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WITH YOU AND WAVENEY APRIL 2012



WATERLANE LEISURE CENTRE



**£8million project
breathes new life in to
Lowestoft leisure centre!**

**See the Olympic Torch
carried through Waveney
towns and villages**

**Win tickets to see the
Darkness LIVE!!**



- waveney.gov.uk
- twitter.com/waveneydc

SAVINGS KEEP ON COMING

The pioneering shared services partnership between Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils is now set to save around £5 million by March 2015, and this figure is continuing to increase.

The Leaders of the two Councils recently hailed their partnership as a 'blueprint for modern, local government service delivery' after it was confirmed that savings had now reached in the region of £900,000 per year.

The savings are part of both Councils' commitment to deliver services as efficiently as possible, keeping their share of the Coun-

cil Tax bill as low as possible, while also cutting waste and bureaucracy wherever it can be found.

The partnership has not only seen a shared Chief Executive and senior management team, but has also seen a number of shared operational teams formed.

The latest project to get the go-ahead outlines proposals to radically modernise the planning service of the two Councils. They will be merged in a move that is intended to ensure an improvement to overall performance and bring shared savings of over £800,000.



BACKING BETTER BROADBAND

Waveney is backing a county-wide campaign to improve broadband speeds in Suffolk by asking residents to complete an important survey.

People in Suffolk can boost the chances of better speeds by proving to the Government and suppliers that there is genuine demand in Suffolk and taking part in this survey is a way to do that.

Leader of Waveney District Council Cllr Colin Law said: "Superfast broadband will not be rolled out across the country at the same time and it is clear that some regions will get to the front of the queue quicker than others.

"This is why it is vital that everyone in Suffolk completes this survey to show that the demand is there and that investment is desperately needed. I call on the people of Waveney

to stand up and be counted and help the County by taking just a few minutes to fill out the form. It really could make all the difference."

The county has one of the poorest broadband networks in the country, with an average speed of under five megabytes per second, but an ambitious £41.7 million project supported by local councils, businesses and national government is set to bring the area into the 21st century.

This survey can be completed in a number of ways and follows a similar exercise undertaken with Suffolk businesses, which is also still live. For full details head to the dedicated web page set up by the County Council on behalf of the countywide broadband partnership: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/broadband>

NEW MAN IN WORLINGHAM



Norman Brooks is the new ward Councillor for Worlingham having won a by-election for the Conservative Party on in December.

Replacing Andrew Draper who resigned his seat, he polled 706 votes, beating Sylvia Robbins of Labour (586) and Sue Bergin of the Green Party (137). Stuart Foulger of the UK Independence Party won 64 votes and Liberal Democrat Doug Farmer polled 46 votes.

The Conservative Party now, once again, has 23 seats on Waveney District Council. The Labour Party also has 23 with one Green and one Independent.



Waveney District Council is on Twitter! Follow news and updates from the Council at twitter.com/waveneydc for instant up to the minute information on a wide range of services and topics.

Over 700 individuals, companies and other groups are already following the Council's feed which has so far included 'live tweeting' of events such as the Council elections last May. Why not take a look yourself?

EYES OF THE WORLD

In a fantastic boost for Waveney and its communities, the Olympic Torch will be heading through the district on its journey around the UK ahead of this summer's sporting spectacular.

Dozens of towns and villages are gearing up for 5 July, following the announcement of the 'communities on route' in November and confirmation a fortnight ago of which roads it will take on its 70-day journey around the UK. In each of the chosen towns or villages, torchbearers will carry the flame right in front of local residents, businesses, visitors and - of course - the world's media.

Councillor Colin Law, Leader of Waveney District Council, said: "The 2012 Olympics will be one of the greatest events this country has ever seen and I am filled with the most enormous pride to know that the route of the Olympic Torch will weave through Waveney. It is the greatest honour and playing a part in history will mean a huge amount to the communities of this district."

The 70 day Olympic Torch Relay, will start at Land's End, Cornwall on the morning of 19 May 2012. On leaving Land's End, the Olympic Flame will travel an estimated 8,000 miles around the UK giving thousands of communities and individuals their moment to shine as the Olympic Flame comes to a place near them. The big day for Waveney is Thursday 5 July. Leaving Norwich in the

morning, the torch will pass through Acle, Filby and Great Yarmouth in Norfolk before heading to Lowestoft, Wrentham, Reydon and Southwold in Waveney.

From there it will go to Kelsale, Saxmundham, Aldeburgh, Wickham Market, Ufford, Melton, Woodbridge and Felixstowe in Suffolk Coastal before arriving for an overnight stay in Ipswich. In announcing the villages, towns and cities LOCOG are taking the Torch to within an hour's journey time of 95% of the population.

People can view the interactive map at www.london2012.com/olympictorchrelaymap to find exactly where the Olympic Flame will be carried. LOCOG Chair, Sebastian Coe, added his support to the torch travelling through so many Suffolk towns and villages. He said: "We are thrilled to confirm that these places in Suffolk will act as host locations for the Olympic Flame, extending an invitation to



WHERE IS THE OLYMPIC TORCH GOING?
www.london2012.com/olympictorchrelaymap

people across the county to welcome the Olympic Torch Relay during its journey around the United Kingdom.

"This is the UK's moment to shine and I want to encourage people across Suffolk to start planning how they can be part of this once in a lifetime opportunity and show their support for the inspirational Torchbearers chosen to carry the Olympic Flame as we count down to the start of the Olympic Games."

QUEEN'S JUBILEE... IT'S PARTY TIME!

This June will see celebrations across the country to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and Waveney is looking to make celebrating even easier!

Plans are already taking shape in towns and villages throughout Waveney including the annual "Big Lunch" which encourages communities to get together and, this year, coincides with the Jubilee celebrations. And to help people plan their events, Waveney

has put together a guidance pack, containing helpful tips on planning a party and useful information on where and how to organise it. For a copy of the pack, go to the Waveney website or call the Culture, Tourism & Sport team on 01502 523385

Monday 4th June will then see the lighting of special celebratory beacons throughout the county to commemorate the Jubilee and Lowestoft also welcomes Thundercat racing

back to the town for a Jubilee race meeting. After a successful visit to the town in October 2011, Thundercats return to bring offshore powerboat racing to the town. There are also numerous events around the market towns and details of Jubilee activities will be added to our website shortly. So if YOU are planning a celebration or event for the Jubilee please let us know, so we can spread the word and really make this a celebration to remember in Waveney.

2012-13 BUDGET: COUNCIL TAX FROZEN



Council Leader Colin Law (right) with Chief Executive Stephen Baker

Waveney District Council has approved plans to freeze the portion of Council Tax it receives for a second consecutive year. The budget, which details how the Council will spend its money and the income it receives, will see the portion paid to Waveney remaining at £147.51 for a Band 'D' property.

In addition the budget report also detailed the closing of a £909,000 budget gap thanks to an ongoing and concerted programme of savings and efficiencies – largely achieved through partnership working and the manage-

ment transfer of services such as Leisure and the Marina Theatre.

The ongoing shared services partnership with Suffolk Coastal has saved a further £228,000 in this financial year, while the transfer of Waveney's leisure services to the newly formed Sentinel Leisure Trust has realised a further £150,000. Meanwhile the decision to transfer the management of the Marina Theatre has helped the Council recoup £50,000 this year and the ongoing partnership with Waveney Norse has saved another £44,000.

However important income from the Government in the shape of the Formula Grant and the Housing Benefit Administration Grant

has been reduced and further reductions in subsequent years, aligned to other economic factors, has led Leader of the Council Colin Law to strike a warning note for the district.

He said: "Once again, Waveney has responded to great difficulties caused by the financial squeeze on local authorities by proposing a budget which will still manage to preserve the quality of frontline services. We have been able to achieve this as a direct result of the strategic decisions taken by this administration, without which our financial position wouldn't bear thinking about.

"I cannot applaud the hard work that has gone in to driving a range of efficiencies and savings more highly. There will be a considerable number of councils who would like to be in our position.

"However, the financial outlook for the next few years will present a significant challenge, requiring radical solutions to close a gap that could break through the £2million mark in 2015.

In addition, the Council's first ever formal, Strategic Business Plan, mapping out Waveney's social and economic vision for the next 10 years was also formally approved. Replacing the Council's current Corporate Plan, it outlines Waveney's professional and business focused approach to delivering services and, according to Cllr Colin Law, focuses much of its attention on the promotion of Economic Growth.

He said: "We want to be building thriving communities through a strong, sustainable, and dynamic local economy, offering our communities more stable, high quality and high value jobs, with increased opportunities for all, and providing affordable homes for local people.

At the same time we will continue to drive down the costs of local government and the public sector as a whole in a number of way. This will be a natural continuation and expansion of our approaches to 'Partnerships', 'Enabling' and 'Localism' that have already been delivering so much success."

PRAISE FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

In an official report presented to Full Council during 2011-12, Waveney District Council was praised by the Audit Commission for its excellent financial management.

The Audit Commission's Annual Governance Report assesses how well Waveney uses and manages its resources to deliver value for money and better

outcomes for local people. In completing their report, the Commission praised the Council in a number of areas.

Highlighting budget savings and a commitment to budget planning, they commended Waveney for its 'longer term financial solutions rather than short term financial fixes.' The report also complimented Senior Management for its strong leadership and focus

on spending reductions, praising the shared services partnership with Suffolk Coastal for driving increased efficiency and savings.

Once again, the message from the Audit Commission is clear: Waveney is a financially robust Council reaping the benefits of strong leadership, improved performance and a strategy designed to address the pain of difficult times.

FANTASTIC NEW FACILITIES!



Have you checked out the new Waterlane Leisure Centre yet? If not, don't delay! You'll be amazed by the fantastic facilities and affordable prices.

Following an extensive redevelopment programme, the new complex provides an unrivalled mix and breadth of activities in a modern, innovative, accessible and sustainable leisure facility for the residents and visitors of Waveney.

Fitness and leisure activities include:

A new **Teaching Pool** (with moveable floor) and **Main Pool** with Viewing Gallery.
A new **Thermal Spa** (steam room, sauna, ice room, foot spa and heated recliners).
New **body treatment rooms** at 'The Spring', offering nail stations for manicure/pedicure, spray tanning and treatments to pamper and relax (opening April 2012).

The £8 million project to redevelop Waterlane Leisure Centre was led by Waveney District Council, to help create healthy communities getting the most out of affordable facilities.

This new transformed venue, epitomises that ambition. The Sentinel Leisure Trust now looks after a range of leisure facilities in Waveney, providing high quality fitness and leisure services at affordable prices. Call today on 01502 569 116!

A new **state-of-the-art 110-station, two-storey Fitness Suite**. As part of your Gym membership you will benefit from your very own 'virtual trainer' SmartCard that helps to train, educate, motivate, communicate and ensure you get the very best out of your new active lifestyle.

New **dedicated Spinning and Dance studios** – with a variety of classes daily
A new **Soft Play and Party Zone** (dance mats, roller skating, climbing and other activities can be hired to really get the party started!)

New **high-quality changing areas** with improved facilities for disabled and families
A new **Meeting Room and Function Suite** with on-site catering available

New **Squash Courts and Martial Arts/Table Tennis complex**.

A new **Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)** an all-weather multi-use sports surface (astro-turfed and floodlit) is marked out for tennis, basketball, 5-a-side football and netball, providing a 21st century venue for clubs and individuals to practice and enjoy. And, all the old favourites are there too: climbing wall, badminton courts and roller skating, together with local clubs offering swimming, martial arts, etc!

And if you simply want to try or use the facilities on a casual basis then pay-as-you-go options are available on everything - a good way to experience what's on offer! Or, come along simply to relax and enjoy the new café, bar and grill, 'The Source', offering locally-

CREATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP FROM JUST £25 PER MONTH!

Includes unlimited swimming and centre admission

no minimum contract

choose extra activities and add to your 'core' membership for only £5 per activity per month

Create your very own lifestyle membership package!

Also, the Passport to Leisure scheme entitles participants to concession rates on a range of activities at sports and leisure related facilities across Waveney

If you are a full time student, a senior citizen, disabled, or in receipt of certain benefits, you are entitled to apply for a Passport to Leisure card

SENTINEL  LEISURE TRUST



sourced ingredients within a menu range from breakfast through to dinner. Or wind down in style with the company of good friends and choose from a classic list of premier beers and wines at the stylish bar.

So, for a warm welcome, shake off those winter blues, and take your resolutions to the next level – embrace the Spirit of Fitness at Waterlane Leisure Centre – Your lifestyle, your Choice!

PLAYING FOR REAL



Students from the Denes Lower School in Lowestoft are taking charge of their local play facilities by working with the Waveney Play Partnership to deliver new facilities.

Having drafted exciting options for two play spaces, class 7EM led by their tutor Kerri Edmundson and Julie Mayo, came to the Town Hall in Lowestoft in February to make a final decision and pick a winning design! Last year they put their minds to designing a park and produced a 'manifesto' outlining the

needs for local young people in the local areas. This manifesto was presented to the Waveney Play Partnership, the group leading on improving free play opportunities for local communities across the district.

They also took part in two workshop events - led by Chris Ames, Waveney's Play & Sport Development Officer to research, debate and design a specification list for both projects; The Bleach and Denmark Road play spaces. These specifications formed the instruction to

renowned play companies to produce designs and quotes for the much needed improvements and on Friday 10th February the class of some 30 pupils filled the Town Hall Chambers at Waveney District Council to review, evaluate and decide on the winning design.

The event was chaired by Cllr Frank Mortimer, Waveney's Portfolio Holder for Customers and Communities to give the young people a taste of what the councils are really about and do on a daily basis. He said: "I could not be more impressed by the effort that these students have put in to this project. They should feel really proud of what they have accomplished together."

Work to create the chosen designs for both The Bleach and Denmark Road play spaces will begin after the Easter Holidays and they will be ready for use by the Summer Holidays. Cllr Chris Punt, Chair of the Waveney Play Partnership added: "The local children will now be able to watch as their creations come to life at the two sites. Once complete we will ask the school pupils to officially open the new provision and also create and propose artwork for the welcome signage to add that further personal touch to their play spaces".

DON'T THROW IT AWAY... GIVE IT AWAY!

You may not need your old sofa or wheelbarrow any more – but there might be someone just round the corner who does. Or what if there's something you'd like, that someone nearby might just throw away? Freegle groups exist to help YOU!

Sign up online, make an 'OFFER' of something you want to get rid of, or a 'WANTED' for something you need. Freegle is a national grassroots organisation of people throughout the UK who are giving and receiving free un-

wanted items in their immediate communities. Local charities, non-profit groups and communities are encouraged to join.

All groups within the Freegle organisation operate with a basic principle – all offers and requests must be freegle (free and legal). The aim of Freegle is to keep anything reusable out of our landfill sites. With over 4000 members, Waveney Freegle is usually a very quick way to find a new home for that unwanted item. And there are added social

benefits as meeting new people helps to develop local community networks and friendships in the process.

Waveney Freegle is run by volunteers and is FREE to join and use. It is about to undergo an overhaul of the way it operates to make it even easier to use and more flexible. Three local Councillors (David Ritchie, Bruce Provan and Bill Mountford) have contributed money from their County Council locality budgets to enable this important development to happen.

To join Waveney Freegle visit:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/waveneyfreegle/>

WATERFRONT PLANS CATCH THE EYE

An important leap forward in the transformation of Lowestoft has been taken with the publication of exciting plans for the Kirkley Waterfront Area.

Following the recent adoption of an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Lake Lothing and Outer Harbour Area by Waveney District Council, a detailed brief has been drafted with specific information about the kind of development that can be expected on the Waterfront and a recent consultation asked for opinions on the proposals.

The plans show the ambition to transform an underutilised, unattractive area into a vibrant, inclusive community with housing, employment opportunities, services and facilities in a high quality environment.

The development would be driven by an insistence on quality design of new buildings, street layout and public spaces to make the area somewhere people feel proud to live and work. It will maximise the opportunities presented by the waterfront, the central location and links to the town centre.

Cllr Colin Law, Leader of Waveney District Council said: "The proposed development outlined here is a significant project for Lowestoft. These plans are hugely exciting and seeing them on paper begins to bring the reality a little closer."

The aim of the Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood and Kirkley Waterfront Development Brief is to provide more detail and guidance to assist with the implementation of the proposals contained within the AAP. Comments from the consultation will be taken into account in the final preparation of the brief before further consultation on the final draft version. The Council expects to adopt the brief later this year.

The development will take place over the next 15 years and for all information relating to development plans in Waveney go to www.waveney.gov.uk/LDF

The plans include 1,380 market & affordable homes to meet local housing need

Leisure facilities such as restaurants and bars

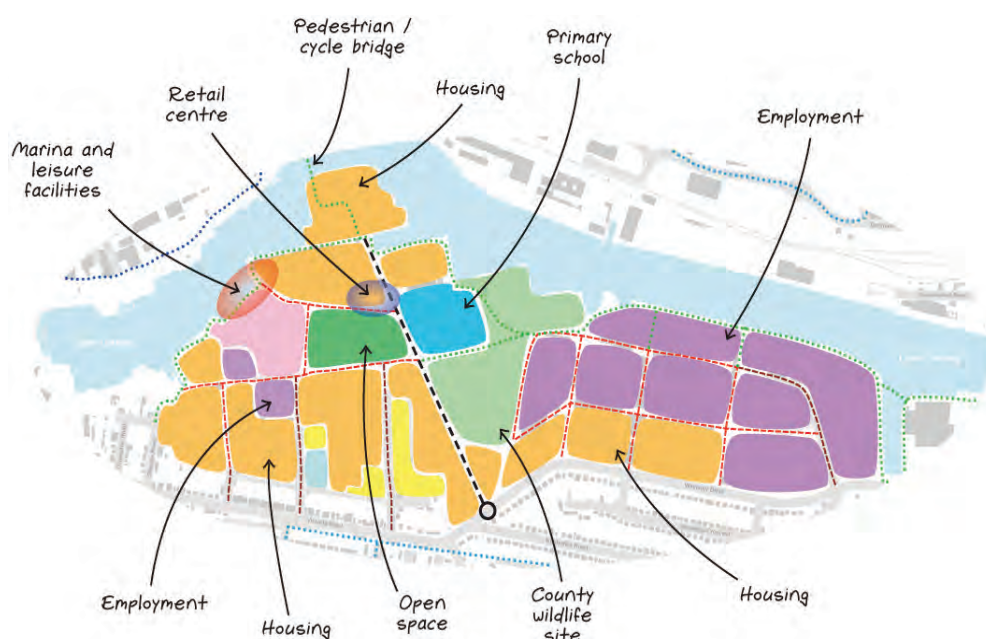
Improved public access to the existing County Wildlife Site

12 hectares of employment land

Small-scale retail facilities and business premises

A network of playing fields, small parks, play areas, tree planting

A network of walkways & cycleways to provide access to local facilities & services including waterfront access



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Residents and communities are being asked for their views on affordable housing and how Waveney District Council will ensure an adequate provision for future generations.

One of Waveney's planning policies requires all new housing development to include a proportion of affordable housing or, alternatively, a financial contribution towards affordable housing on another site. Alongside this policy, detailed guidance on how these measures would be implemented must be put in place.

Therefore a 'Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)' has been produced. It contains key criteria, mapping out how the Council will secure the delivery of affordable housing through the planning process. Prior to publishing the final version of the document, the Council is inviting comments on the draft document as part of a six week consultation.

To find out more and give your views, go to www.consult.waveney.gov.uk/. Any comments should be made by 5pm Friday 13th April 2012.

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT



The future of one of the East of England's most popular theatres, the Marina in Lowestoft, has been secured with the formation of the Marina Theatre Trust.

Waveney District Council will continue to own the building and will work closely with the newly-formed Board to maintain and improve the facilities and the calibre of show on offer. Following an extensive recruitment process, a number of highly experienced people from both the local community and theatre industry will now work with the venue management to ensure its continued success.

Chairman of the board is Hazel Clover, who with 25 years experience of working in the arts, theatre and entertainment business has

considerable experience managing art centres, concert halls, festivals, residencies and theatres. Meanwhile, former Marina Theatre Manager, Martin Halliday who led the bid to operate the Marina as a charitable trust, is the venue's new Chief Executive and the venue is now embarking on a programme of attracting the very best acts and shows to the theatre.

Cllr Stephen Ardley, Waveney's Cabinet Member for Partnerships said: "The Marina Theatre is without doubt the cultural jewel in the district's crown and building upon the enormous success the venue has had in recent years, We are certain the Trust will ensure that the high standard of productions and entertainment offered by the venue is maintained and indeed expanded."

Previously the venue's sole source of financial support came from Waveney with no financial support from either the County Council or any arts funding group. Initially, the role of the trust is to safeguard the venue and enable it to put on the kind of shows that contributed to its success in previous years.

This includes seeking a share of funding at county level and supporting Waveney to improve the venue for audience and artistes. Long term aims are to further enhance the programme, build and sustain new audiences and improve the venue's catering offer to provide substantial improvement to its income.

And so, with the Trust in place, what is currently on offer? Some fantastic shows that's what! The world famous Royal Philharmonic Orchestra recently announced an extension to its prestigious residency at the Marina Theatre into 2012. Meanwhile, having been the fastest selling tour ever and triumphing in the West End, the Calendar Girls are coming to Lowestoft. And if it's laughs you're after then there are few funnier than Al Murray, the pub landlord. Britain's most irrepressible Innkeeper will be in Lowestoft as part of his 2012 tour.

To book tickets for these or any other shows - including cinema screenings - visit the Box Office at:
The Marina Theatre,
The Marina, Lowestoft
NR32 1HH
Telephone (01502) 533200
or email info@marinatheatre.co.uk

HALL TOGETHER NOW

Waveney District Council has handed over the management of Beccles Public Hall to a local charitable community group.

The Council has been determined to provide a sustainable option for the Hall which best protects the interests of the Council and the local community. Beccles Lido Ltd have already demonstrated that they have the skills and ability to develop and operate local facilities successfully following the transforma-

tion of the outdoor swimming pool and their business case met with the universal support of Councillors.

The Council has invested significantly in the Public Hall over the past decade, however the venue needs further investment to address structural issues and for refurbishment, allowing the hall to realise its full potential. Their vision for the Public Hall "is to develop a centrally located facility, where local people

can access and enjoy a wide range of activities from events, concerts and performances to special interest groups".

Cllr Stephen Ardley, Waveney's Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships, said: "We have spoken at great length to the people of Beccles to establish what they want from the hall and it is clear that the Beccles Lido group will be able to deliver exactly what the town is looking for."



MEET MICK!

As a direct result of surveys carried out by the Housing Team last year, the Council have introduced an Estate Ranger for a trial period to help tenants on the Gunton and Whitton estates.

Mick Collins has moved from another job at Waveney to take up this brand new role and he is relishing the opportunity

So, what is an Estate Ranger? Well – it is a job that could change as the Council learns more about what is needed and when! As the Council has never had one before the role may need to change and adapt to meet the needs of tenants on both estates. Time will tell.

Mick will deal with very low level anti-social behaviour such as damage to property, graffiti, dog fouling, and other minor issues that affect a residents enjoyment of where they live. He will work closely with other

agencies to try and ensure that Waveney is achieving improvements to the environment in which we live. Already he has built up a good liaison with Police and Environmental Health colleagues.

Early indications suggest that it could be a success and is being well received by those residents he has met. The focus of activity so far has been dealing with fly tipping and encouraging residents to improve their rear gardens, take pride in where they live and not park on the grass if they can help it!

Plans are afoot for a brand new 'Estate Ranger newsletter and contacts are being made with local schools to help discourage younger children from behaving in a way that could be seen as anti-social while still allowing them to benefit from using the great play facilities that we have on both estates.

COULD A LODGER EASE YOUR MONEY WORRIES?

Waveney Lodgings Scheme is a new scheme in your area run by Solo Housing, a registered housing charity working across East Anglia.

Prospective lodgers are interviewed by staff and assessed for suitability, then matched with a landlord/lady according to each person's requirements. The final choice of whether to offer the room to the lodger is always made by the landlady/landlord. The scheme is free and is partially funded by Waveney District Council.

Solo's lodgers are some of the many people who find themselves unexpectedly in housing need through relationship/family breakdown, redundancy, ill health or the rising cost of living. Lodgings can be a vital step back onto the housing ladder at a difficult time and can often prevent job loss, health problems and loss of contact with family and friends.

Sara, for example, is a bright 19 year old, is working hard to hold onto her first job, unable to afford a place of her own due to low wages and finding herself 'sofa-surfing' between friends. Sara's family recently moved to a smaller house on the other side of the county after they couldn't afford to keep up with increased mortgage payments; it is too far for her to travel to work and in any case, there is no longer any space for her there. She is constantly worried about overstaying her welcome and afraid that she will run out of places to stay.

For Sara and many others like her, renting a room as a lodger could be the answer to their problem. It could also be the answer to their new landlady/landlord's rising house-



hold bills! Solo need more people now, who have a space to offer, in all areas of Waveney. If you think you might be interested in renting out a room in your home, they would love to hear from you. Whether you are an owner-occupier, housing association tenant or in private rented accommodation, why not give them a call for an informal chat, to find out more?

There are more details on Solo Housing's website www.solohousing.org. You can also call Solo on 0800 652 0155 or email info@solohousing.org.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK



The Waveney Disability Forum is really making its mark in the district with a number of projects and awareness activities.

This includes officially opening a 'Changing Places' facility at the Waterlane Leisure Centre, providing adapted hanging facilities within the newly refurbished venue.

Waveney District Council and Sentinel Leisure Trust have combined to source funding for the work to be carried out after

consultation with Andrew Provan and Amanda Wiles, Co-Chairs of Waveney Disability Forum who led on behalf of local people with disabilities. Changing Places' is a national campaign to highlight the need for suitable facilities for people with severe disabilities.

Waveney Disability Forum was set up in September 2011, by the Council's Community Development Team, following a request from local people with disabilities who felt there was no representation from Waveney at a county-wide level.

Councillor Frank Mortimer, Portfolio Holder for Customers and Communities said "This was a clear need for a group to support disability needs at a district level and I am delighted that the Waveney Disability Forum is already making an impact."

Since starting up, the Waveney Disability Forum has undertaken a number of events and consultations, such as the successful 'ScootSafe' event to raise awareness of using a mobility scooter and powered wheelchair.

This Lowestoft event, with participants including Lowestoft Mayor Tod Sullivan (pictured), took place in partnership with Waveney District Council, Waveney Norse, Suffolk Police, Waveney Town Centre Partnership, DIAL and Shopmobility.

The Waveney Disability Forum also took part in the Council Accessing Services Event to promote a better understanding of the issues that may effect access to services provided by the Council, by People with Disabilities. Further consultations taking place include the national Government campaign 'Fulfilling Lives' and the Waveney District Council Local Area Agreement.

For further information about the Waveney Disability Forum, contact the Community Development Team on 01502 562111.

SEEKING VIEWS ON CORTON PAVILION

Corton Playing Field Association are seeking views on proposals to develop the Corton Pavilion.

Planning approval has been given to make improvements to the building and the group now need to secure funding to start the work.

Plans include, improving the changing rooms, a larger meeting room, and a large sports hall. It is expected that to achieve this, the project will need to be split into phases, with phase one the improvements

to the changing rooms and providing refreshment facilities for the users.

As part of the development they would like to engage with new and existing users of the building. The Pavilion is a focal point for the playing field and although the building is in need of renovation it is recognised that this is an asset to the people of Corton.

Suggestions already made are, creating a visitor centre, holding tea dances or learning sessions such as computer courses and providing a venue for small functions.

Jo McCallum Community Development Officer with Waveney is supporting the group and said. "Many communities recognise that to develop existing buildings is a much more achievable aim than trying to secure funding for a new build. However, funding is very competitive and to get to the top of the list, there needs to be sound evidence of need".

If you have any views/comments on the proposals please drop them through the letter box at the pavilion marked "Pavilion Consultation".

YOUTH VOICE



Now in its third year, the Waveney Youth Council continues to provide a voice for young people across Waveney.

With students from high schools in Waveney, The Ashley and Warren Schools and the Lowestoft Sixth Form college, the members don't just attend youth council meetings. In November, The new Lowestoft Sixth Form College hosted an event to mark National Youth Take Over Day which saw them begin work on a new free youth magazine.

Then a month later, the Youth Council met a representative from Suffolk County Council looking for views on future County Council budgets and services. A very passionate debate took place with key issues discussed such as the decision to turn off street lights in some areas during certain times in the night and cost of transport for young people.

And more recently, Sam Kenward, Kerri Leeson and Emily Finch gave a presentation about the WYC to councillors at the Town Hall in Lowestoft. This was well received by Councillors and senior management alike. Stuart Halsey, Waveney Community Development Officer said, "It is great to see so many young people wanting to get involved in their and feeling they can make changes for the benefit of other young people."

The Waveney Youth Council is always looking to extend its membership to other youth groups and organisations, so for more information or to get involved, either call 01502 523354 or email

youthcouncil@waveney.gov.uk

Motorists parking in Lowestoft and Oulton Broad will no longer have to hunt for change with RingGo 'cashless parking' being offered in Waveney District Council pay and display car parks in April!

RingGo is a special mobile phone service, enabling you to pay for your parking by credit or debit card, rather than with cash at a machine. With phone parking: you don't have to save up change; you don't have to trek to and from the machine; and you don't need to put a ticket on your dashboard - Civil Enforcement Officers check which vehicles have paid using internet connected handhelds.

If you've got an iPhone or Android handset, you can download and use the RingGo app to register and pay for your parking. Alternatively call the standard rate telephone number 020 3046 0010 (shown on signs in the car park), at the time you want to park. If you want to save time, you can pre-register in advance at www.myRingGo.co.uk. If it's your first time using the service, you'll be asked for information about your vehicle, the four

digit location code (shown on the sign) and your payment card. On following occasions the service recognises your mobile phone number and retrieves the information given, reducing time considerably. You can pay with RingGo via the apps, by calling, using a text message or on-line. Details of each are given on the myRingGo website.

As well as being convenient, paying with RingGo reduces the risk of receiving a parking charge notice. If you're running late or simply need a bit longer in town, there's no need to worry - just top up your parking wherever you are by using the service again.

The optional RingGo text reminders also help. These notify you 10 minutes before your parking time is due to run out, leaving you time to either extend your stay or return to your car (10p per reminder).

Cllr Stephen Ardley, Waveney's Portfolio Holder for Operational Partnerships, said: "It's a great idea and if it works well in Lowestoft and Oulton Broad we will roll the scheme out across the district."

NO COINS FOR PARKING?



JUST USE RingGO!



NORSE TO BE RECKONED WITH!

Waveney Norse delivers outstanding services on behalf of the Council - could they work for you too?

Do you need help with your garden? Does your Garden lawn need revitalising and mowing, or your trees and shrubs pruning? Could the grounds of your offices, business or commercial premises be transformed with some expert planting and regular maintenance?

Waveney Norse can provide the solution – using professionally trained and experienced staff they can design, install and maintain to customer requirements. Projects big or small, they will happily give advice and provide competitively priced quotations.

Norse's range of specialist services include:

- Grass cutting and turf care**
- Tree works (arboriculture)**
- Creating new lawns**
- Horticulture**
- Shrub maintenance**
- Seasonal bedding: planting & maintenance**
- Garden clearance**
- Weed control**
- Soft and Hard Landscape design**
- Verges and hedges**
- Fencing and paving**
- Patio's and drives**
- Nature and Conservation**
- Home Composting**
- Maintenance of sport pitches/courts**

Norse's comprehensive portfolio is best displayed through their work with Waveney District Council in the prestigious and award-winning parks, gardens, public open spaces and sports fields. Everything they do is tailored to customer requirements.

They are a licensed waste carrier and take great care when disposing of any waste during gardening and grounds work. All waste will be recycled wherever possible and disposed of legally and responsibly.

Norse's Landscape Development Team specialises in both soft and hard landscaping activities and are happy to advise on a design to meet your needs: from landscaping, wildflower meadows designs for borders around new buildings, play areas, ponds, seating, woodland & conservation schemes, Norse are confident they can help no matter how unusual or challenging your project.

Trustworthy staff, quality service – and a clean and green approach too! They take pride in caring for our local environment and their contribution to helping Suffolk be an attractive place to live and work. To discuss your gardening or grounds maintenance service needs – call now and speak to their customer friendly team on: 01502 527100 or e-mail: grounds.waveney@ncsgrp.co.uk

As well as gardening and grounds maintenance, Waveney Norse can also provide a range of services to residential and business premises in the area:

- Building Design & Property Maintenance
- Car Park Management & Cash Collection
- Commercial Refuse Collection and Recycling
- Waste Management Services
- House Clearances & Large item Collections
- Street Cleansing Services
- Drain and Cesspool Emptying
- Vehicle Maintenance & MOTs
- Commercial CCTV Monitoring
- Home Panic Alarm Service
- Building Cleaning and Caretaking.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

With spring in the air, why not head to one of our beautiful parks in or around the district?

2011 brought some significant improvements and following our first ever Green Flag award for Nicholas Everitt Park there is no better time to enjoy your local green space. Meanwhile, Kensington Gardens has begun a programme of rejuvenation and we hope you will be inspired by the start of this transformation. Sparrows Nest is always a popular destination and with an upgrade in facilities it is well worth a visit. With an emphasis on a new style of permanent planting, the introduction of a variety of interesting herbaceous plants is helping to provide a more sustainable approach to landscape management.

Recycling is an integral part of this process and we are very pleased to report that much of the green waste produced on site is now being turned into compost and put back as a soil improver. Producing our own compost not only gives new plants a great start but also freshens up the beds, helps to retain moisture and encourages birds and wildlife to forage.

And with help from our many volunteering 'Friends', we're making great progress. It's, a great way to enjoy gentle exercise, make new friends and hopefully learn more about what our parks have to offer.

Why not get involved and make a difference, you would be most welcome. If you would like to know more, contact the parks department on (01502) 527100 or email waveney.info@ncsgrp.co.uk or visit www.waveney.gov.uk for links to various Friends groups. If you would like to learn about the Green Flag award visit their website:

www.keepbritaintidy.org/greenflag



AWARD WINNERS

Waveney District Council's teams are setting national standards and are being recognised for their outstanding achievements!

The Council received national recognition from APSE (Association of Public Sector Excellence) for its outstanding Building Maintenance work. APSE are the largest local authority benchmarking group in the country and Waveney won the Most Improved Performer award and were commended in the Best Performer category.

Meanwhile another Waveney team picked up a national award. The Council won the Best Performing NLIS Level 3 Local Land Charges Department award at the 2012 Land Data Local Land Charges Awards for Excellence.

The national awards celebrate the work and achievements of local authority local land charges departments, which carry out land and property searches required for property transactions throughout England and Wales. Last year, the Council was highly commended for the same award.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Waveney folk will be familiar with the Scores on the Doors scheme, which has been providing hygiene ratings for for restaurants, takeaways and other food businesses in the district. Now, these premises will have their standards measured against a new national scheme.

Waveney is launching the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme and from the beginning of April food premises will be given a Certificate and Window Sticker displaying their Hygiene Rating. Under the national scheme these will range from zero - which means urgent improvement necessary - to the top rating of five, which indicates a 'very good' standard.

Also, importantly, the ratings for these businesses will be placed on the Food Standards Agency's website, alongside food businesses and premises from all around the country.

Cllr Mary Rudd, Cabinet Member for Community Health said: "I'm no different to any other Waveney resident in wanting to know the safety and cleanliness of the restaurants and other food outlets I use.

I am delighted that Waveney is now part of a consistent National Scheme and I look forward to seeing the new stickers and certificates around the district".

To find out more about the national FHRs residents and businesses can visit www.waveney.gov.uk/foodhygieneratings. Alternatively, contact a member of the food safety team on 01502 562111 or email environment@waveney.gov.uk. The cost of transferring food businesses to the national FHRs has been funded by a grant from the FSA who also manage the website on which the ratings will be displayed, www.food.gov.uk/ratings.

"The officers in the Food & Safety Team work hard with local food businesses to constantly improve and maintain good standards of food hygiene. This scheme acts as a further incentive to food businesses to aim for high standards of hygiene and safety.

"It also, importantly, gives the public a real opportunity to make informed choices about where to eat or buy food based, not just on price and quality, but also now the safety of the food they're buying," added Cllr Rudd.



ENTERPRISING TIMES

Waveney is gearing up for growth after a bid from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for 'Enterprise Zone' status was given the green light by the Government.

The Enterprise Zone will cover six sites in Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth, transforming the two towns, with significant benefits for the rest of Norfolk and Suffolk. It will capitalise on the area's leading position in the energy sector, aiming to create up to 2000 jobs and attract 80 businesses by 2015, and 13,500 jobs and 200 businesses over the 25 year lifetime of the zone.

This is a major incentive to attract new and expanding businesses to the towns and create much needed jobs. Waveney as a Member of the LEP is working closely with the County Council to help regenerate Lowestoft and is working with Norfolk and Great Yarmouth to put the area on the map as an inward investment location.

The Enterprise Zone will benefit from simplified planning rules, a business rate discount for new and expanding businesses and any increase in business rates will be retained by the LEP to support economic development across both counties.

This could generate tens of millions of pounds over the next 25 years and create more than 10,000 additional jobs in the two counties.

The New Anglia Enterprise Zone was one of 11 given the go-ahead out of a total of 29 bids. The submission was ranked as one of the five best submissions.

Andy Wood, chairman of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, and chief executive of Adnams, said: "I'm delighted that the Government has recognised the quality of our bid and has given our Enterprise Zone the green light. We are confident that the Zone will help create significant numbers of new jobs in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft and more in the rest of Norfolk and Suffolk."

Colin Law, Leader of Waveney District Council, said: "I am delighted with the decision to designate an Enterprise Zone for Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth, and capitalise on the area's leading position in the energy sector. Thousands of jobs will be created, making a huge difference in terms of attracting investment, and generating new business opportunities for both new and existing local firms.

"What's more this decision benefits the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk through the related supply chains and not just the defined Enterprise Zone areas in both towns, which will see direct rate relief given to new and expanding businesses. This is going to transform Lowestoft and it sends a clear message - exciting opportunities in our area will grow and more jobs will be on offer."



DISABILITY CHAMPION

Waveney District Council's Customer Service team now has a Disability Liaison Officer, Wendy Thurlby, to assist and support visitors to the Marina Customer Service Centre in Lowestoft.

The role was established some months ago, following one of the Accessing Services consultation events. This was a partnership event through the Council's Community Development Team, and the Waveney Disability Forum.

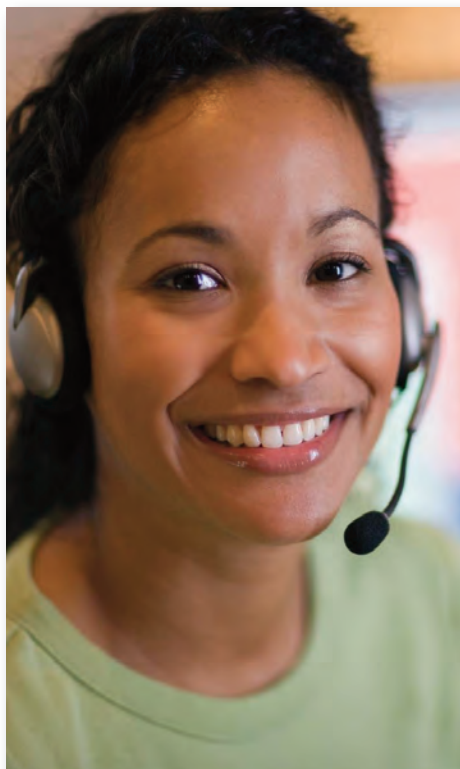
One of the outcomes from the event identified a need for an appropriate officer to be based within the Council's Customer Services team at the Marina Customer Services Centre. The officer will have the skills to support vulnerable customers and people with additional needs, who require information and advice. It was agreed by the Waveney Disability Forum this would be beneficial to the community, helping users access Council Services in a supportive and more personal way.

Wendy has been trained in British Sign Language and regularly attends the Waveney Disability Forum as well as Older Peoples Forums, offering advice and taking customer suggestions.

If you would like to contact Wendy for advice or assistance about any of our Council Services you can e-mail: disabilitychampion@waveney.gov.uk or contact customer services by telephone on: 01502 562111 asking to speak with the disability champion, Wendy Thurlby.



PUTTING CUSTOMERS FIRST



The Council is revising its 'Customer Service standards' to ensure it continues to meet the standards and level of service that residents and communities can expect when they make contact. It also tells you what the Council expects from you and what to do if things go wrong.

Waveney wants to provide the best service possible and these standards will help deliver a consistent level of service across the Council and across our partnerships.

The standards cover a number of important areas, including the kind of service customers can expect every time they make contact with the council, how they will be treated and how quickly enquiries will be dealt with.

They also look more specifically at what customers can expect when they visit our offices, what they can expect if they telephone the Council and also if they write to us or send us an email.

The standards will also detail the importance of feedback to enable us to keep improving the services we provide. The Council regularly monitors these standards using a variety of

methods to check the quality of service being delivered. These methods include:

- Telephone monitoring
- Complaint monitoring
- Feedback from customers

These methods enable the Council to identify areas of good practice, areas for improvement and helps to understand how to deliver an improved services to you, the customer.

However, the standards are only part of the story and the Council is working on a range of projects and considering a range of options on issues such as the future of local offices, the ability to take cash across all sites, opening hours and much more besides.

So with this in mind, a survey has been created for YOU to let us know how you feel about our proposals and the kind of service you would expect from your local Council.

You can find a link to the survey on the homepage of www.waveney.gov.uk the Council's website and paper copies are available from the local offices. The closing date to take part in the survey is Friday May 11 2012.

Waveney District Council is putting considerable thought in to how it supports, assists and responds to its customers and is undertaking a number of activities in the months to come including the launch of a customer survey online.

BENEFITS CHANGES

Do you receive Housing Benefit? Are you a Private Tenant? If so, the way your benefit is calculated has changed.

These changes took place from April 2011. This will affect your award straight away if you first claimed benefit after April 2011. However, if you were already receiving benefit the government awarded a nine month protection, which means you may only see changes to your award from January 2012.

If you are aged between 25 and 35 and living alone, further changes were made to your benefit from January 2012. The Government changed the rules that apply to you and you will now be classed as a Young Individual; this means that you will only be entitled to the

lower rate of housing benefit for a room in shared accommodation.

You should have received letters to warn you of these changes and help plan for the rent shortfall you may receive. If the changes leave you with a rent shortfall we may be able to help with a Discretionary Housing Payment. This is a payment that can be used to top up your rent, or council tax, where you are suffering severe financial hardship.

Do you have a "Non Dependant" living in your home with you?

A non dependant is someone who normally lives with you, such as an adult son, daughter, relative or friend. A son or daughter is classed

as an adult when you no longer receive Child Benefit for them.

If you have a non dependant living with you, you may be receiving a deduction from your benefit. This is a deduction to allow for 'keep' we assume the non dependant pays you. If they do not pay you a contribution for their keep, we will still apply the non dependant deduction to your Housing and Council Tax Benefit award. The amount of weekly deduction we take from your benefit will increase from April 2012.

For further information please visit our website www.waveney.gov.uk. Alternatively you can contact us by phone 01502 562111 or email customerservices@waveney.gov.uk

THE PLACE TO VISIT

With the launch of their first ever joint holiday guide, Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Councils have joined forces to promote the Suffolk Coast as a tourism destination in 2012.

Creating a clear tourism identity running from the Southern Broads to Felixstowe, The Suffolk Coast Holiday Guide, produced by the Councils' Tourism teams in conjunction with tourism businesses across the districts, replaces two previous, separate handbooks.

With 68 full-colour pages, the Suffolk Coast Holiday Guide has been carefully produced to encourage new and returning visitors to the area by promoting a wealth of attractions, accommodation, days out and things to do. 75,000 copies have been printed and circulated through a targeted national marketing campaign and tourist information networks.

Tourism in Waveney and Suffolk Coastal is worth over £0.5billion to the local economy and the districts welcome around 8 million visitors each year. The Councils' Tourism teams work closely together, and with tourism businesses, to help ensure the area is promoted as a holiday destination and this new Guide is just one part of their strategic approach to spreading the word about the Suffolk Coast.

Cllr Bruce Provan Portfolio Holders for Leisure, Tourism and Economic Development at Waveney said: "The Suffolk Coast has its own clear identity, with its beautiful beaches and coastline, idyllic countryside, market towns and so much more. The combined skills of our tourism teams and businesses will ensure that this message is heard loud and clear and we really look forward to welcoming new visitors to the area in 2012."



WIN TICKETS TO SEE THE DARKNESS!

Lowestoft's multi-award winning rockers, **The Darkness**, will be performing in Thetford Forest as part of Forestry Commission Live Music 2012 and we have **TWO** pairs of tickets to give away!!

The Darkness exploded into the public consciousness for both their unique brand of glammed-up rock and outrageous stage costumes when their debut album 'Permission to Land' shot to number one, spawning new rock anthems including 'Love is only a Feeling', 'I Believe In A Thing Called Love' and 'Growing on Me'.

The band - brothers Justin and Dan Hawkins, Frankie Poullain and Ed Graham - are currently enjoying a successful UK indoor tour and on Saturday July 14 a woodland glade in Thetford Forest will be temporarily transformed into a concert venue. With everything required for a great night out, including full catering and bar facilities, the gigs are renowned for their relaxed atmosphere.

There's also an unexpected bonus for concert-goers' green credentials as income generated from ticket sales is spent on im-

proving the local forest for both people and wildlife. Forestry Commission Live Music takes place each summer in seven forest locations around the country. Woodland clearings are temporarily transformed into a concert arena creating a safe and relaxed atmosphere for gig-goers.

Tickets priced at £36.00 (subject to booking fee) are on sale from the Forestry Commission box office telephone 03000 680400 or you can buy online at www.forestry.gov.uk/music.

However, to get your hands on one of **TWO FREE PAIRS OF TICKETS** simply email phil.harris@waveney.gov.uk with the correct answer to this simple question (which you can find somewhere in this magazine!). **"What is the name of the Council's new Estate Ranger?"** Also include your name and a contact telephone number and do it before April 30th. Two names will then be drawn at random. You **MUST** put Darkness Tickets in the subject heading of your email, or it will be ignored! Your email address will **NOT** be stored or retained for any other purpose and will **NOT** be passed on to any third parties.