

# THE HAZ HERALD

NEWS FROM THE NORTH LOWESTOFT HERITAGE ACTION ZONE



*Ness Point - taken as part of the Lowestoft place branding (see page 2)*

## Lowestoft Awarded £24.9m for Regeneration!

Following a successful bid to the Government's £3.6 billion Towns Fund, on the 3rd March it was confirmed that Lowestoft would be offered £24.9 million to invest in the regeneration of the town, driving economic growth and acting as a catalyst for future investment.

In 2019, Lowestoft was chosen as one of 100 UK towns to benefit from the Government's Towns Fund. Each town was invited by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to develop a proposal for a Towns Deal, with up to £25 million available to bid for.

In October 2020, a Town Investment Plan which sets out Lowestoft's ambitions, opportunities and challenges over the next ten years, was submitted to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government as the basis of a £24.9m application to the Towns Fund. The plan was developed in partnership with Lowestoft Place Board, which comprises representatives from public, private and voluntary



organisations and is managed by East Suffolk Council. Projects included in the Investment Plan are focused on housing, employment, skills, infrastructure, retail, leisure, culture and heritage, but the investment will also support the town's wider long-term recovery from Covid-19.

Specifically for the North Lowestoft HAZ (Historic Quarter), £3.3 million has been allocated. Whilst dependent on local business case sign off, this includes, provisionally, an allocation of £2 million in match funding for the Town Hall project and £1.3m for the restoration and public realm enhancements to the Scores and in and around the Triangle Market.

Further details of the projects can be found within the Town Investment Plan.

Work has now begun to prepare business cases for each project put forward within the Town Investment Plan to show how they will be implemented within the timeframe of the funding. This process will take 12 months with project delivery expected to begin from April 2022.

## New look for Lowestoft

In 2018, East Suffolk Council, through the Making Waves Together project, started a placemaking project to help promote Lowestoft, as a place to live, work and do business.

Pre-Covid, we brought people together through workshops and surveys, with over 200 people and organisations contributing. We wanted to change the story that Lowestoft was seen at the end of the line, and instead flip that to Lowestoft being where the line started.

We wanted to highlight that Lowestoft was a place of innovation, with the offshore industries and marine science and that we were surrounded by beautiful vistas and landscapes, with the Broads National Park and rich sandy beach on the coast. We wanted to be a place of firsts and lead the way, that being the most Easterly point of Britain, Lowestoft is the first place the sun touches every day, the place where the day starts.

The place making project aims to bring forward more opportunities for communities and businesses to hear more about what is happening in their town and involve them more.

East Suffolk Council and local partners started the development of a Place Board and the Lowestoft Story. This work helped shape the Town Investment Plan and Town Centre Masterplan, by which a place branding toolkit for the promotion of the town has been created complimented by an Ambassadors group which consists of people who have an interest in Lowestoft and who are passionate about all that Lowestoft has to offer. This involves people who are involved in the private, public, and voluntary sector. The Ambassadors will help to 'sell' Lowestoft and cascade the Lowestoft story within their networks (to employees, customers, clients, supply chains), and articulate a more vibrant and optimistic narrative. A small group of Lead Ambassadors has been created to lead on the telling of the story and engage others in this initiative.

The Lowestoft Story and Ambassador Programme will promote what makes Lowestoft special, competitive and different to other places. By bringing this together in a new story that every organisation and individual across the area can share and be part of it, the 'rest of the world' will start to see and hear a more confident and consistent message about what makes Lowestoft unique.



Our regeneration and placemaking work has recently been recognised by IESE Public Sector Transformation Awards, where we have been named as a finalist in the Asset Management and Regeneration category. This is a hugely exciting announcement for the team.

To find out more about the Lowestoft Story, visit [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/regeneration-projects/lowestoftplacemaking](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/regeneration-projects/lowestoftplacemaking)

## Business Highlight: Paper-works\* Books and Prints - 114 High Street

Having opened our new premises on the High Street on the 5th December, we have only been able to open our doors to the public for three weeks, so we are looking forward to the opportunity to reopen on the 12th April.



*Books and Prints, historic High Street. Photo: paper-works\**

The closure caused by Covid-19 has however given us the opportunity to make the most of all that we were able to learn from our initial opening period. We have increased the capacity of the shop with over 20m of new shelf space, catalogued thousands of books, opened a click and collect ecommerce web site (with helpful tips from East Suffolk's Digital Advice Team) and promoted neighbouring shops with a book list campaign inspired by Dean Parkin's 'Right Up Your Street' video poem, which was commissioned by the North Lowestoft HAZ.

We have also designed and fitted a new inner entrance door (with help from 'Art and Craft in Wood'). No longer will people have to struggle physically and aesthetically with a white UPVC domestic front door but will instead be able to glide through a new partially glazed natural timber door complete with retro door handles and 1930's door closer accompanied by the sound of an old-fashioned door mounted shop bell.

Celebrate the reopening of independent businesses from 12th April, by visiting and using our High Street. Do drop in to browse through our extensive collection of fiction (classics, standards, crime, sci-fi and selected beach hut reads!) and our non-fiction collection covering everything from cooking to theology and music to local history. Remember you can also order almost any published book for home delivery through our online store too!

See you soon!

[www.booksandprints.co.uk](http://www.booksandprints.co.uk)





*Credit: East Suffolk Council*

## The Scores

One of the five projects outlined in the Towns Fund is the Historic Quarter, of which funding has been earmarked for the restoration and public realm improvements to the Scores and enhancements to the area around the Triangle Market.

In order to progress the project, our next step is to write a robust business case to Government. To support this, East Suffolk Council has appointed Jon Sheaff and Associates (who are currently working on a masterplan for the seafront and London Road HSHAZ) to design a scheme where each Score becomes a destination, telling its unique story in different, playful and informative way, and for the Triangle Market to become a space that is animated in the day time and into the evening.

The North Lowestoft HAZ partnership and Jon Sheaff and Associates will be consulting local residents and traders as part of a public consultation in the coming weeks. Keep an eye on our social media to find out more as the project progresses and to be involved in the consultation.

## First Light Festival presents First Flight

**Genevieve Christie - Director, First Light Festival C.I.C.**

This year, as we emerge from severe Covid restrictions, and in place of a full festival, First Light Festival C.I.C. is programming a series of projects 'First Light presents Longest Days of Summer'.

As part of this, 'First Flight' is our large-scale community project that celebrates Lowestoft's most easterly coastline, connecting artists, communities, schools, and businesses across the town through nature and art to boost well-being and support our connection to the natural world, something that has been so important to people during the Covid pandemic as well as a being a major planetary priority.

Lowestoft's beach is the first landing post for a variety of birds

that migrate from across the world to settle, breed and fulfil their lifecycle. In partnership with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve, First Flight celebrates the region's birdlife and spotlights the importance of the natural world and its ecosystems, especially habitats within an urban context. Its focus is creating beautiful, imaginative, and fun bird boxes to raise awareness of the need for nesting sites for birds, particularly those such as swifts.

These bird/nest boxes do not have to be functional – but they can be! The idea is to bring colour and creativity to the town over the weekend of the 26th and 27th June with an outdoor exhibition of artist designed boxes in Kensington Gardens and at Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve, for shops in both the North and South HAZ's to get involved and create a bird box that represents their business, and for schools to make boxes that will be displayed in town for all to see. Shops, community groups and schools will be supplied with a cardboard box to either be used as inspiration or as the bird box to be decorated.

As Lowestoft is the most easterly point of England, this is where many of the birds who migrate arrive after their long flight from far-a-way lands. First Light and Suffolk Wildlife Trust would like you to be involved in developing our awareness about the birds we find in our gardens and the green spaces around us and to encourage you to visit Carlton Marshes - where a wide variety of birds can be found right on our doorstep.

First Flight combines a curated exhibition targeting regional artists, an artist open call and a school and community project. We really hope you will get involved and visit the exhibitions over the midsummer weekend of 26th and 27th June.

**First Flight**

To follow what's on this summer as part of First Light Festival, visit [www.firstlightlowestoft.com](http://www.firstlightlowestoft.com)





*Photo: Town Hall, historic High Street. Credit: Historic England*

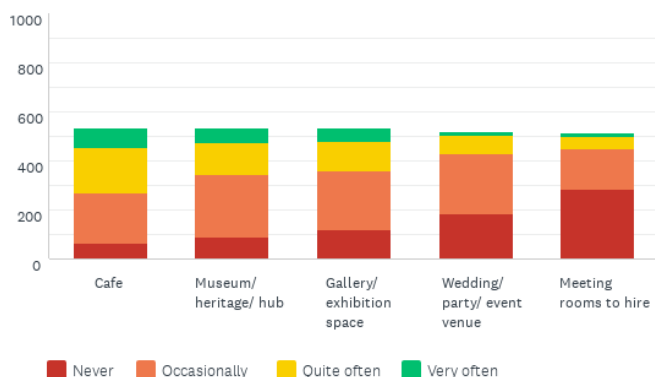
## Exploring the future use of the Town Hall - your Town Hall, your views!

A public survey was conducted in December 2020/January 2021 by MossKing Associates on behalf of Lowestoft Town Council. The work is funded by a grant from the Architectural Heritage Fund.

The survey's purpose was to collect the views of local people about how they would like the Town Hall to be used, and to get an update on the last survey, conducted in 2018. A final section aimed to establish the level of interest in Lowestoft's history, as there is the potential to link into the town's heritage via the Town Hall. A total of 999 people completed the survey, both online and on paper. Over 90% were 'local', 54% from the NR32 postcode alone.

### What did the survey tell us about how people would like to use the Town Hall?

The majority of residents are in favour of Lowestoft Town Council moving into the Town Hall, provided the building is also available for the public to use. The general facilities that would



*Table 1: Q8 - Which facilities would NR32 residents use most?*

be most used by local people are a café; a museum/heritage hub; an art gallery; a social/event venue, including for weddings. Many people said that they would like to see the Council Chamber used for marriages, civil ceremonies and receptions, and some also recommended that the Registrars should move in.

Another popular suggestion was as an indoor food market, which we will investigate further.

The most popular community facility/activity was as a space for events, fairs, parties, sales etc - the sort of things a community hall might offer - and the top activity was arts and crafting. Interest in sports and fitness, and in education, were both relatively low.

Disabled people were more likely to be interested in using facilities and activities in the Town Hall than any other group, and NR32 residents overall were more likely to participate in community activities than those from further away.

Almost 30% of NR32 respondents were interested in affordable creative space, either as studios to work from, or spaces to run workshops and classes, which would fit well with the level of public interest in arts and crafting activity.

### What were people's interests in heritage?

Because the Town Hall is an important listed building in a historic part of Lowestoft, we wanted to understand what aspects of the town's heritage people were interested in, and how much they already knew about their heritage. We also wanted to know what stops people going to museums.

Fishing and the beach village were the most popular, but we found that younger people were more interested in witches and the supernatural, and Lowestoft during WWI and WWII. Men were more interested in boats and Naval history, and in industrial history, whereas women found people and family history,



and witches/the supernatural more appealing.

On average, people assessed their level of knowledge of Lowestoft's history at just over 50%, but NR32 residents scored themselves slightly higher, at 56%.

We asked people which heritage venues and events they visited in 2019 (i.e., the year before the pandemic). Over a third of people had been to the Maritime Museum, and almost as many had visited Lowestoft Museum at Oulton Broad, but 31% of NR32 residents had visited none on the list. Some people remarked that they had not visited any of the local museums recently because (in their view) they rarely change.

When we looked at 'Midults' (ie people aged between 18 - 34), half of them had not visited any museum, yet only 12% said they weren't interested in heritage.

When asked about what stops them visiting museums over 40% of people said this was due to a lack of time; however, 39% said a lack of information about museums was a problem. People on low income were more likely to find cost and transport were issues, and NR32 has a higher level of people on relative low income than other postcodes in the area. Disabled people noted that several venues aren't accessible for them. A small number of people commented that they didn't know of several of the venues on our list.

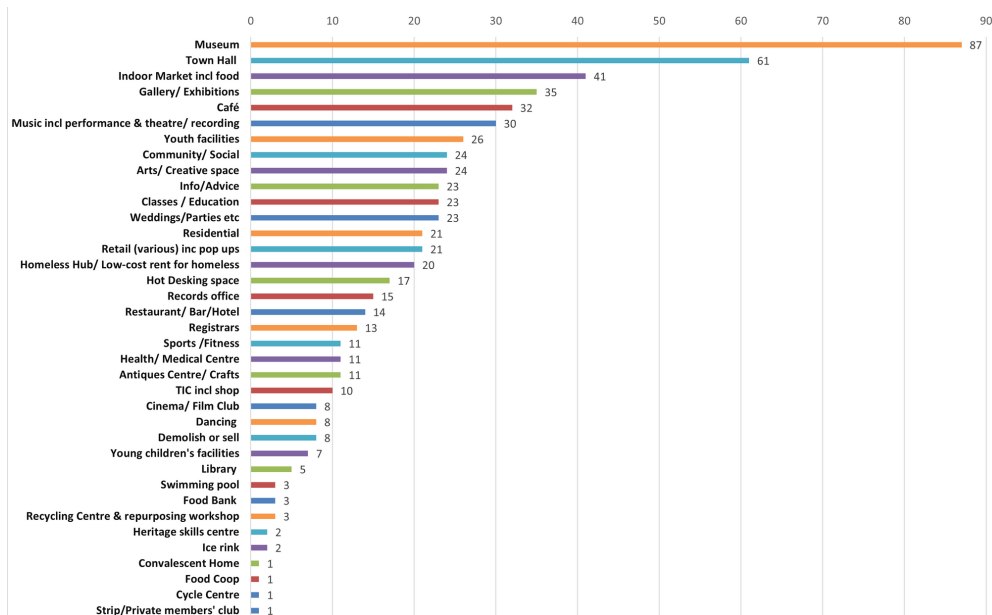


Table 2: Town Hall Survey: Suggestions for use.

### What comments did people make?

We gave people the opportunity to make comments throughout the survey, and received over a thousand to analyse! The range of suggested uses was even wider than when the question was asked back in 2018.

More than 90% of those surveyed support an investment in the Town Hall to bring it back into use. Just 8 people recommended it should be sold or demolished, with a few more recommending commercial uses such as conversion to residential.

A recurrent theme was that the building should be as environmentally sustainable as possible, using green technology and minimising its impact on the environment. About 8% of respondents commented that the costs of running the building must not be a burden on future taxpayers.

Additional parking close to the Town Hall was raised, as was public transport, particularly the need to reintroduce certain routes, to make it easier for people to travel to the Town Hall.

### What happens next?

The survey shows there is an eagerness for works to start and the building to be used again.

Our next steps will be to take these findings and set them into the designs for the Town Hall, looking at what will meet the needs of Lowestoft residents, what will work within the space, and what will help ensure that the 'new' Town Hall will be financially sustainable.

Lowestoft Town Council will be working with East Suffolk Council through the Heritage Action Zone to access further grant funding and develop the project further to help restore this amazing building. If grants are secured, detailed design work could start at the end of this year.

If you would like to read the full report on the survey, it will be published shortly on Lowestoft Town Council's website.



Photo: Council Chamber. Credit: East Suffolk Council

## Business Support

East Suffolk Council launched the Digital Advice Service (DAS) in November 2020 as part of its commitment to support local businesses affected by Covid-19. The DAS provided free support to small businesses – mainly in the retail, leisure and hospitality sector – who needed help to thrive online, for example by creating or improving their website, online shopping offerings or social media presence.

The DAS offered extensive digital business diagnostics and advice, a personalised session with a dedicated business coach, access to various workshops from local experts and industry leaders, peer-to-peer group sessions as well as links to other forms of support, if needed.

Once enrolled, businesses were also eligible to apply for an East Suffolk Digital Grant of up to £1,000 to help them implement new digital changes, such as improving a website, installing new online systems or attending further training to help their businesses thrive online.

Paul Wood, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration at East Suffolk Council, said: "It's been an extremely difficult year for many small businesses in East Suffolk and we wanted to ensure we were supporting them as much as possible to enable them to come out of this in the best position to recover. DAS was launched as a result and gave businesses access to support that would enable them to best adapt to the challenges, but indeed also the opportunities, presented by Covid-19.

We have received great feedback from many businesses, who found the support, advice and workshops invaluable as they were trying to deal with the changing face of the high street. It enabled them to improve their digital profile to reach more customers and learn how new digital skills or products could support their survival and growth, even in this climate."

DAS was delivered by a team of experts from the Business Growth Coaches Network (BGCN) on behalf of East Suffolk Council. BGCN brought together highly experienced coaches and mentors from all around the country to support SMEs and their businesses.

Peter Basford, founder of BGCN, said: "Business Growth Coaches Network have been delighted to be working with East Suffolk Council to deliver the Digital Advice Service with them. We have produced digital reports, had 121 meetings with the business owners to review the findings and agree the action steps. Alongside this we have run over 20 workshops to help educate around the key areas of digital skills such as SEO, ecommerce and getting the most from all the social media platforms that can help a business not only survive but prosper. We estimate that the programme has delivered at least a 12X economic return for the project leading to more sustainable growth for businesses in the area."

The pioneering business support service has acted as a pilot for a longer 2-year dedicated programme, the 'Digital Springboard', which will be launched later this year. The new programme will offer a wider range of business support, workshops and pop-up events alongside a dedicated website to support digital growth and skills growth in local businesses.

The new free programme will be available to all small businesses in East Suffolk, who can sign up now to receive updates on the programme and to join the Council's 'waiting list' by emailing [smarttowns@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:smarttowns@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

More information is also available online at <https://eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk/business-support/resources/smart-towns/>

### Case Study - Paper-works\*

(<https://uk.bookshop.org/shop/paper-works>)

Paper-works\* wanted to create a website in response to Covid and were able to receive expert analysis and guidance on how best to do so through DAS. They also received a grant to match fund their own investment in developing an immersive online browsing and shopping experience, which they hope will provide a unique digital offering to attract both online sale nationally but also increase the profile of the store locally.

"Covid lockdown meant that books and prints couldn't trade as normal and DAS provided the right opportunity at the right time to create a web presence. During this, I benefited from the online workshops which included sessions on ecommerce, search engine optimisation and maximising advertising strategies on Google. Not only have I had the opportunity to learn from professionals in the digital field but also from the experience of fellow small businesses from across East Suffolk.

The 1-2-1 session with an advisor was invaluable. It reassured us that the steps we had taken so far had been in the right direction and emphasised to us the importance of choosing the best digital channels to promote our business and how to make the most of them. We were particularly pleased that our tentative experiments with using 360 degree virtual tour technologies was greeted enthusiastically and thrilled it was recommended that the development of this aspect was suitable for a grant application, which we were successful in." - Hugh Davies, Co-Founder of Paper-works\*.

For more information on business support, please visit [www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk](http://www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk)

## HAZ Business Survey

The last 12 months has been unprecedented and challenging for businesses in the Lowestoft Heritage Action Zones, but despite this we have seen a number of new businesses start up, expand and adapt.

The Heritage Action Zones, in partnership with East Suffolk Council's Economic Development team East Suffolk Means Business, are developing a pilot programme of online training to support local businesses.

We would be grateful if businesses could take 2-5 minutes to complete our survey to help inform what training is prioritised and delivered for you. The survey can be accessed via our Facebook or Twitter pages, where you will also find a link to our Privacy Notice which explains how your data will be handled.

Survey closes Tuesday 4th May.





*Whapload Road, 1st Feb 1953 after the flood. Photo courtesy of the Jack Rose Collection*

## Lowestoft Heritage Action Zones Cultural Programme

The London Road HSHAZ, in partnership with the North Lowestoft HAZ, has been successful in securing funding to deliver a three-year cultural programme in both the HAZ's.

Funded by Historic England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England, there will be a number of cultural opportunities for residents to explore the history of the shops and buildings in the HAZ's. We will also be able to showcase the shops that are currently providing services to our local communities through a shop local campaign which will help support footfall into Kirkley, Station Square, Bevan Street, London Road North, and the Historic High Street.

Communities will be provided with opportunities to start planning activities to commemorate the 70th and 10th anniversary of the 1953 and 2013 flooding and take part in activities around seaside holidays in Lowestoft, recognising the town's long heritage of being a Victorian seaside resort. There will also be events linked to the former Post Office and the 175th anniversary of Lowestoft Railway Station.

The activities will be delivered by a range of cultural partners and led by the Lowestoft Cultural Leadership Group. In April we will be asking cultural groups to come forward and submit their ideas to help shape the programme. If you are interested in being involved, please contact [economicregen@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:economicregen@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) for more details.

## Virtual Creative Hub

In Summer 2020, East Suffolk Council commissioned Focus Consultants to undertake a creative industries needs assessment and growth plan. The Creative Hub Needs Assessment determined that the creative industries are a small but growing sector in Lowestoft, with the potential to play an important role in the future prosperity of the town.

To grow the sector, the Growth Plan identified three key areas of intervention:

- Increasing concentration of creative and cultural activity
- Creation of a focal point
- Supportive and active creative network

East Suffolk Council plan to implement these areas of intervention over three phases, with phase one building a supportive and active creative network through a virtual creative hub.

ESC has secured funding from Arts Council England to kick start a virtual creative hub for the town, which will include networking opportunities, training, 1-2-1 support and small grants programme for creative enterprises.

There are many creative makers and groups in the HAZ which will benefit from this new virtual hub. We are currently still in project development phase, but check the next edition of the HAZ Herald, or keep an eye on our social media posts, for more information about this exciting project.



## Lowestoft Maritime Museum

### Update from Patricia Day

Lowestoft Maritime Museum has been busy working behind the scenes during the winter months, not only carrying out the everyday maintenance work needed to keep the building and its collections in tip-top condition, but to make all of the museum's collections available online. The digital collection, which

includes lots of uploaded images documenting the town's fascinating maritime heritage, can be viewed at ehive.com.

Throughout lockdown, the award-winning family-friendly Maritime Museum has continued to engage and support local families. This Easter, working with the Association for Suffolk Museums alongside Suffolk County Council, the museum has produced a 'Spring in a Box' discovery pack. The pack contains fun resources including a mini-compass and exciting activity trails which supports families to get out and about and explore the areas around Sparrow's Nest, the seafront and the exciting new Ness Park. The packs will be distributed to vulnerable families in Lowestoft via a local network of charitable organisations and will provide a bit of adventure for children who have been finding this year to be especially challenging.

In addition to all of the above, the museum has implemented Covid-19 secure measures to ensure that the museum is 'Good to Go' and the team is very much looking forward to welcoming visitors just as soon as it is safe to do so.



## Most Easterly Community Group

After many months of virtual hibernation, we, the Most Easterly Community Group, are starting to look forward again to a time when we can really come together again and to once again help make our area 'a positive place to live work and play'.



There are a number of events and activities planned for lifting all our spirits (as well as brightening up our shop/house fronts) to celebrate the official arrival of Spring, and the long-awaited 'opening up' on April 12th for non-essential businesses including:

- Get planting - join us on the 17th and 18th April in the Compass Street Garden area for a Bulb Planting Weekend on where we will be giving away free pots, bulbs and seeds for you to cultivate to make our High Street bloom (watch out for a flyer with details)
- Get recycling and reusing - by promoting our own 'Use It All' campaign and helping others to do the same (watch out for more publicity)
- Get busy - we would like to start a local gardening group, and secure premises for a Men's Shed/Repair Shop. Why not come and join us?
- Get local - our businesses are a vital part of the community and need your support. Shop local and in return they will support you!
- Get into history and heritage - planning for Heritage Open Days 2021 is already underway, with this years theme being announced as 'Edible England'. So why not find those old Lowestoft recipes, and delve into where the ingredients might have been sold or try a hand at them yourselves?

We'd love for you to join us! Find out about all of the above and more or just get in touch by either emailing [info@mosteasterlycommunitygroup.co.uk](mailto:info@mosteasterlycommunitygroup.co.uk), finding us on Facebook, or asking in a shop where you see our logo.

### Keep in touch



Follow us:  
@lowestofthaz

Lowestoft Heritage Action Zones  
Visit our websites:  
[eastsuffolk.gov.uk/haz](http://eastsuffolk.gov.uk/haz)  
[historicengland.org.uk/lowestofthaz](http://historicengland.org.uk/lowestofthaz)

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

### Business Support



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[economicdevelopment@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)  
[www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk](http://www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk)

### The Most Easterly Community Group

[mosteasterlycommunitygroup@gmail.com](mailto:mosteasterlycommunitygroup@gmail.com)

### Flytipping, abandoned vehicles, environmental health, parking

East Suffolk Council  
0333 016 2000  
[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk)  
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### In Partnership



Historic  
England



East Suffolk Building  
Preservation Trust

**LOWESTOFT**  
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