

# intouch!

WITH YOU AND WAVENEY APRIL 2011

## HELPING HAND!

A Waveney initiative, helping young people find work, wants new recruits

## SCORES ON THE DOORS

How clean are Waveney's restaurants and takeaways? A new scheme reveals all

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

Tell the Council what you think about the service it provides for you



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# COUNCIL TAX FROZEN

**Council tax will be frozen in Waveney for the forthcoming year and a budget gap of £1.5million, created by the cuts in Government grants has been closed.**

This has been achieved through a programme of efficiency savings, primarily linked to the developing relationship with Suffolk Coastal and the delivery partnerships with Waveney Norse and NPS.

Additionally, ongoing reviews of team budgets have also realised savings and efficiencies to help address the shortfall, while not reducing the quality of services provided.

Leader of the Council Mark Bee said: "Despite the financial storm that is blowing through local government, we have so far avoided the need to make swingeing cuts and wholesale compulsory redundancies.

"The tireless work of Members and Officers have helped to ensure that this Council can continue to thrive and, more importantly, that our communities will not suffer. Our decision to engage in effective, efficient and productive partnerships is proving to be the correct strategy and our work with Suffolk Coastal to share and deliver services together is central to this approach."



The portion of Council Tax received by Waveney will remain the same, with Band 'D' customers continuing to pay £147.51 per year (around 11% of the overall household bill which will be £1434.78 plus Parish precepts), or just over £2.80 per week.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy had previously made assumptions about expected spending, estimating a budget gap of £1.469million for the forthcoming financial year. And yet, through a programme of efficiency reviews,

undertaken by each team at Waveney in conjunction with Suffolk Coastal, the gap was considerably reduced.

Cllr Bee continued: "Of course, this is by no means the end of the story. Further cuts to funding from Government will require us to make further savings across the next three years. We will have to work just as hard to achieve them. However, we continue to review what we do, alongside Suffolk Coastal and others, and continue to follow the right strategy to weather this storm.

## BEST EVER

**The Audit Commission has praised Waveney's 'exceptional efforts' in its Annual Audit Letter; an assessment which judges the authority's financial performance and efforts to achieve value for money.**

Following the financial uncertainty of previous years, the Council has met every single one of the Commission's targets and the report praises Waveney for a number of achievements including significant improvement in how the council manages its finances and governs its business and significantly improved 'value for money' arrangements.

Council Leader, Cllr Mark Bee, hailed it Waveney's 'best ever' performance report.

## BETTER TOGETHER



**Waveney's burgeoning partnership with Suffolk Coastal District Council has taken a giant leap forward with the creation of a joint management team for the two authorities.**

Following the appointment of a joint Chief Executive three years ago, the new structure sees four directors and nine heads of service in place, offering an overall reduction of five posts.

This creates ongoing savings of £400,000 a year between the two councils, whose commitment to joint working had already seen them save around £200,000 for both councils.

Cllr Mark Bee said: "We can now get on with the business of further delivering value for money for residents in our two districts. With public sector funding reductions a reality, we face some very difficult challenges.

"And yet we are now better placed to address these issues while maintaining our focus on what matters most of all – the services we provide for our communities."

## SHOW MUST GO ON

**Waveney District Council has confirmed its determination to preserve the future of the Marina Theatre in Lowestoft.**

As a tendering exercise began, to help determine the future operation of the venue, the Leader of the Council, Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Commercial Partnerships met with representatives of the Friends of the Marina Theatre and the Lowestoft Players to explain the Council's plans in detail.

And following a detailed and lengthy discussion, the groups hailed an extremely productive meeting which built understanding and a bond of trust between all parties.

James Reeder who was attending the meeting on behalf of the Friends and Players said: "The Leader confirmed the Council's commitment to ensuring the Marina remains a premier theatre for Lowestoft and its improvement for the future. He also told us that the Council plans to extend its booking policy through

until September 2011 at the earliest, which is fantastic news."

"It is frustrating that the Council must follow an exhaustive procurement process. However I do understand that their hands are tied in this respect and, more importantly, we are completely reassured that the future of the theatre is safe.

"We all want the same thing which is to continue building upon the improvements that the Council have made to the theatre in recent years and to find a way to ensure that the Marina can become a more sustainable and professional first class theatre venue for Lowestoft and the wider area.

"It is clear that the Council do have the best interests of the theatre at heart and we will be working with them to make this happen." Cllr Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder with



responsibility for the theatre said: "It is understandable that people will worry about the future of the theatre, however I wanted to ensure that the Friends and the Players understood our utter determination to safeguard its future.

"Despite some suggestions to the contrary, we all want exactly the same thing. This process will not be quick or straightforward – but our goal remains the same as ever: a fantastic, nationally renowned and sustainable theatre for the people of Lowestoft and Waveney."

## TRUST IN WAVENEY

**A new charitable organisation that will ensure the long-term sustainability of Waveney's leisure operations has been formed.**

Forming the Governing Board of the newly formed Sentinel Leisure Trust, a range of Waveney citizens will manage the leisure and culture portfolio operated by Waveney District Council and seek to deliver improved value for money for residents.

Councillor Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder for Healthy & Inclusive Communities, said: "I'm very excited about this positive step forward for leisure in Waveney. Forming the Sentinel Leisure Trust is an excellent way to safeguard the future of leisure provision

in the district, setting the scene for the next 15 years, and make sure residents are getting the most out of local activities.

"Additionally, the facilities looked after by the trust are central to Waveney life, such as beach services at Lowestoft and Southwold, and other extremely well used sites, as in the cases of Waterlane Leisure Centre and Yacht Stations at Beccles & Oulton Broad."

The seven trustees held their first meeting on February 1 at Barnards Centre Point -



**SENTINEL LEISURE TRUST**

one of the facilities which will pass to Sentinel on April 1 subject to Council approval. The seven are former Waveney MP Bob Blizzard, Rod Hodds, Maxine Bye, Anita White, Paul Fenner, Paul Belton and Neil Loveday.



# YOUTH VIEWS YOUR PLACE, YOUR SAY

**Waveney Youth Council, the voice for young people in the Waveney area, has launched a district-wide consultation giving young people the chance to win up to £50 in vouchers for taking part.**

Young people are being asked for views on their community and to suggest any improvements. This is also an opportunity for them to voice their views on other issues that might affect them, such as bullying, lack of affordable housing, careers and crime.



"The consultation will help us identify key areas and issues that young people feel strongly about, and will enable us to take a broad view of Waveney, what young people want and how we can help them achieve this," said Ryan Holt, chairman of the Waveney Youth Council.

You can complete this questionnaire online at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk). Paper versions are also available (to be returned once complete) at your local youth club, council office or school or by emailing: [youthcouncil@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:youthcouncil@waveney.gov.uk) or calling 01502 523354.

For your chance to win either a £50 or £25 voucher of your choice, please ensure you return your completed questionnaires by Friday 25th March.

Follow the news and updates from the WYC by following them on twitter: [www.twitter.com/waveneyyc](http://www.twitter.com/waveneyyc) or find them on Facebook.

**Would you like more of a say and more of an opportunity to shape the future of your town or village?**

Waveney District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council, Suffolk Acre and The Community Forum are working together to support the development of Community Led Plans across the district.

Community Led Plans encompass a range of processes giving communities the opportunity to consider and debate their hopes for their area, leading to the development of an Action Plan to take these priorities forward.

Many communities can be put off the idea of developing a plan, thinking it will be time consuming, or that it will cost a significant amount of money.

And although there is a time commitment, the process can be undertaken with the support of the whole community; sharing the responsibility and making it much easier. There is funding available to support the development of plans along

with expertise and help with training and development.

Many areas have already undertaken the process including Halesworth which now have a completed plan. Beccles is beginning the process and will be carrying out wide community consultation in the forthcoming months.

Jo McCallum, Community Development Officer at Waveney District Council who is working on the Community Led Plan programme said "It is important for communities to realise that they can make a real difference and that their ambitions can be a reality.

"And it doesn't matter how big or small your village or town is. For example we are working with some of the smaller Parishes to feed into a larger plan, such as in Halesworth".

If anyone would like to talk about the possibility of producing a plan please contact Jo McCallum on 01502 523186 or [jo.mccallum@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:jo.mccallum@waveney.gov.uk)



# PLAYING FOR KEEPS



**A recent survey of young people has revealed overwhelming approval for the schemes developed by the Waveney Play Partnership.**

With over half a million pounds of external funding secured and invested in Waveney's play/open space infrastructure in the last three years, the Partnership has supported and enabled a number of local communities to improve their play/open space infrastructure within the district.

Through engaging with and empowering the children and young people in the decision making process, each play/open space has been designed to its own individual needs and 500 children and young people have responded to a questionnaire which analysed completed

projects so far. The results show that:

- **EVERY child/young person now has more choice and control over how they play**
- **97% are now satisfied with their park/play space**
- **Over half of those consulted now rate their play space as 'Excellent'**
- **87% say the new equipment provides more challenge for them**
- **Three quarters of children and young people now visit their park at least twice a week**
- **Seven out of ten children and young people have made new friends whilst using their improved play space**

Moving forward, the Partnership hopes to not only sustain its work for the years to come, but also to become stronger through

further supporting and enabling local communities who wish to see their play and open space infrastructures improved.

A new levy called the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) will supersede the current S106 process – in which developers make a contribution to community facilities by 2014.

This is by far the greatest challenge to befall play and open space development and it is a Partnership priority to ensure that public play/open space is not undervalued or forgotten within these new policies.

For further information on Play & Open Space Development in Waveney please contact Chris Ames on 01502 523391 or [chris.ames@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:chris.ames@waveney.gov.uk).



# SWITCHOVER SOON!

The digital TV switchover is happening now around the country and is coming to Waveney between July and November this year.

The switchover is a process of turning off the UK's 'analogue' TV signal and replacing it with a new, stronger digital TV signal. This will mean that, with the right equipment almost everyone will be able to receive digital TV through an aerial.

However, to keep your current TV service, you will need to convert your TVs to digital before your area's switchover date. Almost any TV can be converted with a digital box, even a black and white one so there is no need to buy a new TV unless you want to. If you do decide to get a new TV, make sure it carries the 'digital tick'. The 'digital tick' means that it is designed to continue working after the switchover.

The transmitters which provide television signals for Waveney residents will take place later this year, in two stages.

Stage one (BBC Two analogue off):  
Sudbury transmitter (Parts of Suffolk and

Essex): 6 July 2011  
Tacolneston transmitter (Norfolk and north Suffolk): 9 November 2011

Stage two (All analogue channels off)  
Sudbury transmitter (Parts of Suffolk and Essex): 20 July 2011  
Tacolneston transmitter (Norfolk and north Suffolk): 23 November 2011

Viewers can check when their area switches and the options for digital TV in their area by calling the advice line on 08456 50 50 50 or by using the postcode checker on the Digital UK website: [www.digitaluk.co.uk](http://www.digitaluk.co.uk).

This site also provides a wealth of information on the switchover, providing detailed answers to a range of questions you may have about why this is happening.



There is also a Digital Switchover Help Scheme which will be available to you if you are: aged 75 or over, or have lived in a care home for six months or more, or get (or could get) certain disability benefits, or are registered blind or partially sighted.

For further information on the scheme, call free on 0800 40 85 900 or visit the website [www.helpscheme.co.uk](http://www.helpscheme.co.uk).

# IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY...

**If the unthinkable happens your council will be ready. There are numerous hazards and risks that can have an impact on a community, such as severe weather, flooding, industrial accident or transport accident, animal diseases or a flu pandemic, and Waveney has developed detailed contingency plans and trained staff to deal with any eventuality.**

As a member of the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit, we have a team of civil protection professionals on call, 24/7, to respond to any eventuality.

In addition, the team will establish rest centres for people who may have been evacuated, support the emergency services to bring the incident to a safe conclusion and assist in returning the community to normal activity with business continuity advice.

In extreme conditions such as heavy snow or flooding, there is a possibility that the emergency services may not be able to reach the scene immediately. In such circumstances, the initial response may rely entirely on local people and the team work closely with Parish Councils and

others to help a community prepare for an emergency and minimise its impact.

To help home owners prepare for emergencies, the emergency planning unit have produced Self-help Emergency Guidelines in the form of a fridge magnet pop-out card which is available free of charge from the reception of the District Council offices.

Further advice is available from the District Emergency Planning Officer, [graham.saward@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:graham.saward@suffolk.gov.uk) or at [www.suffolkresilience.com](http://www.suffolkresilience.com).

# ELECTION TIME

Although there is no General Election, 2011 is still a critical year for elections giving YOU the chance to make your voice heard nationally and locally.

Local elections will take place on Thursday May 5, electing all 48 Waveney District Councillors and 339 Parish / Town Councillors to represent the Waveney area for the next four years. In addition (at the time of writing) there is expected to be a national referendum on the same day.

This referendum will ask you to vote on changing the system currently used for electing Members of Parliament ('First past the post') to the 'Alternative Vote' system. If the referendum goes ahead, the Electoral Commission will post a booklet to every household explaining this in detail.

These different elections and the referendum mean that many voters will receive several different ballot papers. In addition many will also be voting for more than one candidate as most district Ward areas and Parish areas are each represented by several different Councillors. The number of candidates to vote for will be displayed clearly on each Ballot paper.

Anyone wishing to stand as a candidate to become a District Councillor must apply for a Nomination Paper for the electoral area that they wish to represent and submit the Paper to the Returning Officer.

To be eligible you must be:

- At least 18 on the day of nomination
- A British subject or an Irish Republic or European Union citizen living in the UK

- On the Waveney electoral register or have lived, worked or owned property in the district for the last 12 months.
- You will also need to have your nomination paper signed by ten people who are on the electoral register in the Ward you would like to represent as a District Councillor.

You can not stand for election if you:

- Work for Waveney District Council.
- Are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order
- Have a criminal conviction involving a prison sentence of three months or more (including a suspended sentence) in the last five years.
- Are otherwise specifically disqualified from holding office by order of the court.

Nomination papers can be submitted from March 25 (when the 'Notice of Election' is published) until midday on April 4. Where there are more valid nomination papers received than vacant seats for the District Ward and / or Parish / Town Council then the contested election will be on May 5.

Please ensure you read your Poll Card carefully when it arrives and ensure you know where you must go to vote on May 5. The hours of poll are 7am to 10pm. If you would prefer to vote by post and you are not currently a postal voter then please contact the Elections Office, as soon as possible, stating your name and address and an application form will be sent to you. A completed postal vote application form must be returned to the Elections Office, Town Hall, High Street, Lowestoft, NR32 1HS by 5pm on April 14th for the May Elections.

Remember if you have any queries or concerns then phone the Electoral Services Helpline on 01502 523238 or email: [elections@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:elections@waveney.gov.uk).



# BENEFITS CHANGES

If you are claiming benefit, this will be affected if your Housing Benefit is calculated using the Local Housing Allowance Scheme or if you have an adult living with you, over the age of 17 and you are not receiving child benefit.

## The LHA Scheme Changes

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) was introduced in April 2008 as a new Housing Benefit (HB) scheme for the assessment of all new claims and change of address for tenants renting private accommodation (not from the council or a Housing Association). LHA is based on location and number of bedrooms with monthly rates set by the Valuation Office Agency. Your Housing Benefit will be reducing. The amount it will be reducing by will depend upon the amount of bedrooms you have. And the date that is reduces from will depend upon the month that we review your benefit.

## Non Dependant Scheme Changes

A non dependant is an adult living with

another adult as a member of the family, such as a grown up son or daughter. Benefit rules assume they make a financial contribution to the household based on their income. That contribution is deducted from the claimant's Benefit. The level of increase has been designed to catch up on 1999 frozen rates over the next four years.

## When will this affect me?

The new rules will not affect you until your annual benefit review and a protection scheme means there will be a nine month delay between us reviewing your benefit and dropping your rent.

## Can I get further help?

There is further information at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk) or you can call us on 01502 523535 or come in to see us at the Marina Customer Centre in Lowestoft. If you have any changes in your circumstances that may affect your Housing or Council Tax Benefit, you must tell us. Email [Benefits@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:Benefits@waveney.gov.uk) to tell us what has changed and from when.

# CUT YOUR BILL!

- Are you the only adult in your home?
- Do you use a wheelchair in your home?
- Has your home been modified for your disabled needs?
- Are you a full time student?

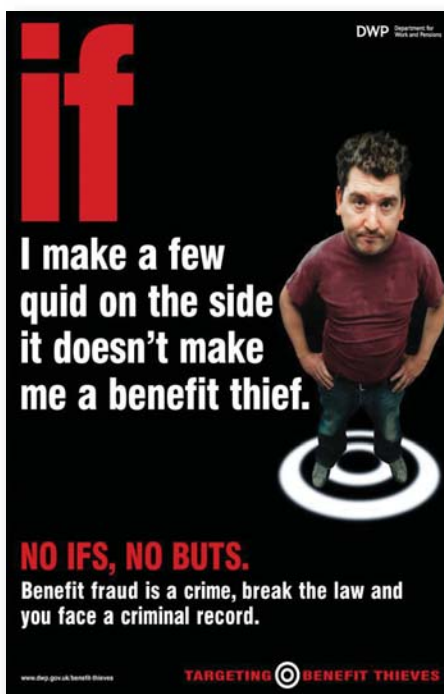
## There may be a discount to help you

- Are you working but on a low income? Retired?
- Receiving any state benefit?

## There may be a benefit to help you

To see a full list of Discounts, Exemptions and Benefits, or to apply online go to [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk) call **01502 523535** or visit us at the **Marina Customer Centre in Lowestoft**

# IT'S YOUR MONEY



**Waveney District Council Benefit Fraud Team has enjoyed a very successful 2010 bringing the fraudsters of the Waveney area to account for their actions. To date the Team has saved £244,000 of public money.**

Working in conjunction with the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) the investigation team work in rooting out false claims for both Housing and Council Tax Benefit, and will prosecute the worst offenders.

Since April 2010 more than 1,000 cases have been reported to the Team from various sources and a total of 38 people have been successfully prosecuted with many others in the process of being investigated. Nevertheless, although the council will always recover overpayments it does not

follow that everybody will be prosecuted. The Council's prosecution policy allows two alternatives to prosecution.

The first option is a "Formal Caution" which amounts to a stern warning not to offend again and the second option is to offer an "Administrative Penalty", an agreement to repay the original overpayment plus a 30% penalty.

One of the major weapons in the fight against benefit fraud is the general public, who can report any suspicious cases by calling a dedicated Benefit Fraud Hotline free on 08003286340 or by calling the Council's fraud hotline on 01502-523333. Callers can remain anonymous if they wish and all calls are treated in the strictest confidence.



# CONFRONTING COASTAL CONCERNS

**Waveney has approved a groundbreaking policy to help Suffolk home owners who face losing their homes to coastal erosion.**

It means that people who are in danger of losing their property to erosion in the following 20 years will have the opportunity to relocate and build further inland, subject to planning law. Businesses will also be able to relocate.

Project Director David McGinnis said: "I am delighted this policy has been approved and some concerns people have about the future of their homes can now be eased."

A great deal of work has gone into exploring ways to help affected home owners since the creation of the Waveney Pathfinder Project, which was awarded £1.5m by Defra to help find ways to support local communities to manage the impacts of erosion. The communities of Corton and Easton Bavents were chosen to consider the effects of coastal erosion and its impacts on community life and businesses.

Recently up to £15,000 of Pathfinder funding was

approved to commission an Area Impact Study (AIS) that will appraise viable works options to inform the Beach Management Plan, which will identify those practical interventions that Pathfinder funding will procure. In addition, a commissioned study called the Corton Cliff Field Report has been exploring cliff top erosion at Corton and will deliver a final report following by the end of March 2011. The study's aim was to confirm the

geological make up of the cliff to identify the underlying cause of stability failure, prior to looking at possible engineering solutions and costs.

To find out more about the Waveney Pathfinder Project visit [www.waveney-pathfinder.com](http://www.waveney-pathfinder.com).



# PLANNING WITH CERTAINTY

**Two key documents which are crucial to the quality of future development in Waveney have been formally adopted by Waveney District Council.**

The two documents received independent backing from a Planning Inspector at the end of last year and were subsequently adopted after consideration at a council meeting on January 26 2011. The Site Specific Allocations document identifies land suitable for future development such as housing, employment and community facilities.

The Development Management Policies document contains criteria based policies which will help make decisions on planning

applications. Adopting both documents is a considerable step forward in completing an up-to-date planning policy framework for Waveney's future development.

Both form part of the Waveney Local Development Framework (LDF) and seek to deliver the vision for the district as set out in the Core Strategy adopted in 2009. The Council's Core Strategy is the most important of the LDF documents and guides development in the district to 2021. Waveney is one of only a handful of local authorities in the country that have an almost complete LDF.

Portfolio Holder for Prosperous and Vibrant Economy and Learning and Skills Cllr

Wendy Mawer said: "These important documents are crucial to the effective development of Waveney.

"We are grateful to all those who contributed to the preparation and examination of the documents, and to all those who attended the hearing sessions. Contributions were offered in a very constructive way."

The Area Action Plan for central Lowestoft was submitted to the Government for 'examination' on February 11.

For more information call Waveney's Planning Policy Team on (01502) 523029 or visit [www.waveney.gov.uk/LDF](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/LDF).



## NOISE NOTICED

**Don't suffer in silence this summer. If you have a problem with noise, there is something you can do about it - any time of day.**

From April 29 though until September 25, Waveney will operate an out of hours hotline, which residents can call for assistance with incidents of noise nuisance.

The Environmental Protection team at Waveney expects to deal with around 700 complaints of noise nuisance each year. Waveney's evening hotline is available at weekends from May to September from 7pm to 1am on Fridays & Saturdays, and from 7pm to midnight on Sundays and Bank Holidays and it will enable residents to report incidents of noise nuisance out of

hours. Call 01502 515 435 and remember that noise complaints can also be reported during the normal working day by phoning 01502 562111.

Some incidents will result in legal action being taken against the perpetrators. This ranges from the serving of an abatement notice to prosecution. In addition, officers can enter premises, confiscate equipment or make application to magistrates for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order.

Principal Environment Health Officer Andrew Reynolds said: "Our message is for people to be considerate of others. Waveney takes noise pollution very seriously and we will be there to assist affected residents."

## RECYCLING NO1 (AGAIN)

**Waveney District Council has retained its position as Norfolk and Suffolk's NUMBER ONE recycling authority, following publication of the latest annual figures by DEFRA.**

National recycling data for 2009/2010 (the most recent available) shows that Waveney recycles the most household waste out of all the local authorities in the

two counties, with 53.17% of domestic waste being sent for reuse, recycling or composting. This remarkable figure places the Council 16th out of 358 local authorities nationwide.

The annual figures were released by DEFRA, the UK government department responsible for policy and regulations on the environment, food and rural affairs.

## SMOKING PLAN

**Waveney District Council is to pilot an innovative plan to help people stop smoking and, by association, cut down on the littering caused by the habit.**

An incentive scheme has been created which would reduce any issued smoking-related fixed penalty notice by 50% on condition the recipient receives appropriate advice on quitting smoking from health professionals.

The scheme, which is the brainchild of the Council's Environmental Health Team, emerged during discussions with the NHS Smoking Cessation Advisors and other members of the Local Strategic Partnership. The scheme would have two objectives.

The first would be to help people who wish to give up smoking take appropriate action by offering a discount on a fine which otherwise would have to be paid in full. Secondly, it is hoped that such a scheme would in itself highlight the issue of smoking litter which blights the environment.

Cllr Ken Sale, Portfolio Holder for the Greenest County said: "The health effects of smoking are well documented and many smokers genuinely want to give up. If we can push them to do so with a financial incentive, it could make all the difference."

Smoking kills around 114,000 in the UK each year and research suggests that smoking costs the Health Service in excess of £5bn each year. Additionally, littering costs the UK just under £1bn each year according to the Keep Britain Tidy group and around 80% of the Fixed Penalty Notices issued in the Waveney District each year are for littering offences.



# SCORES ON THE DOORS

**Waveney District Council is publishing food hygiene ratings of local businesses to drive up standards and reward high performing outlets.**

The 'Scores on the Doors' scheme aims to provide consumers with a user-friendly way of obtaining the information they need to make an informed choice about where to eat in the district. It also ensures that food businesses achieving consistently high standards of food hygiene are publicly recognised and rewarded. It is hoped that this will provide additional motivation to food businesses to achieve high standards of hygiene, leading to greater food safety.

The star rating scheme, which is already in operation in many parts of the UK, sees inspecting officers from Waveney District Council's Environmental Health Team give businesses, such as cafes, restaurants, pubs and food manufacturers, a 0 to 5 star rating in terms of food hygiene, as part of their regular inspections. Businesses will

be given a certificate showing their rating, which they can display. Cllr Ken Sale, Portfolio Holder for the Environment, said: "Scores on the Doors provides an excellent way of rewarding high quality, hygienic businesses and, at the same time, informs the public of the standards maintained by local food businesses.

"The Waveney scheme, in common with much of the rest of Suffolk, demands very high standards of compliance to achieve 5 stars – so those businesses who get high star ratings can be justifiably proud."

The star rating for a business can be seen both on the certificate displayed by the business and on Waveney District Council's website at: [www.waveney.gov.uk/Environment/Public+Health](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/Environment/Public+Health)



Top: The Raj Mahal, Below: Istanbul Chef

# NEW 'ASB' UNIT GETTING RESULTS

**A new partnership set up to tackle anti-social behaviour in Waveney is enjoying notable success, working on no fewer than 50 reported cases and eradicating a number of long term problems in the past two months, alone.**

Waveney's first ever dedicated Anti Social Behaviour Unit (ASBU) is a partnership formed by Waveney District Council and Suffolk Police to help agencies work closer together and tackle a range of "aggressive, intimidating or destructive" behaviour. The newly formed team is based together, within council offices in Lowestoft. Anti-social behaviour or 'ASB' describes any

behaviour we find unacceptable and covers any aggressive, intimidating or destructive activity that damages or destroys another person's quality of life.

The unit had initially been set up to deal with more serious reports of ASB, but due to its success, the team is already helping on other cases, not just alongside the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, but also Waveney's Housing and Environmental Health teams, who also deal with ASB issues.

Cllr Mary Rudd, Waveney's Portfolio Holder for Safe Communities added: 'Everyone has the right to enjoy peace and quiet in

their own home, feel safe and secure and not suffer the anti-social activities of others. This is a safe place to live and with the help of the ASBU we aim to keep it that way".

Suffolk now has the second-lowest rate of anti-social behaviour in the country and latest figures from the British Crime Survey show that residents' confidence in the police and local councils' ability to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter, has risen by 2.8 per cent on the previous quarter. This is the fifth increase in six quarters, making the county the eighth-best in England and Wales in terms of customer satisfaction.

## VITAL FUND

**A new source of business funding to help those unable to get help from their bank has been launched in Waveney.**

The Waveney Advance Loan Fund, established by Waveney District Council and Waveney Local Strategic Partnership, will target individuals looking to set up in business and established businesses focussing on survival and growth. The fund will be managed by local business support organisation Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services (NWES), who operate similar funds elsewhere within the region.

Cllr Wendy Mawer, Waveney District Council's Portfolio Holder for Prosperous and Vibrant Economy and Learning and Skills, said "We are delighted that we have been able to establish this loan fund to support our local business community in these difficult economic times. Research has repeatedly shown that access to finance is the largest barrier faced by both start-ups and established businesses. This fund will help small businesses in the Waveney area now and, as the loans are repaid, further businesses will receive similar support from the repaid money over the next 10 years."

For further information on the Loan Fund please contact NWES on 0845 60 99 99 1 or email [nec@nwes.org.uk](mailto:nec@nwes.org.uk).

## KIRKLEY OK!

**Waveney District Council has teamed up with Jobcentre Plus and other local partners to bring together a wide range of services and advice for the people of Kirkley at a local venue.**

The service, named "Our Kirkley" (OK) aims to deliver an easily accessible, multi-agency service to help meet the diverse needs of people in Kirkley, which can make a difference to them, and possibly to the area itself.



## LEARN TO EARN

**Fifty students in the Waveney area are taking part in an innovative 'Learn to Earn' programme funded by Waveney District Council and delivered by the educational charity Young Enterprise.**

In the activity based Learn to Earn programme students identify a dream future lifestyle and discover what success means to them. Students then explore potential career options and job roles and prepare an annual budget - which will almost certainly require them to re-evaluate their dream lifestyle!

Cllr Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder at the Council for Prosperous & Vibrant

Economy and Learning & Skills said "The programme sends a powerful message to young people to make the connection between education, training and employment. It is a very valuable scheme which the Council is pleased to support."

Throughout the day students discover the qualifications and skills needed for a range of career options and how their career choices will affect their future lifestyle choices. The importance of making the most of their education whilst at school becomes apparent.

Various representatives from local industries also attend to discuss future job prospects in the area.

The Kirkley Centre at 154 London Road South in Lowestoft will be the 'hub' of activity with key local organisations on hand to deliver information, learning, advice and workshops to help people affected by worklessness, health and social issues.

There will be a launch event on April 8 & 9 - please come along and see what 'OK'

can do for you! And if you are a local organisation, employer or group representative who would like to know more about the scheme, or believe you can contribute to the service, Our Kirkley would love to hear from you.

Please email [jeannette.white@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jeannette.white@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk)



## A FOOT ON THE LADDER

**An initiative to help young people in Waveney improve their chances of finding work is looking for 'new recruits'.**

The Waveney Pre-Apprenticeships Scheme is a joint initiative created by Enterprise Lowestoft, Waveney District Council, Lowestoft College, The Connexions Service and others for 16–18 year olds who fall in to a category known as 'NEET': not in education, employment or training. The scheme matches young people to voluntary placements with employers, to gain new skills and explore career options in an environment suited to their ambition and abilities.

A number of young people have seized the chance to take part, however the scheme will end later this year and its Project Manager wants to ensure that more young people enjoy this fantastic opportunity. Cheryl Willis of Enterprise Lowestoft said: "This initiative provides a local solution to help both employers and young people in challenging times. We always seek to try and place those who come to us into com-

panies or organisations that we know will benefit them. Students are using the initiative to obtain relevant valuable experience to give substance to a cv and also to support applications for apprenticeships.

Steven Downie is just such an example. Having left school following a one-year sixth form course, he was unable to find work and began to despair after several months with no prospects for change. The Pre-Apprenticeship scheme, however, has opened a door and his entire outlook has changed. He said: "The scheme was recommended to me and I was given an opportunity to work with Felixarc Marine at Orbis Energy. I hadn't been able to find any work and I was despondent – but the scheme has given me confidence to do a job and to build a career."

Meanwhile, Joe Battle at Halesworth Tool Hire said: "I am gaining a greater understanding of why things go wrong and how to fix it. I want to try and go on to an apprenticeship later this year and this can only help me."



Ms Willis continued: "Steven and Joe are examples of young people benefiting from the Scheme and who have been given the chance to prove themselves. I hope that others will follow in their footsteps and enjoy the benefits of learning and gaining new skills in a workplace."

For more information or to register your interest please contact Cheryl Willis on 07824 398 243 or email [cheryl@enterpriselowestoft.co.uk](mailto:cheryl@enterpriselowestoft.co.uk).

## SCHEME FOR SUCCESS

**Waveney District Council is working with James Paget University Hospitals and NHS Great Yarmouth & Waveney on a Local Government/NHS Apprenticeship Scheme that provides training for 11 posts across the three organisations.**

The training is carried out in partnership with Great Yarmouth College. The aim is to promote work in the public sector and all the apprentices will have some contact with all local public sector organisations. The Scheme began in September 2010 and will run for one year during which time nine apprentices will undertake a Level 2 apprenticeship in Business Administration and 2 will be working towards a Level 2 apprenticeship in Health & Social Care.

Danielle Bellamy is one of three young people undertaking an apprenticeship in Business Administration based at Waveney and is enjoying her time here. She said: "Working at Waveney is not only helping me build a wide range of experience, it is also good fun too. I'm meeting so many different people, all committed to delivering the best services to local communities and whatever I end up doing, I hope I can take the same kind of commitment with me."

Waveney Head of HR Carol Lower said: "We give the participants real skills to im-



prove their chances of gaining meaningful employment in the future. In return we have gained apprentices who have the potential to learn and develop and can provide the marketplace with a pool of future talent with the experience and qualifications to go far in the public sector or elsewhere."

## PLANNING TO SUCCEED



**Waveney's planning team is celebrating after being awarded accreditation by the British Standards Institute**

The ISO9001:2008 Quality Management System for Development Management, Conservation and Enforcement services. requires a consistent approach to delivering the service as well as a good standard

of customer care and evidence of continuous improvement.

Customer satisfaction forms a major part of the independent assessment, carried out by the British Standards Institute, and the improvements in this area have been significant with all customer survey indicators showing an upward trend compared with

the same period 12 months ago. For instance, over 94% of customers said they found the Planning Team efficient (previously 51%) and 97% said they found them helpful (previously 79%) Over 92% said the service met or exceeded expectations.

Portfolio Holder Cllr Ken Sale said "Whilst planning by its very nature will always be controversial, and accepting that not everybody will be satisfied with the outcome of a planning application, this represents a massive achievement for the Council and its officers who work hard to deliver a consistent and continually improving service.

"Across the country there are very few planning services who have this accreditation but our team passed the two day assessment with flying colours and I would like to congratulate everybody who contributed to achieving such a high standard".

## HOME PRIDE

**New figures reveal that Waveney's Housing Team is outperforming other local authorities in England and delivering exceptional value for money.**

In a benchmarking exercise carried out with national body Housemark, the Council recently compared its Housing Team's performance at two levels: with other district Councils in England (40 councils in total) and with other landlords in England (478 councils and housing associations). Waveney ranked highly in terms of minimising costs, satisfying tenants and responding promptly to tenants' problems.

The figures show that the cost of tenancy management per property is the **LOWEST** out of all landlords in England, and the cost of tenancy involvement per property is **SECOND** lowest in England for district councils.

Waveney proves it's also on the right track when it comes to efficiency and quality, as satisfaction with its repairs and maintenance service ranked the authority as the **BEST** in England for district councils. Similarly, repairs completed right first time placed the Council in **FIRST** place, compared with all English district councils, and in third place in respect of how tenants feel Waveney is able to deal with reported housing problems.

In addition, Waveney's SAP rating (the measurement for thermal comfort of its properties) ranked the Council as the **BEST** in England with at a front-running rating of 82.9 – the next highest was 75.

Cllr Sue Allen, Portfolio Holder for Housing & Inclusive Communities, is delighted with the Housing Team's consistent performance: "I'm tremendously proud of these figures. We know how important it is to Waveney residents that their council offers a great service and value for money and, by undertaking this benchmarking exercise, we have clear evidence that Waveney is putting the needs of customer first.

"The Housing Team does not have an easy job but what our staff do greatly benefits people living in Waveney and I am so pleased that the Team's efforts are paying off."







## HOW ARE WE DOING?

**Customers can now tell Waveney District Council how satisfied they are with the service it provides at the Marina Customer Services centre.**

A new service called GovMetric gives customers a quick way to leave feedback whenever they visit the centre using the new touch screen in reception. Simply pick the 'face' that best matches how you feel about the service you received, be it happy, neutral or unhappy.

All feedback will be regularly reviewed by council staff, who will then try to keep doing the things that residents like, and to improve the things that they don't. The council plans to publish the results from all customer feedback along with details of how it has improved services.

The Marina Customer Centre provides the first point of contact for Waveney services and is located at the Marina, Lowestoft (next to the Marina Theatre).

## BUS PASS CHANGES

**Owing to a change in the law, from 1st April 2011 the responsibility and the powers for providing concessionary travel will be transferred from Waveney District Council to Suffolk County Council.**

They will provide the national statutory minimum scheme, providing free concessionary bus travel from 09:30 to 23:00, Monday to Friday, and all day on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

As a result, from 1st April 2011 the concessionary bus travel scheme will change to only offer free concessionary bus travel at the times detailed above, although some exceptions will be made for rural communities whose only bus leaves before 09:30.

Suffolk County Council have also decided to continue offering discretionary Travel Vouchers in lieu of a concessionary bus pass for people with a 'severe mobility impairment', but the full year value across the county will be £50.

If you already hold a concessionary bus pass you will receive a letter directly from Suffolk County Council explaining these changes. You will also receive a letter if your pass expires on 31st March 2011, letting you know what you need to do.

Suffolk County Council has set up an information telephone line to help you keep up-to-date with changes to the new scheme and how you can apply for a pass. Please call this number with any enquiries: Tel: 0845 600 0659.



## CONTACT US

**The Marina Customer Service Centre in Lowestoft is open to the public at the following times:**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm and Thursday: 9.30am to 6.00pm.

*Services provided include:*

Council Tax & Recovery  
Housing Benefits  
Customer Services (for all general enquiries)  
Housing Options/Homelessness  
Home Choice  
Land Charges, Planning and Building Control  
Private Sector Housing  
Payments

We accept payments by debit/credit card via our automated telephone line: 01502 511805 and on our website:

[www.waveney.gov.uk/payments.htm](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/payments.htm)

**Our Call Centre is your first port of call for general enquiries. Call 01502 562111 between:**

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday: 8.30am to 5.00pm  
Thursday: 8.30am to 6.00pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

You can also contact the council by email: [customerservices@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@waveney.gov.uk).

**Local Offices are available in Beccles, Bungay & Halesworth and are open:**

Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 1pm and 2pm to 4.30pm, Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm.

**A Drop-In Surgery is also available for enquiries each Wednesday from 10am to 4pm at Marram Green, Kessingland (above the Library).**

More information is available on our website: [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk)

## A BIT OF 'TIC'?

**Situated on Lowestoft's seafront and in Southwold's High Street, Waveney's two Tourist Information Centres, provide help and information not just for visitors but for locals too!**

Both Centres have information on local attractions, accommodation, events and services as well as details on destinations and attractions all over the country.

Our friendly staff can also help with your travel plans, helping you to plan and book your journey as well as providing train times and local bus information. They can even help book accommodation for you.

Both work closely with local attractions, with Lowestoft offering discounted tickets for Pleasurewood Hills and Pettitts Animal Adventure Park, whilst Southwold is a booking agent for the Coastal Voyager down at Southwold Harbour. Each also sell tickets for events such as Latitude and tickets for the theatre concerts and more.'

For more information on the services we provide throughout the year, why not pop in to see us at the East Point Pavilion in Lowestoft or at 69 High Street Southwold, or ring Lowestoft Tourist Information Centre on 01502 533600 or Southwold on 01502 724729.



**Waveney District Council is now on Twitter!** Follow news and updates from the Council at [twitter.com/waveneydc](https://twitter.com/waveneydc) for instant information covering a variety of different services and topics. The Council wants to reach as many people as possible and is also exploring other ways to get the best out of the service, including its benefits as a tool for consultation. You can also get tourism and events updates from [twitter.com/thesunrisecoast](https://twitter.com/thesunrisecoast).



## THE PLACE TO COME

**Tourism in Waveney continues to grow year on year and Waveney District Council is playing its part.**

Latest figures released by East of England Tourism highlighting that the district attracted an estimated 3,950,000 visitors, which is worth an estimated £255,389,000 to the local economy.

The figures also show that tourism in Waveney now supports 5,774 jobs which account's for approximately 12.9% of the marketplace, making it one of Waveney's largest employers.

An active marketing campaign by Waveney's Culture, Tourism & Sport Team, including a range of national advertising, direct mail shots and web based promotion is helping to boost figures.

This includes an email newsletter which provides an instant update on activities throughout the Waveney area. You can request a copy by-newsletter by visiting [www.visit-sunrisecoast.co.uk](http://www.visit-sunrisecoast.co.uk).

Currently Waveney's Culture, Tourism & Sport Team are working on the district What's on Guide which will support the Holiday Handbook in promotion of events around the district. For further information on the events guide or if you would like to list your event for FREE please email [events@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:events@waveney.gov.uk) or telephone 01502 523387.

For further information please contact the team on 01502 523385 or email [sunrisecoasttourism@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:sunrisecoasttourism@waveney.gov.uk).