Jude storm, when the largest tidal surge for at least 60 years hit the East Coast. Here Waveney, and in particular Lowestoft, took the brunt of the flooding, but properties were affected all across the two Districts.

As the joint emergency response sprang into action, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils linked with the Environment Agency, Emergency Services and County colleagues – getting out flood warnings, setting up emergency rest centres and dealing with distressed residents.

Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council, praised the response, saying: “The commitment and preparedness of our teams was absolutely first class. Where people have been affected they have been given the help and support they needed throughout the recovery process.”

Over 200 properties were flooded across Suffolk Coastal and Waveney but, despite the surge being similar to 1953, the early



Storm damage to Felixstowe promenade

warning and public response meant there was no loss of life in this area.

There were also 15 breaches to the coastal and river defences, which will need to be repaired.

In Suffolk Coastal, partially because of its rural nature, the impact was less immediately apparent in some areas. However, a significant number of homes were flooded at Snape (including the pubs) and Waldringfield, when the water got over the river walls. There were also homes and businesses flooded at Bawdsey, Felixstowe Ferry and Woodbridge.

Travel was disrupted for several days by the failure of the sea defences at Blyth-

burgh flooding the A12. Rail services along the Lowestoft to Ipswich line were closed for 12 days.

A number of people were temporarily re-homed, with some still unable to return to their homes. Teams of officers were out in the affected areas, offering advice and support to businesses and householders.

The Council loaned dehumidifiers to local people to help dry out their premises. Also we have removed flood-damaged goods and possessions upon request, free of charge. This includes bulky items and hazardous household waste.

Leaflets are also being distributed to homes and businesses in the affected areas saying that rate and Council Tax relief will be granted to affected properties. Discretionary relief to some affected properties has also been granted.

Suffolk Coastal continues to support communities and property occupiers affected by the recent severe weather. For further details www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Coastal Concordat

Our local councils are leading the way on a national initiative aimed at cutting the red tape that slows down vital coastal protection work.

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils were among a handful of ‘Early Adopters’, who supported the Coastal Concordat launched in November.

Suffolk Coastal's Deputy Leader Cllr Andy Smith who, as the Chairman of the Local Government Association's Coastal Special Interest Group, played a leading role in developing this Concordat and is now actively encouraging other councils to sign up to the agreement.

St Jude Starts Severe Winter

The severe weather that hit this country started with the St Jude storm.

Large areas of Suffolk Coastal had their electricity cut off – some people living for days without power in the middle of winter.

A total of 15 of Suffolk Coastal's countryside sites were seriously affected by the storm. Trees of varying ages were either felled by the wind or had limbs torn from them. The worse affected site was Sutton Heath where approximately 100 trees needed attention, ranging from 100+ year old pines and oaks that were felled and a range of other aged trees that were either felled or had branches affected.

The main clear-up took well over a month, with some fallen trees still in place.



Enabling Our Communities

A new fund has been set up by Suffolk Coastal to help support communities in the District.

The Community Enabling Budget gives each elected member of Suffolk Coastal a pot of money, specifically designed to help develop projects in their community.

A total of £220,000 is being set aside each year to support this work. This gives each Ward Councillor up to £4,000 a year to spend directly on new projects or community groups in their Ward, as they see appropriate.

“We are committed to supporting our local communities and have always worked to be an enabling council. No matter how lean and streamlined we become, we will continue to work to

support and enable local communities,” said Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council.

“It is not just about us centrally providing grants or services to people, it is about us helping and encouraging communities to organise and take responsibility for dealing with issues.”

“The local communities know what their needs are and are often best placed to come up with practical, long-term solutions to issues. By supporting them, we can build and protect our community spirit, while providing services tailored to their needs.”

“The Ward Councillors are key to the successful delivery of this ethos. As community leaders, Ward Councillors are perfectly placed to

identify and deliver what each community requires. They are our community ambassadors, able to take action on projects or, where necessary, troubleshoot to overcome any problems preventing the successful delivery of the community’s wishes.”

Community Enabling Budgets are designed to be spent on projects that are consistent with the Council’s Business Plan and Localism Strategy. The money cannot be used to support existing services but is aimed at stimulating new community activity.

For more information on Community Enabling Budgets, including the criteria and how to apply for funding, see www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/enablingcommunities/communitybudgets/



Action taken

The responsibility for overseeing the Enabling Communities Budget has been given to Suffolk Coastal’s cabinet member with responsibility for Customers, Communities and Leisure, Cllr TJ Haworth.

And she is already seeing good ideas coming forward from the community and being supported by their Ward Councillors.

“The Enabling Communities Budget was only launched in December, but we have already had a good response, with ideas being sent through for funding,” said TJ.

“What is really encouraging is not just the number of projects being submitted, but also the wide variety of ideas. We have schemes ranging from people wanting to develop effective emergency plans for their local community, through a project to manage the concerns of children worried about moving from primary to high schools, as well as one improving people’s E-safety, to improving pre-school equipment and one to improve disabled facilities.”

So, if you have an idea which can help improve your community, speak to your local Ward Councillor.

To check who your Ward Councillor is, with their contact details, see Centre Pages

The Big Picture

The creation of the Enabling Communities fund is part of a wider commitment to support local communities.

Suffolk Coastal recently adopted a clear Enabling Communities Strategy setting out how we will support local communities to do more for themselves - giving them greater influence over their local environment and the services provided.

This approach is central to delivering the Council’s Business Plan objectives of improving the quality of life of local people, by building

sustainable and thriving communities through capacity building.

“For us Enabling Communities is about adopting a culture of working with local people to deliver more with our communities,” explained Cllr Herring.

“We believe that the best way to empower people is to make the area where they live or work, into the place they want it to be. To do this, we have to ask communities what they want to do and help them achieve it.”



Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council

For more information on the Enabling Communities Strategy, see www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/enabling-communities/

Your Councillors 2011-15

Key: **Conservative** 44 **Liberal Democrat** 5 **Labour** 4 **Independent** 2

The **Leader** of Suffolk Coastal is **Cllr Ray Herring** -
for full contact details and information about committees visit
www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/councillors

<p>Felixstowe North</p>  <p>Mike Deacon 01394 211146</p>	<p>Felixstowe North</p>  <p>Kimberley Williams 07899 052493</p>	<p>Felixstowe South</p>  <p>Peter Coleman 01394 284968</p>	<p>Felixstowe South</p>  <p>Joan Sennington 01394 285030</p>	<p>Felixstowe South-East</p>  <p>Jan Garfield 01394 210887</p>
<p>Framlingham</p>  <p>Colin Walker 01728 638232</p>	<p>Grundisburgh</p>  <p>Tony Fryatt 07887 988271</p>	<p>Hacheston</p>  <p>Graham Peck 01728 748483</p>	<p>Hollesley with Eyke</p>  <p>Jane Marson 07771 608376</p>	<p>Kesgrave East</p>  <p>Geoff Lynch 07918 608837</p>
<p>Leiston</p>  <p>Trevor Hawkins 01728 830234</p>	<p>Leiston</p>  <p>Andrew Nunn 07833 441348</p>	<p>Martlesham</p>  <p>Chris Blundell 01473 613360</p>	<p>Martlesham</p>  <p>John Kelso 01473 631682</p>	<p>Melton & Ufford</p>  <p>Jim Bidwell 01394 385193</p>
<p>Peasenhall</p>  <p>Stephen Burroughes 01986 785283</p>	<p>Rendlesham</p>  <p>Terry Eastman 07899 063154</p>	<p>Rushmere St. Andrew</p>  <p>Mark Newton 07899 011098</p>	<p>Rushmere St. Andrew</p>  <p>Robert Whiting 07833 441347</p>	<p>Rushmere St. Andrew</p>  <p>John Withey 07899 063519</p>
<p>Trimleys with Kirton</p>  <p>Susan Harvey 01394 448780</p>	<p>Trimleys with Kirton</p>  <p>Richard Kerry 01394 275636</p>	<p>Walberswick & Wenhaston</p>  <p>Michael Gower 07874 203782</p>	<p>Wickham Market</p>  <p>Bryan Hall 01728 746837</p>	<p>Witnesham</p>  <p>Steve Hudson 01473 785920</p>

Aldeburgh



Marianne Fellowes
01728 453896

Aldeburgh



Terry-Jill Haworth
07899 063702

Earl Soham



Bob Snell
01728 621476

Felixstowe East



Doreen Savage
01394 285895

Felixstowe East



Chris Slemmings
01394 285441

Felixstowe South-East



Andy Smith
01394 283283

Felixstowe West



Stuart Bird
01394 275128

Felixstowe West



Margaret Morris
01394 274345

Felixstowe West



Michael Sharman
01394 213071

Framlingham



Christopher Hudson
07986 844259

Kesgrave East



Mary Neale
01473 614221

Kesgrave East



Sally Ogden
07702 476063

Kesgrave West



Martin Grimwood
01394 383387

Kesgrave West



Debbie McCallum
01473 613363

Leiston



Tony Cooper
01728 830181

Melton & Ufford



Michael Bond
01394 388611

Nacton



Veronica Falconer
01394 448263

Nacton



Patricia O'Brien
01394 448228

Orford & Tunstall



Ray Herring
01728 746337

Otley



Peter Bellfield
01473 735259

Saxmundham



Marian Andrews
01728 603553

Saxmundham



Sir Peter Batho
01728 602132

Snape



Phillip Dunnett
07833 441343

Sutton



Christine Block
01394 411660

Trimleys with Kirton



Graham Harding
01394 278936

Woodbridge Farlingaye



Diana Ball
01394 385284

Woodbridge Kyson



Les Binns
01394 387372

Woodbridge Riverside



Geoff Holdcroft
01394 610548

Woodbridge Seckford



Josh Sayles
07944 548659

Yoxford



Barry Slater
01728 648559

Outstanding designs celebrated



Chairman of the Council, Peter Bellfield (left) with Nicholas Jacob, Architect (right), winner of the Building Conservation Award.

The iconic building designs and conservation work which add to this District's character were celebrated at the fourth annual 'Quality of Place' awards ceremony.

The event was held in Suffolk Coastal's Council Chamber in Melton Hill, Woodbridge, late last year - where prizes were awarded to seven outstanding projects.

The awards are a celebration of the effort being made by people across Suffolk Coastal to add to the quality of our environment by helping conserve historic buildings, landscape or nature, or introducing new innovative designs.

"There is growing awareness of the positive impact high quality design and conservation can have on the local environment. As a Council, Suffolk Coastal is committed to encouraging innovative design and work that helps conserve the best of our District. These awards are our opportunity to spotlight some of the excellent efforts being made locally," said Cllr Veronica Falconer, who chaired the panel of judges.

"The quality of the work being done locally can be judged by the fact that projects from this District often go on to win national awards or accolades. The Quality of Place awards help focus attention on what is being achieved in Suffolk Coastal and encourages others to follow these examples of best practice."

"Once again, it was a difficult but enjoyable task for our experienced panel of judges to come up with the winners and highly commended projects, as there were some outstanding examples to choose from," added Cllr Falconer.

The judges this year were - SCDC Cllr Veronica Falconer (Chair); Architectural expert, Peter Wells (Member of Suffolk RIBA); Conservation expert, Fiona Cairns (Director of Suffolk Preservation Society); Local amenity society expert, Peter Hill (The Aldeburgh Society).

All the categories were judged on quality of design and detailing, quality workmanship, materials, and sustainability.

Categories, Winners and what the judges said

Category - Design - New build - Non Residential

Winner: Archive - The Red House, Aldeburgh

The new purpose-built Archive to house the Britten-Pears Foundation's internationally significant collection relating to the composer Benjamin Britten and his associates designed by architects Stanton Williams and constructed by R.C. Carter Ltd. in soft red brick reflecting the qualities of the adjacent Grade II Listed Red House, the judges commented that it was; *"A triumph... The quality in workmanship and design is outstanding which sits comfortably in its setting."*

Category - Design - New build - Residential

Winner: Walk Farm Barn, Westleton

Walk Barn Farm is a single storey eco house and stand-alone bat house, which replaced a previous dwelling. Architect Charles Barclay said that the *"House was carefully designed to relate positively to its semi-wild context while providing spectacular framed views of the site from inside."* The contractor for the scheme was Stephen Mersh of Maidstone, Kent. One of the Quality of Place Judges commented that it was; *"Absolutely wonderful... Superbly simple in visual terms."*

Highly Commended: Rivercote, Woodbridge

This attractive contemporary dwelling replaced a 1930's chalet-bungalow and was designed, by local architect Patrick Allen Ltd., to be appropriate for its important riverside site. The scheme took into consideration the form of the commercial workshop buildings of the c19th and c20th and was built to a high standard of workmanship by Complete Timber Solutions Ltd of Melton. The judges found the building to have; *"quality detailing and a stunning setting."*

Category - Design - Extension and Conversion

Highly Commended: Bethesda Baptist Church, Felixstowe

The church is situated on a prominent corner in the Felixstowe South Conservation Area. The extensions to the church were designed by local architect Stephen Claydon to provide much-needed additional space and a welcoming entrance. The scheme produced a striking revitalised building, built by Elliston Steady & Hawes. The judges commented that the scheme was *"an impressive community building and the scheme delivered what the client wanted on a very constrained site."*

Highly Commended: Fludyer Arms Hotel, Felixstowe

Works included the removal of later inappropriate front and side extensions to allow the ground floor of the original Edwardian property to be fully appreciated once more. Bold use of a contemporary design by Last & Tricker Partnership, for a new rear extension, with glass to the main elevation, provided a stair and circulation area to all levels, constructed by A M F Building Contractors of Felixstowe. The judges commented that the scheme was *"an interesting design where a good contrast from the original building has been achieved."*

Category - Building Conservation

Winner: Darsham House, Darsham

Darsham House, a grade II Listed country house, had suffered neglect and poor quality alterations within the last decade. Furthermore, unauthorised alterations carried out by a previous owner had led to enforcement action having to be served by the local authority. This was still ongoing when the current owners brought the property and set about its restoration with the assistance of Nicholas Jacob Architects. The attention to detail in every aspect of the repair and refurbishment of the house is clearly evident with R & J Hogg Ltd having carried out the work to very high standards. Now, three years on, the house is a wonderful historic house again, an example of how sensitive restoration/conservation work should be carried out. The judges said the work carried out showed *"Superb attention to detail and craftsmanship..."*

Highly Commended: 107 Saxmundham Road, Aldeburgh 1928 House

The 1928 House is a fascinating and unique piece of history. Unaltered since its construction, the house still retains its original Crittall windows and striking green paintwork, with none of the additions so often added to houses over the decades. Incredibly, the house still has the original furniture, purchased in the 1920s. Receipts found in the house detail the items bought. All the original contents have been sensitively restored. Owners and project managers Mr Tarry and Mr James have taken much time over getting the detail of the restoration of the property correct, Mr Tarry said *"it takes an awful lot of work to make it look as if nothing has changed"*. One of the judges commented that; *"personally I loved the scheme, it is a good example of a 1920's house it is harder and harder to find original examples of this era."*

Thorpeness Consultation Update

Local people have now had their say on the future policy for managing the coast at Thorpeness.

Suffolk Coastal launched a consultation exercise in mid-November, aimed at gauging public support for changing the 'Shoreline Management Policy' (SMP) for Thorpeness.

By the closing date in December nearly 370 responses were received – most of them supporting the proposed change in policy.

"I am delighted with the response to the consultation. We have received a remarkable amount of feedback, which clearly shows the effort put in by the Parish Council and the Thorpeness Coastal Futures Group, which created this great level of response from the community," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council, who has respon-

sibility for coastal management issues.

"The overall response has been very positive and is greatly in favour of the change in policy. The difficulty in creating a realistic long-term strategy for managing the coastline in this area was once again demonstrated with the recent tidal surge, which resulted in further damage to the beach."

"We recognise that this is a rather technical area. However, as recent events have demonstrated, we need to be able to react quickly to events on the coastline at Thorpeness."

The stretch of coastline is expected to continue to be eroded by the sea. This potential change in the policy does not mean that it will now be automatically defended but it does allow greater flexibility for the district council to work



Work carried out at Thorpeness in 2011 - now a new plan is being considered for the coast here

with the local community to develop a way forward that meets all our needs.

The suggested change has been agreed in principle by the Suffolk Coast Forum (including organisations such as Natural England and the Environment Agency), but Suffolk Coastal felt it was important that local people had this opportunity to have their say about the proposal and raise any questions or

concerns they may have.

At its February meeting, Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet decided to recommend a move to the new, more active policy of 'Managed Realignment' for Thorpeness in the short, medium and long-term. This has now been sent to the Environment Agency's Regional Director for approval. It is hoped a final decision will be made by late 2014.

Housing Benefit - Online forms

Suffolk Coastal has introduced a new online application form for Housing Benefits and Local Council Tax Reduction.

The form can be found at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/benefits/apply/

If you do not have access to the internet at home, there is free access available at your local library.

There is also free internet access at the Jobcentre in Woodbridge and Felixstowe. You could also visit

our Felixstowe and Melton Hill Offices and complete an application form.

You will still need to provide certain evidence to support your application. These can be sent by post or you can visit us at our Melton Hill offices in Woodbridge or our Felixstowe Office on a Monday and Wednesday.

Alternatively an appointment can be made at our Melton Hill Offices to provide your supporting documents. Appointments are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Full information is available online www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/benefits/

Self Service system

Suffolk Coastal is operating an online self service system.

This service is available to all Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Reduction customers and landlords who receive direct payments of Housing Benefit.

Once you have logged in you will be able to view details of how your benefit has been calculated, the payments

sent to you or your landlord and copies of correspondence we have sent you.

You can register to use the self service system online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/benefits/online/

You can also manage your Council Tax accounts online www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/counciltax/online/ or your Business Rates account online www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/your-business/businessrates/online/

Really meaty savings

A local company has cashed in – by taking part in a free energy audit.

The Sausage Shop and Butchery in Trimley St Martin, near Felixstowe, recently took advantage of the free energy efficiency scheme being offered through Suffolk Coastal District Council.

And now more businesses are being encouraged to take part in this green cost-saving initiative.

“Domestic and commercial energy costs are constantly rising. Gas now costs twice as much as it did in 2003 and electricity is not far behind, so smart businesses are looking for ways to minimise their energy consumption to protect themselves from further price rises,” explained Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Leader of Suffolk Coastal and Cabinet Member responsible for Economic Development.

“Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils are running the East Coast Carbon Efficiency Scheme, which shows local small and medium-sized businesses how they can make energy savings and cut costs. The service is free, so it makes good business sense to take part.”

When The Sausage Shop and Butchery was contacted by a member of the East Coast Carbon Efficiency Scheme (ECCE), they jumped at the chance to identify cost savings.

The owners of this small business were looking to reduce the cost of running the business’s extensive array of refrigeration units. After a free energy audit by an ECCE Advisor, energy savings of over £1,300 were identified, most of which could be undertaken with very little initial outlay and effort.

The business has been quick to take action – and has already implemented measures saving it over £850 a year.

The Sausage Shop and Butchery also applied for, and was awarded, a grant of over £500 to upgrade an old refrigeration unit, allowing it to make even greater savings from its utility bills. Businesses can apply up for up to 35% of the total needed and grants can be awarded up to £5,000, with the panel meeting every month to make the awarding decisions.

Owner Rodney Rowe said: “The ECCE project was great to get involved in. We received practical advice about reducing our bills, without having to invest significantly in new equipment. We decided to upgrade one chiller unit and received a grant of over £500 towards the cost of this project, with



minimal paperwork required.”

After the initial audit, The Sausage Shop and Butchery also decided to take up the free Suffolk Carbon Charter environmental accreditation associated with the project, in order to communicate their good work to their customers.

The Suffolk Carbon Charter provides an excellent vehicle for The Sausage Shop and Butchery to share information about their great local and ethical purchasing practices.

Green savings - good business

The East Coast Carbon Efficiency (ECCE) project is offering businesses in Suffolk Coastal the opportunity to become more efficient and help the environment.

Victory Car Sales in Leiston were recently the 100th business to benefit from a green audit, which identifies how money and carbon emissions can be saved. The audits are open to eligible Small and Medium businesses (SMEs) based within Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Districts.

Businesses within this energy efficiency advice

scheme in East Suffolk have already been shown how they can make almost £500,000 worth of savings.

The ECCE is a partnership between Suffolk Coastal, Waveney, and Groundwork Suffolk.

It’s very easy to book a free audit for your business, by contacting the ECCE project co-ordinator on 01502 523393 or email ecce@groundwork.org.uk. More information and the eligibility criteria is available at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/support/energyadvice/

Action taken on pollution hotspot

Suffolk Coastal is taking action on a new pollution hotspot by creating a new Air Quality Management Area.

An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is set up when the air quality in a specific area falls below Government standards.

Suffolk Coastal has a legal duty to monitor the air quality in the District and already has two AQMAs – at Felixstowe and at Woodbridge.

Now a third AQMA could be set up on the A12 on the outskirts of Stratford St Andrew.

“Concern about the air quality in the area led to us monitoring the pollution levels since 2011. Over this period, the level of nitrogen dioxide in this part of Stratford St Andrew, has consistently exceeded the standard,” explained Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

The plan to declare a new AQMA at Long Row, Main Road, Stratford St Andrew, has now been sent to DEFRA for approval, then an action plan will be drawn up to reduce the pollution levels.

Disability Forum

Suffolk Coastal Disability Forum would welcome new members.

The Forum, which was launched in September 2012, aims to provide a place where everyone who wants to make a difference to the lives of disabled people in the Suffolk Coastal area can meet, be involved, and have their say.

Suffolk Coastal provides support through the use of the Council Chamber and other facilities.

Membership is open to:

- disabled people, and their

family carers, who live in Suffolk Coastal, including people with physical disabilities, sensory disabilities, learning disabilities or mental health problems;

- representatives of disability organisations that provide a service to people who live in Suffolk Coastal;
- representatives of Suffolk Coastal

In its short life, the Suffolk Coastal Disability Forum (SCDF) has held a series of well-attended meetings, looking at leisure facilities in the area; parking, pavements and paths. Issues are still being followed

up a year or more later.

A wheelchair user member has helped to draw up a report on access for people with disabilities at leisure centres – which will feed into SCDC's major review of leisure provision across the District; Housing issues for disabled people in Suffolk Coastal involving discussions with SCDC and Flagship such as the impact of the spare room subsidy, and adaptations to houses.

And the Forum has even had a positive impact at Suffolk Coastal, which hosts its meetings – they ensured

that the door of the accessible toilet near the Council chamber opens and closes at the correct rate and, after discovering one fire exit from the council chamber is down 12 steps, a evacuation chair and trained operator is now provided at all public meetings.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 8th April at 1 p.m. at the Council Chamber, Suffolk Coastal District Council, Melton Hill. The theme is Transport and our guests will include representatives from Greater Anglia, First Bus, and Community Transport providers.

Rural Broadband in Churches

Churches are stepping in to help local residents in rural areas who are struggling to get internet access.

Churches are often located in strategic places ideal for receiving and transmitting Broadband wireless signals to village residents.

All Saints' church in Hollesley has recently installed Broadband aerials on the tower and as a result people in Shingle Street and other villages can now get fast Broadband.



Keeping an eye on the church, via the internet!

Suffolk Coastal www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

In addition the advantages to churches themselves are often overlooked. Apart from a small annual income, free Broadband is available in the church as well as the school, the village hall and to the vicar.

This means that events in the church can make use of the Internet and all online resources become available.

But, perhaps more importantly, the Broadband connection improves security. A motion sensitive password-protected Internet camera has been installed enabling the whole church to be viewed remotely by those responsible for security.

Finally almost as a spin off, the camera plus audio may be accessed with a temporary password by absent friends at a wedding, christening or funeral.

Tree Planting



Tree planting in progress

Local people will soon be seeing the benefit of a new tree planting scheme in the area.

Following the Tree Council's recent donation of £175 to Suffolk Coastal, funds were made available to local Tree Wardens to help with parish tree and hedge planting schemes.

The Tree Council's money was then matched by an

amount from the Suffolk Coastal's Countryside budget.

The Council received applications from four Parishes and, as a result, were able to help fund Wickham Market's and Blaxhall's ongoing hedge planting projects, the planting of some replacement oak trees on Middleton's recreation ground and the planting of some fruit trees at Melton Riverside Picnic site.

Kids Taught To Be Wise

Hundreds of local primary school children are being taught to be good citizens – thanks to an innovative educational scheme.

Funded by the Suffolk Community Safety Partnership and supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the anti-social behaviour and crime prevention presentation is being given to Year 5 pupils in primary schools across Suffolk Coastal.

Entitled 'Y-B-Yz' (which reads as Why Be Wise), the training is given through an interactive one-hour workshop using magic and story-telling focusing on 'good citizenship', which is highlighted in the National Curriculum. Themes throughout the presentation also highlight anti-social behaviour, bullying and its consequences.

The themes explored in Y-B-Yz link naturally into the Crucial Crew courses given in Year 6.

"This scheme has been running for a few years in Waveney and we have received very good feedback, from pupils and teachers alike. The important thing is that we are getting strong, positive messages through to the children at the right age to influence their behaviour," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health and Chair of the Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership.

The Y-B-Yz workshops were launched in December last year and run through to the end of this month (March). They are being given at over 20 primary schools in the District.

You're hired !



*The Apprentices – with our very own 'Sir Alan' McFarlane centre front.
From left to right back row: Mollie Evans, Chloe McVay, Scarlett Jones, Lee Todd, Ben Mills, Jake Read, Sigourney Ventura, Chris Wheeler, Lucy Paterson, Chloe Farley.
From left to right front row: Carol Lower, Alan McFarlane, Simon Elvin.*

Our apprentices were recently faced with a unique challenge – doing 'The Apprentice'.

Ten apprentices from Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils took part in a special training day in January – based round the popular TV show 'The Apprentice'.

The day started with the apprentices learning skills for life after their apprenticeships with CV writing, interview techniques, and job applications.

In the afternoon, the 10 apprentices were split into two groups of five to complete project work on making our recruitment process more appealing to young people.

This included creating an

advert and a brand for our apprenticeship scheme and deciding where they would advertise for apprenticeships to increase the number of applicants we get.

They then had the opportunity to present all their ideas back to a judging panel including our very own 'Sir Alan' (Alan McFarlane – Director of Resources), Carol Lower, Head of Human Resources and Simon Elvin, Human Resources Representative.

"The day was a great success. The apprentices were able to show us fantastic team working and great confidence in their presentations. They also came up with some great ideas on recruitment, some of which we plan to adopt in the way

we create our job adverts and promote them," said Alan McFarlane, Director of Resources.

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils currently have 11 apprentices across both Councils and the scheme is proving to be a great success.

"Both Councils have a good success rate in keeping the apprentices on once their apprenticeships cease. Given our workforce is ageing, with the highest proportion of employees falling within the 45 -54 age group, this is an effective way of bringing bright young people into our organisation," said Cllr Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources.

About Our Apprentice Scheme

All of our apprentices are being supported to gain a Business Administration or Customer Services NVQ.

Permanent jobs are not guaranteed but their training and

experience does improve their career prospects and they are able to apply for any internal vacancies that arise during the course of their employment within the Council.

The apprenticeships scheme has proven very successful for young people to get jobs within the Council or with other employers when their apprenticeship has finished.

Making a hi-tech splash



The latest technology to help swimmers achieve more in the pool is making a splash at Suffolk Coastal's leisure centres.

The SWIMTAG wristband is simply picked up on arrival at the centre, worn in the pool and once returned back to the docking station on reception all the swimmers results are uploaded to their online account.

This enables people to see how far they have swum, work on improving their stroke technique and monitoring how many calories they burn.

It can also set fun challenges, such as swimming the distance between Felixstowe and Leiston leisure centres.

People can also compete against each other in swims which are, for example, the



distance around the Scilly Isles or English Channel - all from the safety of their local pool!

As well as making swimming more fun, this helps people stay motivated and achieve their personal best – whatever their ability.

The equipment is due to be installed in April 2014 at the Felixstowe Leisure Centre,

Deben Pool and Leiston Pool, and is free for swim members and full members.

SWIMTAG records member's previous swims and compares them, so they can track improvement as well as sharing latest swims on social media.

Cllr TJ Haworth, Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet Member for Customers, Community

and Leisure, said: "The SWIMTAG technology is a fantastic way to help you be more active and gives you lots of information to help keep you motivated and enjoying your swims."

To find out more about SWIMTAG, or how to become a member at any of the pools mentioned above, visit www.dcleisurecentres.co.uk.



Contact Us

General enquiries

Please check our website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk for any information you require.

Accessing services online is quick, easy, cost effective - and avoids you having to wait in a queue.

Email: customerservices@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

You can call us on **01394 383789**

- Monday to Wednesday 8:45am to 5:00pm
- Thursday 9:30am to 5:30pm
- Friday 8:45am to 4:30pm

Our telephone lines are usually busiest on Mondays and between 12-2pm each day. Calling outside these times avoids long waiting times.

- Minicom/textphone: 01394 444211**

Visit us

Public access to computers that allow our customers to view appropriate websites and other useful Council information is provided at our premises.

As with the telephones, Mondays are our busiest day, as well as the period between 12 noon - 2pm being busy.

Council Buildings

Customer Service Centre & Tourist Information – Woodbridge Library New Street, Woodbridge, IP12 1DT
Opening times:

- 10am - 4pm on Mondays
- 9.30am - 5pm on Tuesdays
- 9am - 5pm - Wednesday to Friday
- Citizens Advice Bureau** drop in session Tuesday 10.00am-12.00

Melton Hill Reception - Melton Hill Headquarters, Woodbridge, IP12 1AU

Opening times:

- Monday to Wednesday 8:45am to 5:00pm
- Thursday 9:30am to 5:30pm
- Friday 8:45am to 4:30pm

Felixstowe - 93 Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe IP11 2AF

- Benefits enquiries:** Mondays & Wednesdays 9.00am - 12.30pm and 2.00pm - 4.30pm.
- Housing surgery:** Wednesdays 2.00pm to 4.30pm.
- Felixstowe Citizens Advice Bureau:** drop in session, Mondays 9.30am - 11am.

We are closed on all statutory bank holidays and weekends.

For refuse collection and recycling enquiries contact **Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd**
Telephone: **01394 444000**
or Email: scsltd@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

For **Port Health** enquiries, based at the Port of Felixstowe:

Telephone: **01394 614933**.
Email: port.health@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk
Website: www.porthealth.eu

Tourist Information centres

- Aldeburgh 01728 453637
- Felixstowe 01394 276770

Leisure Centres (managed by DC Leisure)

- Felixstowe 01394 670411
- Brackenbury 01394 270278
- Leiston 01728 830364
- Deben Pool 01394 38476

Emergencies outside of office hours

We operate an out-of-hours emergency telephone service, jointly with Waveney District Council, telephone **01502 527133**.

On Your Bike!



And they're off - Suffolk Coastal's chairman Cllr Peter Bellfield, puts councillors TJ Haworth, Alasdair Ross and Alan Goggin under starters orders for Stage Three of the Women's Tour at Felixstowe.

Felixstowe is to host a world-class cycling event in May.

Stage Three of the first Women's Tour will start in Felixstowe on Friday, 9 May, before winding its way through Suffolk Coastal's countryside to Ipswich, then down to Essex, finishing in Clacton.

"This is great news for Felixstowe. A lot of hard work has gone on behind the scenes to attract this prestigious event to the area. Hopefully it will prove to be a massive boost, not only to Felixstowe but for the entire District," said Cllr TJ Haworth, Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet Member with responsibility for Customers, Communities and Leisure.

"Cycling is increasingly high profile and has seen a massive growth in popularity as a participation sport in recent years. Having Stage

Three of The Women's Tour starting in Felixstowe, then going through Suffolk Coastal, will put us in the spotlight."

"This event allows us to support our aim of encouraging people to have healthier lifestyles, while giving the tourist industry and profile of Felixstowe and the surrounding area a much-needed boost, opening the town up to a new audience and new type of tourist. We hope the start of Stage Three in Felixstowe will be a real community event, involving the local schools and other organisations."

This is the country's first ever international stage-race and it is already bringing in the stars – one of the first riders to confirm her participation was reigning World and Olympic Road Race Champion, Marianne Vos.

Ms Vos will be returning to compete on British roads for the first time since winning Olympic Gold in London 2012. The Dutch rider is widely acknowledged as the greatest ever female cyclist, having won World titles on the road, track and in cyclo-cross, plus Olympic Gold in the former two.

Commenting on The Women's Tour, which forms an important part of her 2014 race programme, Marianne Vos said; "It's great that we get a big new stage race on our calendar with The Women's Tour. The times that I've raced in Great Britain – with of course the London Olympic Games fresh in my mind – I have been amazed by the huge crowds and the enthusiastic people. I'm sure it will be a fantastic event and I'm looking forward to competing here with the best riders from all over the World."



Follow the Tour

The Women's Tour will run over five stages from Wednesday 7th to Sunday 11th May 2014.

Stage One: Oundle to Northampton

Stage Two: Hinckley to Bedford

Stage Three: Felixstowe to Clacton

Stage Four: Cheshunt to Welwyn Garden City

Stage Five: Harwich to Bury St Edmunds

You can follow The Women's Tour on Twitter, via www.twitter.com/the-womenstour or find us on Facebook via www.facebook.com/thewomenstour