

Edition: June 2022

# EastSuffolk

## Magazine

### EAST SUFFOLK FREE WIFI IN A TOWN NEAR YOU!

Using digital to welcome  
shoppers and visitors to  
boost our local businesses

More on  
**PAGE 5**



### PAGE 9: A HOUSE INTO A HOME

How we are investing in empty homes to bring them back to life

### PAGE 15: AT YOUR LEISURE!

Welcoming improvements to our fantastic leisure centres



How are we doing?  
Watch the video –  
our year working for YOU!

[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/annual-report](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/annual-report)



## A message from the Leader of the Council

Welcome to the latest East Suffolk magazine. Once again, I believe we have a great story to tell about what we are delivering for local communities and I hope you find this edition interesting and engaging, as well as informative.

The money that you provide to help us deliver our services is only around 10% of your total council tax bill, however it is still hugely important and, spent properly, makes a real difference.

So, despite the huge financial challenges faced by local government across the country in the wake of the Covid pandemic, I am delighted that we are delivering a balanced budget, ensuring we continue providing what our residents need, and fulfilling our ambitions as a council. You can, of course, read more about that in this magazine.

We know that finance is incredibly important right now, particularly given issues surrounding the cost of living, fuel prices and other expense which households are having to give greater consideration to.

Council tax-payers will always be at the heart of the financial decisions we make and we are acutely conscious that these are unusual and, for some, difficult times. Therefore, we will work really hard to develop more assets and income streams which ultimately reduce our dependency on council tax to deliver services.

For example, the creation of a new 'Local Authority Trading Company' to deliver our operational services such as waste and recycling collection, grounds maintenance and street cleansing, will allow us to explore the commercial potential of these particular services, so that we can deliver profit which will be invested straight back into our communities.

We will never stop working hard to improve outcomes for you, and those close to you, and I hope you will find practical examples in this magazine of how we are achieving this.



Cllr Steve Gallant

### Contact us

You can do more online at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

Call us 03330 162 000 (local rate number)

Email us [customerservices@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

[www.facebook.com/eastsuffolkcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/eastsuffolkcouncil)

[www.twitter.com/eastsuffolk](https://www.twitter.com/eastsuffolk)

Design [www.tms-media.co.uk](http://www.tms-media.co.uk)

## Support for Ukraine

The Homes for Ukraine Scheme was launched on Monday 14 March to allow individuals, charities, community groups and businesses in the UK to bring Ukrainians to safety – including those with no family ties to the UK.

Suffolk is currently expecting to support more than 850 Ukrainian refugees arriving via this scheme. However, we believe this number will increase.

Meanwhile we want to thank the community groups who have offered help to the refugees arriving in their local areas for the valuable role they play.

If you are a community group who want more information about how you can help, please contact Community Action Suffolk who are offering support to community groups, at: [ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk](mailto:ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk)

An information pack for Sponsors in Suffolk is available on the Suffolk County Council website. The pack contains information about the Homes for Ukraine programme, access to support and health care services, applying for a school place and more.

Further information, and Frequently Asked Questions about what we are doing in Suffolk to support Ukrainian Refugees and how you can help, can be found at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/SupportingRefugees](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/SupportingRefugees)

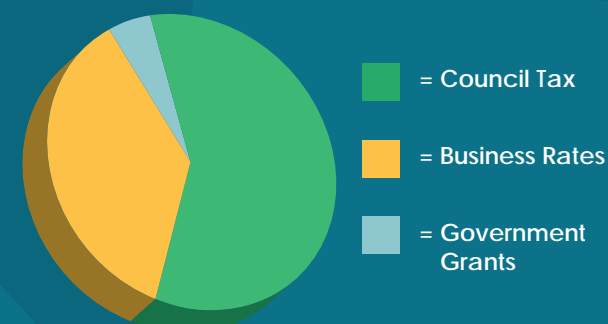


Suffolk's support for Ukraine

## Spending your money wisely

**Our budget for this year has a strong focus on financial sustainability and making the best choices for communities, while ensuring YOU get the best value for your money!**

Our budget for 2022/23 is £26.8million, which is funded in a few different ways, including from the Council Tax you pay, which makes up almost 59% of our budget (£15.7million). The rest comes from business rates (£9.7million) and government grants (£1.4million).



Each year, we provide vital services that benefit people of all ages, support our local businesses, creates new jobs, collects and disposes of waste, protects our environment and wildlife, tackles climate change, maintains our leisure centres, play areas and parks, provides affordable homes... just to name a few.

We're also committed to building for the future to ensure East Suffolk remains a great place to live, work and visit. That's why we're investing over £47million in assets, services, housing, infrastructure and green initiatives through the General Fund and Housing Capital Programme this financial year.

This budget sees a 2.89% increase in Council Tax. We have done everything we can to keep it as low as possible and in real terms, this means that a band D property will be paying an extra £4.95 a year to East Suffolk Council. That is just over 40p a month.

This modest increase will help us raise just over £441,000 in income and means we can continue to provide the vital services you need and deliver the highest possible quality of life in East Suffolk.

**Did you know that not all your Council Tax actually goes to East Suffolk Council? Only around 9% of your Council Tax comes to us - and the rest goes to Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Police and town & parish councils.**

**So for every pound you pay in your bill, we get just over 9p for all the services we deliver.**

**That means that if you live in a Band D property, you pay US only around £14 a month!**



**This year, you only pay East Suffolk Council an extra 40p a month in council tax for all our services!**





# Tell us what you think!

A big **THANK YOU** to over 1100 of you who completed our residents survey in the autumn edition of this magazine.

- The survey helped to inform our budget setting, when we asked you questions about Council Tax levels and what we spend money on
- Our Communities Team also found the results useful for understanding social isolation and loneliness in the district and will be working on ways to help combat that
- A large majority of respondents said they are most proud of the natural beauty of the area, including parks, seafronts and the countryside
- Sense of community is also high in the district
- The most mentioned area needing improvement is roads and pavements (and we will be sure to work with our colleagues over at Suffolk County Council to raise your concerns!)
- Overgrown greenery featured highly in your comments

And the good news is, you can continue to have your say!

The survey remains open online for you to tell us what you think about East Suffolk - Complete the survey online now or look out for the full printed version in the autumn!



[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/survey](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/survey)



**East Suffolk  
Community  
Partnerships**  
*Bringing ideas to life*



## Here to support YOUR town!

East Suffolk Council is committed to improving local town centre economies and the quality of life for the communities and people they serve. With this in mind, two Town Development Co-ordinators (TDCs), Stacy Cosham and Jo McCallum, have been appointed on a two-year contract to help deliver a new approach!

Jo and Stacy will support existing town centre-based programmes as well as the priorities identified through East Suffolk's eight Community Partnerships. They will also work with local stakeholders to identify further priorities and ensure the views of ALL sections of the community are heard through initiatives such as Youth Voice and the two Disability Forums.

Jo has worked with ESC for over 30 years within the Communities team, bringing her knowledge and community support skills to the programme, while Stacy joins ESC from Great Yarmouth having worked on projects to enhance community cohesion and promote tourism.

Cllr Mary Rudd, Cabinet member for Communities said: "These roles will be agile and innovative – and Stacy and Jo will be deployed to specific town centres based on identified need and opportunity. They are initially getting up to speed with the various town centre-based programmes and are focusing, for now, on Saxmundham, Bungay and Halesworth. They will, of course, identify opportunities to progress projects across multiple towns in due course".



Find out more about the work of our Community Partnerships

[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/communitypartnerships](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/communitypartnerships)

## Free East Suffolk wi-fi hits the towns!

As part of a range of exciting digital projects taking place across East Suffolk, free-to-use public wi-fi is launching in Lowestoft and Felixstowe.

To support local towns and businesses, East Suffolk Council is delivering a range of digital projects which aim to strengthen the local economy and improve connectivity within the district's market towns.

One of these projects is the East Suffolk Digital Towns programme which will digitally transform market towns through the installation of free public wi-fi (also in seafront areas), digital footfall counters and town marketing platforms alongside a business support programme.

Supported by funding from the Getting Building Fund and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's Innovative Projects fund, this new technology will be combined with bespoke business support, helping local businesses and the towns in which they are based, to grow.

Visitors to the towns can easily get online and will also have the option of signing up to receive news, offers and information to support local businesses. Specially designed signage is in place across the town to indicate locations where free wi-fi is available.

New technology will enable the council to understand the number of visitors to the town, the busiest periods, the average time people spend in the town centre and more. This will enable the council's Economic Development Team to provide tailored support for local businesses.



Free to use public wi-fi is also provisionally scheduled to be available in Woodbridge, Southwold, Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth, Aldeburgh, Leiston and Saxmundham by October 2022.



Find out more about Digital Towns!  
[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/digital-towns](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/digital-towns)

## Welcome Back!

East Suffolk has welcomed back visitors with a range of successful celebration markets!



The Council received funding from the ERDF Welcome Back Fund for a series of events to bring back visitors safely to our towns, following the Covid pandemic, and encourage residents to explore our local high streets.

This included a series of 'celebration markets', which initially saw four towns hosting pilot markets, all incorporating a mini-festival feel, with a range of live music from local musicians and DJs, street performances, workshops, locally-sourced food and drink as well as children's activities. The project kicked off in Saxmundham in December and during the early spring made its way to Beccles, Lowestoft and Leiston, with each event reflecting a sense of place including stand-out businesses and key characteristics.

Phase two of the project, commencing in Autumn 2022, will see two more live, pilot "MarketPlace" events that will be popping up in Halesworth and Southwold with more events focussed on creating a sense of place within each location.

The MarketPlace project is also delivering a consultancy package of support to advise towns on best practice for event development and offers each town a face-to-face masterclass with Wayne Hemingway, First Light C.I.C. Director and co-founder of HemingwayDesign Design Studio. Masterclasses, workshops and a toolkit of support have been delivered to four towns to date and a further four towns will receive this during Autumn 2022.



East Suffolk Council have launched new digital trails throughout all of our towns via the Go Jauntly app!



## Environment matters

We're committed to delivering on our environmental ambitions – and that's why we're appointing a dedicated lead officer to help shape policy in the fight against climate change.

The new Environment and Climate Change Lead Officer will advise the Council on environmental strategies, policies and initiatives, and their contribution to national, regional and local goals.

Acting as a champion for environmental issues, Paul Mackie will also raise awareness of the impact of emerging environmental issues and the difference the Council can make.

Paul brings with him more than 15 years of experience in the environment sector.



He's spent seven years working with us as part of Coastal Partnership East, raising more than £75million of investment for projects to help make our coastal communities resilient to climate change.

The environment is one of five key themes of our Strategic Plan. In June 2019, the Council voted unanimously to declare a climate emergency to reinforce this important obligation.

Paul's is a multifaceted role, ensuring that robust delivery plans are in place to achieve targets and respond effectively to the UK's 2050 Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions goal.

As well as advising colleagues and partner organisations on the Council's Strategic Plan objectives, strategies and associated work concerning climate change mitigation and adaptation, Paul will work closely with Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor James Mallinder.



The environment is one of five key themes in our Strategic Plan!

## Going wild again

**'Pardon the weeds, we're feeding the bees'** – that's the message of our annual scheme to create essential spaces for wildlife, returning for a third year in 2022.

As part of the campaign – and our ongoing commitment to the environment – grass and wildflowers will be left to grow to help wildlife thrive in more than 100 locations across the district. The areas are large enough to provide an environmental benefit while not presenting any safety issues for local communities.

**We have more than 100 wild spaces across East Suffolk**

Each will be marked with our eye-catching yellow signs to make residents and visitors aware of the scheme.

Town and parish councils, supported by East Suffolk Norse, will monitor the conservation areas to remove litter and control any invasive plant species.

Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, we've been committed to increasing the number of wild spaces in the district, where a more conservation-based approach to cutting could promote biodiversity.

Contact your town or parish council directly if you have any suggestions for new wild spaces – and get sharing photos of your local wildlife space on social media, tagging East Suffolk Council and using #PardonTheWeeds.

## Sweeping up appearances!

**Did you see these sweepers out and about in East Suffolk towns?**

As part of our continual drive to improve the local environment, two different mechanised street sweepers from Green Machines have been on trial across the district.

The mechanical sweepers have been used in both high street and residential settings across East Suffolk to tackle litter and fallen leaves.

Thanks to their small size, the sweepers are able to access areas that can be hard to get to and are safe to use during the day when pedestrians are more likely to be around.

Following a successful trial in December, ESC have now purchased a number of sweepers to help improve standards of cleanliness across the district. Two models have been procured, one is a pedestrian operated machine - which is now in operation - and the other a ride on machine. Three of each type will be out working following a review of street cleansing schedules.

## A fresh start... at your service

The creation of a new trading company in East Suffolk – delivering crucial services such as waste and recycling collection, grounds maintenance and street cleansing – has moved a step closer with the appointment of its first Managing Director and confirmation of the organisation's trading name.

Cassandra Clements arrives from Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils, where she is currently Assistant Director for Environment & Commercial Partnerships, to lead the newly created East Suffolk Services. She will be tasked with driving the highest possible standards of service delivery, while seeking the best possible value for money for residents, businesses and all local stakeholders.

This Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) will operate as an 'arms-length' commercial business, separate to the Council, following the conclusion of the contract East Suffolk holds with Norse for the provision of operational services in July 2023.



She has a track record of delivering success, and the Leader of East Suffolk Council, Cllr Steve Gallant, is delighted to have secured her services. He said:



To ensure the successful function of an organisation with a wide range of responsibilities, a suitably qualified and experienced Managing Director is absolutely essential. It is critically important that the company has strong, commercial leadership to drive performance, ensuring sound financial management and value for money for taxpayers.

"We want to provide the highest quality services with the resources available and deliver improvement that benefits council taxpayers. With the appointment of Cassandra, we welcome someone who shares our progressive ambitions for the district and the way that key services should be delivered to those who use and need them every day.

East Suffolk bin collection day finder:





# Housing improvements

East Suffolk Council has undertaken an in-depth, four-month review of its Housing Landlord Service and is now taking steps, with the guidance of the Regulator of Social Housing, to resolve a number of issues identified.

A significant amount of work is already underway. An action plan, prepared by senior officers at the request of the Leader of the Council, sets out the steps the Council will be taking to ensure these issues are resolved and all relevant Regulatory Standards are met.

It covers a number of areas, including the development of a more robust rent and service charges policy, a forensic audit of all tenancies and the creation of a comprehensive governance process. Over the next few months the Council will be engaging with all its 4,500 tenants to explain the situation, how this may affect them and the improvements that will now be made.

The rent issues relate to decisions taken by the former Waveney District Council, predecessor authority to East Suffolk.

Additionally we have provided the Housing Regulator with information about an absence of proper records, which would indicate that the full range of health and safety checks has not occurred on some properties. This is also being addressed as a matter of urgency.



The concept provides local residents with the opportunity to form a non-profit organisation which they control via one member, one vote principles and all people aged over 16 can be involved. Communities gain a sense of empowerment as they can make decisions about homes or other assets in their area that they need.

CLH groups have also delivered work and education space as well as homes. The democratic nature of the model enables communities to take collective ownership if they wish to do so and become stewards of land and assets. This culminates in a higher level of local governance and can promote the area's sustainability.

For more information on how Community led housing could work for you scan... or email [CommunityLedHousing@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:CommunityLedHousing@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)



We have written to every council tenant in the district explaining the situation. It has also created a web page which will be updated regularly with new information and answers to any frequently asked questions: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/housing2022](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/housing2022)



## Could community led housing work for you?

Community led housing (CLH) is an umbrella term for housing that is owned or managed by the community on a not for profit basis.

The term encompasses different models such as community land trusts, co-operative housing society or hybrid models such as co-housing. They are set up by ordinary people who have an ambition to meet the housing needs of their parish. At the heart of these models are the principles of affordability, sustainability and democracy.

Community led housing has two main benefits:

- > Housing can be delivered that is in keeping with household budgets both for rent or home ownership, through the use of innovative financial models and covenants and housing costs can be protected for future residents.
- > Cooperative and Community Land Trusts can prevent homes being sold on the open market and are 'Right to Buy' exempt.

## Turning houses back into homes

Long-term empty properties are defined as residential properties that have been empty for at least two years and the dedicated programme will commit nearly £300,000 to bring homes back into use via a variety of methods.

Funding to support the development of a long-term empty homes programme is available from reserves created from the New Homes Bonus (NHB) claimed by East Suffolk Council from central government in recent years. The revenue cost of the service is estimated at £281,958 for three years.

In East Suffolk, 280 properties in private ownership have been empty for more than two years. These will be prioritised for action according to type, location, duration unoccupied, and housing need in the surrounding area.



Cllr Richard Kerry, East Suffolk Council Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing, said: "Empty homes are a wasted resource and can cause blight on neighbourhoods, attracting anti-social behaviour, vandalism and fly-tipping. We recognise the value of bringing an empty home back into the housing stock. The result can be a modernised, more energy efficient home, utilising fewer resources than a new build. We also realise that solutions need to be tailored to each case and owner, often requiring time to explore all options."

East Suffolk Council has already successfully brought back empty homes to use, renovating them to provide affordable accommodation and much needed local regeneration - including a property on London Road South, Lowestoft, which was converted into a House of Multiple Occupation, and on Park Road, Lowestoft, which is now occupied as a five-bed council house.

Our strategy for housing in East Suffolk



## Independent living – don't leave it too late!

If you are starting to struggle with mobility issues in your home, then please think about your options sooner rather than later.

Getting older will result in mobility issues for many of us. It might begin slowly with struggling up the stairs or to get in and out of the bath. Does that sound familiar for you or a member of your family?

Many people will manage for some years, bumping down the stairs on their bottoms or crawling up on their hands and knees, not wanting to make a fuss. This approach shows great resilience but without doubt puts us at a risk of a fall. 30% of people over 65 will fall at least once a year.

You may love your home and it may be easy to put in place some adaptations that mean it is the right place for you to continue calling home.

Or now might be the time to list it and move to a more suitable property; smaller, on one level, easier access to local amenities or maybe a move to warden-controlled accommodation is right for you.

The longer you leave these hard decisions the more likely you are to have to do so following a fall and associated injury when the choices may be fewer and your independence less.

If you decide adapting your home is the right thing to do then Independent Living East Suffolk can help you to apply for a grant, obtain quotes from reputable contractors, supervise the works and ensure you end up with a safer home that meets your needs.



Occupational Therapists at Suffolk County Council's Independent Living Service are there to help with assessing your needs both now and for the future.

Call 0800 121 7711

or email [ILS@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:ILS@suffolk.gov.uk)





## New community centre for Framlingham

Construction began earlier this year on a new community centre for Framlingham residents, supported by £700,000 in developer contributions.

Led by Framlingham Parochial Church Council and Framlingham Town Council, the Castle Community Rooms will be a modern community facility on the site of St Michael's Community Rooms, in the grounds of St Michael's Church.

The new centre will provide local residents and groups with a much-needed new space to come together, meet new people and connect with others.

To support the new centre, East Suffolk Council allocated £700,000 in funding from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a fee which the Council can charge developers when new housing is built in the district. CIL can then be put towards improvements to local infrastructure, such as play areas, schools and GP surgeries.

The Castle Community Rooms project is also supported by contributions from Framlingham Town Council and St Michael's Parochial Church Council.

For the latest on the project, go to [www.castlecommunityrooms.co.uk](http://www.castlecommunityrooms.co.uk)

*In September 2021, East Suffolk Council allocated £6.3m in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).*

*This is funding provided to local authorities by developers to support the expansion of schools, leisure and health facilities in the district.*

Find out more!  
[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/  
community-infrastructure-levy](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy)



## Iconic new café complete!

As part of ongoing investment in Felixstowe's South Seafront, the development of a new iconic café has been completed.

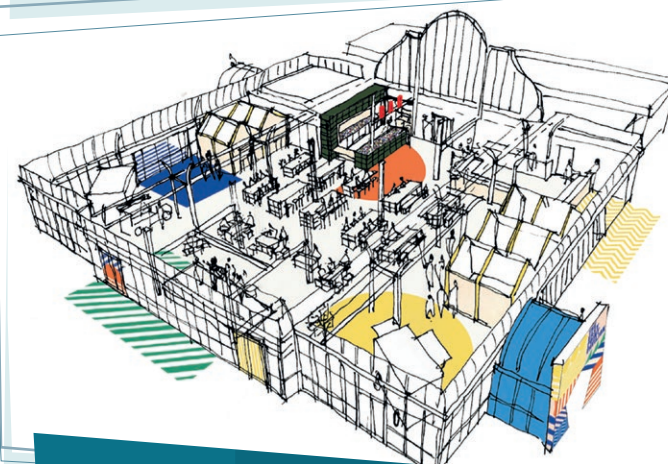
Built by Barnes Construction, 'The Kitchen @ Felixstowe' will be run by East Suffolk Council's operational partner, The Kitchen @ Group.

The café, which has a bakery counter and a contemporary brasserie type menu, offers indoor and outdoor dining with unspoilt sea views.

The development of the landmark new building is part of wider regeneration plans for the seafront, to boost the local economy and attract visitors.



The project was delivered by East Suffolk Council, Barnes Construction, the Kitchen @ Group, Plaipe Design, Superstructures and Gill Associates.



## Introducing the new East Point Pavilion

The newly repurposed East Point Pavilion on Lowestoft's seafront will be ready in time for the First Light Festival in June and is being managed by the festival organisers.

As part of ambitious regeneration plans for Lowestoft's town centre and seafront, the pavilion has been refurbished into an exciting new venue, with a food hall and flexible, open plan space for community activities as well as art, music and comedy performances.

Operators First Light CIC, supported by East Suffolk Council, will create a programme of events and activities to be held within the pavilion, in addition to a unique street food offer.

First Light CIC will also use the pavilion as an office base.

The redesign of the building has been led by Norwich-based Hudson Architects, supported by Hemingway Design.

The First Light Festival returns to Lowestoft's South Beach on 18 and 19 June 2022.

See [firstlightlowestoft.com](http://firstlightlowestoft.com) for the full programme.



## Huts have the edge

Further along the seafront, Lowestoft's eye-catching new beach huts are approaching completion.

72 contemporary beach huts are being built on the site of the former Jubilee Terrace chalets and a huge number of enquiries were received earlier this year from people interested in purchasing one of the huts.

Designed by architects Chaplin Farrant, the new huts – named Eastern Edge – are being built on two levels and face partially south to ensure maximum sunshine throughout the day. The tips of the structures face eastwards, reflecting Lowestoft's position as the most easterly location in the country and inspiring their new name.

Of the 72 huts, 36 are to be sold and 36 will be available to hire on a weekly basis through [www.hirebeachhuts.co.uk](http://www.hirebeachhuts.co.uk). Ten of the most central huts have been designed to be more easily accessible and these will also be available for hire.

Construction of Eastern Edge is expected to complete ahead of the summer season.

Enquiries about purchasing one of the Eastern Edge huts can be made to Paul Hubbard by calling 01502 531218 or emailing [info@paulhubbardonline.com](mailto:info@paulhubbardonline.com)

Meanwhile, existing beach huts near to the Claremont Pier in Lowestoft are also being refurbished with new doors, frames and panelling and a bright new colour scheme. The first batch of huts was completed in April and the remaining huts will be renovated in stages.

These traditional style huts are available to hire at [www.hirebeachhuts.co.uk](http://www.hirebeachhuts.co.uk)





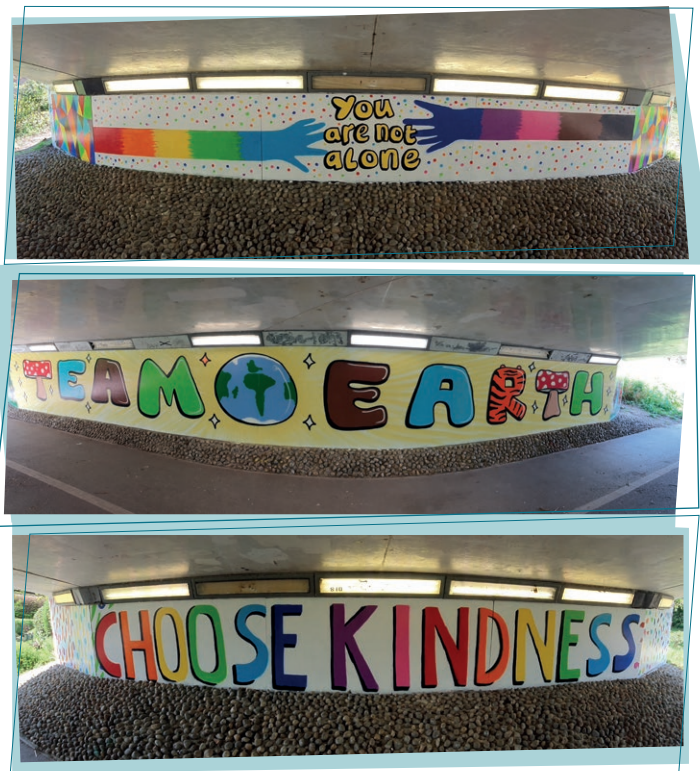
## Underpass artwork raises a smile

Anyone who's travelled through Kesgrave will know it has some of the best walking and cycling routes of any town in East Suffolk, including six underpasses under the main roads, and another under the A12 in Martlesham.

Over time, the underpasses had become run-down and sprayed with graffiti, so we began working with ward councillor Stuart Lawson, police colleagues, Kesgrave Town Council and Martlesham Parish Council last August, with a plan to:

- Improve the appearance of the underpasses with new artwork, created by local primary school children
- Improve safety by working with Suffolk Highways to fix broken street lighting
- Ensure that a robust, long term maintenance plan was put in place
- Engage young people in the process to create a generation invested in their local community

Street artist Knapple was commissioned to work with local primary schools and art students at Kesgrave High School to create new artwork through a series of workshops.



The designs were then blended to create large pieces of street art – with each school allotted its own underpass.

In March, Knapple began transferring one design per week to the underpasses.

The project was made possible thanks to an Enabling Communities Budget grant, along with funding from Kesgrave Town Council and Martlesham Parish Council.

## Let's hear Youth Voices!

Did you know there's a scheme dedicated to involving young people in local issues which affect them?

East Suffolk Council's 'Youth Voice' service is designed to make it easier than ever for young people to share their thoughts and help shape their communities.

A new webpage has been created for young people to have their say by completing a simple online form.

Meanwhile, Youth Voice 'collection boxes' have previously been placed in a variety of locations to enable written submissions – and we're hoping they'll make a post-pandemic comeback. Ideas are then shared with organisations and key decision makers, such as local councillors, East Suffolk Community Partnerships, Suffolk Police and other key partners who can help address the issues raised and make a real difference.



In the past, Youth Voice suggestions have led to work being carried out to make an underpass safer (see above), as well as the replacement of basketball nets on a local court.

So, if you're aged between 11 and 24, make sure your voice is heard! It is quick and easy to share your thoughts online by filling out a short form. And remember to follow '[eastsuffolk.youthvoice](https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/youthvoice)' on Instagram to see how your feedback is helping to make real changes in local communities.

Visit [eastsuffolk.gov.uk/youthvoice](https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/youthvoice) or find us on Instagram!



## School holiday support



The Government funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme has now been confirmed for the next three years. The programme primarily aims to support children who are in receipt of free school meals through Easter, summer and Christmas holidays.

This is done through coordinated programmes that offer enriching activities and healthy food free of charge for at least four hours per day.

We are currently in the early stages of preparing for this summer's provision, so please keep an eye on [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community](https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community) for updates and announcements of future programmes.

Last Autumn, the government announced a further investment of over £200 million this year for the Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF), which follows the successful roll out of the scheme across England in 2021.



For more information on the Holiday Activities and Food Programme or contact [HAF@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:HAF@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

## Help when it's needed most

We know that recent increases in the cost of food, energy and other essentials have hit people hard.

The Council's new Financial Inclusion Team, working with partners including Citizens Advice and our two Disability Support organisations, can help with budgeting, debt, benefits, credit and ways to make your money go further.

If you need helpful, clear and non-judgemental advice and support please contact us at [communities@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:communities@eastsuffolk.gov.uk).

Other projects include helping people to access food at lower cost through a network of community pantries, our new Comfort Food project which enables residents in need to access a free hot meal and drink at a local café and our Warm Homes project to help people on lower incomes to heat their home.

### Do you want to help?

If you want to help others, please continue to donate food at your local supermarket for our network of food banks and consider joining 500 Suffolk Reasons – 500 people who donate £1 a week each so that £500 can help a struggling household.

Go to [www.500suffolkreasons.org](https://www.500suffolkreasons.org) or contact [500suffolkreasons@gmail.com](mailto:500suffolkreasons@gmail.com) to find out more.



## Putting Nature First



**14 local projects have received funding totalling over £10,000 from the Greenprint Forum small grants scheme Nature First.**

The scheme provides funding, courtesy of East Suffolk Council, for voluntary and community groups to support projects that promote biodiversity. This could include restoring habitats or creating new ones, providing nesting places for wildlife or supporting activities which help people of all ages to learn about and enjoy local biodiversity.



Projects supported so far include hedge laying training in Waldringfield, a nature garden at St Margaret's allotments in Lowestoft, teaching pupils from Beccles Primary Academy about growing their own vegetables and installing swift boxes at Thomas Mills High School in Framlingham.

In 2022, Nature First funding is supporting community litter picks in Saxmundham, tree planting in Waldringfield and the creation of the Leiston Church Square community garden.



**If your community group has a project that helps nature in East Suffolk and needs some funding visit Nature First!**

## What is the Greenprint Forum?

**The Greenprint Forum is a voluntary network helping East Suffolk Council to deliver our mutual environmental goals and everyone is welcome to join.**

The Greenprint Forum and East Suffolk Council work together to improve the quality of life for people living in East Suffolk, whilst reducing our impact on the environment.

We do this by sharing knowledge with and between our members, organising events and training, and where need is identified, helping to draw in resources to enable actions to take place.

**Join the Greenprint Forum today!**

Visit [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment) for details.

## Leisure improvements

**Lowestoft's Waterlane Leisure Centre is fully back up-and-running following the completion of refurbishment work.**

Almost a third of the centre was closed for several months to allow for improvements which saw parts of the roof replaced or re-covered.

The work was carried out by the Council's development partners, Pulse Design & Build, and we worked closely with leisure operators Everyone Active to ensure minimal disruption.

It followed completion of a million-pound refurbishment, in April 2021, as part of our commitment to improving leisure provision, which included replacing equipment and flooring in the gym, upgrading lighting and adding new flooring in the sports hall, and redecorating throughout.



Facilities available at Waterlane Leisure Centre include an upgraded spa, the East Face nine-metre-high climbing wall, soft play area, 25-metre pool, changing village, squash courts and café.

Also open are the group cycling studio and fully air-conditioned fitness studios, which host classes like Pilates, yoga, Les Mills Bodypump, Bodybalance and Bodycombat.

**Over the past five years, we've invested significantly in our leisure centres, including the £3.4m redevelopment of Waveney Valley Leisure Centre, completed in October 2020.**

**Elsewhere, Deben Leisure and Leiston Leisure Centre, run by operational partners Places Leisure underwent £3.5m and £4m redevelopment over the previous two years.**



Find out more and sign up to enjoy our fantastic leisure facilities!

[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/sportand-leisure-centres](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/sportand-leisure-centres)

## A new board for Bawdsey

**Visitors to Bawdsey Quay can now learn more about the area's fascinating history and environmental importance, thanks to the installation of a new information board.**

The board, installed in April, provides visitors with information on the Deben Peninsula and the surrounding Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Partially funded by a grant from the Coast and Heaths AONB Sustainable Development Fund, the board was commissioned after locals and visitors requested an information point for the area – highlighting sites of interest, details on local wildlife and history.

The board includes information on the ferry crossing between Bawdsey Quay and Old Felixstowe, the Martello tower seen across the river, Bawdsey Manor's remarkable role in the development of radar, the estuary's designation as a 'Special Protection Area' because of the important species and numbers of birds, and the geological importance of Bawdsey cliffs.

The board was created in partnership with the AONB, Bawdsey Parish Council and the Deben Estuary Partnership, with illustrations by Steve Roberts of Footprint Interpretation, and photography by Time Flize Ltd.



**The Coast and Heaths AONB stretches from Kessingland to Shotley and in 2020, the AONB boundary was extended to include the Stour Estuary and associated areas in the northeast of Essex.**

## Flood defence work latest

**Flood defence work is progressing in Lowestoft following another important phase of construction on the South Pier.**

A flood gate is being built as part of a major project to help protect Lowestoft from flooding, including the construction of glass floodwalls around the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club and the South Pier.

Work on the flood gate began in January and is set to restart following a summer break to prevent disruption during the busy tourist season.

The flood gate and floodwalls, due to be completed next spring, are the second section of the wider Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project, with construction already underway on floodwalls in Hamilton Road and Waveney Road.

These will work in combination with a 40m mitre flood gate tidal barrier, the second largest of its kind in the UK, which will be built in the entrance to Lake Lothing.

Once complete, the Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project will protect more than 1,500 homes and businesses from risk of flooding.

**Protecting communities for generations to come:**  
[www.lowestoffrmp.org.uk](http://www.lowestoffrmp.org.uk)







**Glass is 100% recyclable but only when it's put in the right place.**

Place your glass bottles and jars in any of the 1000+ glass recycling banks across Suffolk. The glass will be recycled into new bottles and jars – over and over again.

This means less raw materials are needed, less energy is used and less pollution is created.

