

intouch!

with Waveney **September 2010**



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Waveney winners!

ETHAN BETTER

How a six-year-old Waveney schoolboy helped Waveney improve a service for young people

ENERGY BOOST

Waveney is helping bring thousands of jobs to the area

FEEL THE BENEFITS

Are you getting what you are entitled to?



In Touch Magazine
produced by
Waveney District
Council



BETTER TIMES

The pressures on local government to make efficiency savings while still meeting performance targets are relentless. Therefore, it is now widely recognised that in order to make savings, while continuing to improve services it is necessary to look at more innovative ways of working.

One of the most innovative developments for Councils to consider is working in partnership, either with other local councils, other public agencies or the private sector. Suffolk Coastal and Waveney councils are at the forefront of partnership working having agreed to share a Chief Executive back in April

2008. Since then further opportunities have been taken to share management posts in planning and audit. With the long running Local Government Review saga now behind us we have the opportunity to develop more formal partnership arrangements between our two organisations.

The latest important step towards integrating the services of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Councils is underway with discussions between the management teams at both authorities about the creation of a single, joint management structure.

Progress has also been made on the business case for a shared ICT infrastructure.

The provision of ICT is integral to the delivery of services for both authorities. The provision of an efficient, cost-effective but robust and flexible ICT infrastructure will be essential



for the implementation and ongoing management of shared services across the two authorities.

A Partnership Board, with representatives from both councils, was asked to comment on the business case and, after positive discussions, recommended that it go forward to the two respective Cabinets for approval.

THE RIGHT PATH

Waveney District Council is leading a £1.5m project set up to help communities at risk of coastal erosion in Corton and Easton Bavents.

Defra have funded a number of projects around the coast of England and Wales to test out their Coastal Change policy - aimed at helping coastal communities at risk of coastal erosion. The projects will run to spring 2011.

Cllr Ken Sale, Portfolio Holder for the Greenest County said: "The project will focus on working with these two coastal communities and local partners to establish what options there are for managing the ef-

fects of coastal erosion and its impacts on community life and businesses."

Defra Coastal Change policy has a range of financial and planning options that partners are keen to test out in Suffolk. Nationally the Pathfinder projects will gather evidence that will help to shape coastal policy for the future and the projects will flag up where there are barriers and opportunities for managing coastal erosion risks.

For further information about the project, please go to

www.waveney-pathfinder.com

or call Programme Director David McGinnis on 01502 523 262.



AT YOUR LEISURE

Waveney District Council is teaming up with a leisure development specialist, to help improve leisure facilities across the district.

Pulse Fitness will work closely with Waveney on leisure development projects across the District. Pulse and Waveney are now set to proceed with a number of leisure projects starting with the exciting rejuvenation of Lowestoft's Waterlane Leisure Centre.

Cllr Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, said: "We were pleased to see 11 different companies expressing an interest in this fantastic opportunity. The standard was excellent and we're delighted to be partnering Pulse in the Waterlane project, as well as for other future leisure development prospects."

The enhanced facilities for existing and potential users at Waterlane will include a spacious, updated fitness

suite, a thermal spa, a junior gym, soft play and crèche, together with a larger café/restaurant.

The project will also support and complement the development of the new Sixth Form Centre on the adjoining site.

Other projects to be fully explored with the new partner include new and improved facilities in Halesworth, improvements at

Bungay Pool and Gym and possible development in Beccles.

Cllr Ardley added: "This partnership is definitely for the long term, with the aim of developing leisure across the whole of the district as part of the Council's approved leisure services strategy. We will seek to deliver improvements to our leisure services, despite these tough economic times."



TENANTS' SATISFACTION

Waveney has been given an exceptionally positive review of the housing it provides for tenants... by tenants.

During 2008/09, every council in England was required to carry out a survey of their tenants and recently the Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) released the STATUS data nationally for 2008, comparing all 182 councils. The figures show that only TWO

other councils ranked higher than Waveney (with 90% satisfaction) on the quality of the property in which they lived. We achieved the third highest satisfaction level nationally on the repairs service we delivered and came fourth in terms of tenants' satisfaction on the condition of their homes.

In addition, our tenants graded us 9th highest countrywide when it comes to customers being able to get

hold of the right member of staff and Waveney ranked as 7th highest for helpfulness. Of the 182 councils, Waveney came in 13th place for overall satisfaction of the housing service that is delivered.

Cllr Sue Allen, Portfolio Holder for Housing said: "I'm delighted that these results are extremely positive for Waveney and are a very real endorsement of the outstanding service our housing team provides."



HAPPY TO HELP

Based at the Marram Green complex off Hall Road Kessingland, Waveney and the Citizen Advice Bureau, are running a drop in surgery every Wednesday between 10am and 4pm.

The surgery is for any residents within the Kessingland area needing help or advice from the Council on a wide range of services from Council Tax or Housing Benefits enquiries to Environmental or Planning issues. Staff are available to see anyone who may not want to or are unable to

travel into Lowestoft and will be using the Compass Suite on the first floor next to the parish council rooms located above the library. It is hoped this will be a popular drop in surgery that can be maintained and developed over the coming years. The Marram Green Complex houses Kessingland Library, a sheltered housing development, a cafe and is used by a number of local community groups including Waveney Learning Community and Suffolk Childrens Centres.

STREET MEETS

Waveney's been out and about once more, asking local people for their views on the services we deliver.

Our Community Development Team along with Councillors and Police Partners have recently completed the latest round of Engagement Forums in North, South and Central Lowestoft, along with Beccles, Halesworth and Bungay. District, County and Parish Councillors all value the chance to deal with

queries face to face and specialists from Waveney's Housing and Revenues and Benefits Teams have also enjoyed some valuable time with residents. Dates have already been arranged for further Community Engagement Forums next year, which will take place in June. For further information on Community Engagement Forums, please contact the Community Development Team on 01502 523186 / 523354 / 523180.

WORKING TOGETHER

Waveney District Council and Jobcentre Plus are working together to improve the service provided to customers.

It is now possible to apply for Jobseeker's Allowance along with Housing and Council Tax Benefits in one single, free phone call to Jobcentre Plus.

Cllr Sue Allen, Portfolio Holder for Inclusive Communities said: "The partnership is aimed at delivering a seamless service to customers claiming benefits through both organisations and improve the overall customer experience for shared customers."

Waveney District Council and Jobcentre Plus in Waveney are looking to extend this programme to include other areas of the Council's business such as Housing Benefit Processing starting in September. We will continue to meet and review our partnership working on a regular basis with further training being organised for staff with both organisations.

Should you need to make a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance or any other Jobcentre Plus benefit please telephone 0800 055 6688 or visit www.direct.gov.uk which includes hints and tips for looking for work, access to the Jobcentre Plus jobs database, and a search facility that helps you find your local Jobcentre.

ETHAN BETTER

The opinions and ideas of a six year old Waveney resident have helped the Council to improve its services to customers!

While his mum was visiting the Marina Customer Service Centre recently, six-year-old Ethan got chat-



ting with staff and has now helped improve the way

Waveney District Council communicates with children. Looking for something to keep him entertained, Ethan went to explore the Customer Access Terminal and, when a council officer demonstrated how he could use it, both realised that the terminal

wasn't geared for youngsters.

This is largely because the on-screen information wasn't presented in a child-friendly way. Ethan talked about the sites that children use and like, and spoke about what he had been learning at school, which gave the Council a valuable

insight into what children like to see, and how we can appeal to our younger customers.

As a direct result of meeting Ethan the council now has a 'Sites for Kids' icon on all of the Council's Customer Access Terminals and these link to various sites, including educational pages on subjects such as history and maths. All presented in a way that kids can and will find easy to understand.

Councillor Colin Law, Portfolio Holder for Customer Access, said: "Providing accessibility for all customers is extremely important to the Council and we are grateful to Ethan for his help. This has reminded us to think about how we present information for different audiences, so that everyone has a positive experience when they access the extensive range of services provided by Waveney."

PLAY DELIGHT

After villagers got in touch with Waveney District Council, Mutford has recently seen the opening of a fantastic new play area.

Waveney's Community Development Team were contacted to see if there was funding available to make improvements to the existing site and a steering group was set up to move the project forward.

After discussions with residents a shortlist of improvements was drawn up and the Steering Group set about looking for funding.

£25,000 was secured from various funding streams, including Awards For All, Geoffrey Whatling Trust, Suffolk County Council, Waveney District Council, WREN (Waste

Recycling Environmental), and Adnams.

Heather Gammon, local resident and member of the steering group said "We are very excited at the improvements to our local play area and the benefits they

have made to the community, the new play area has been so busy!"

"The determination and commitment from these people has been fantastic," said Jo McCallum, Community Development Officer at Waveney District Council. "The group have really pulled together and worked



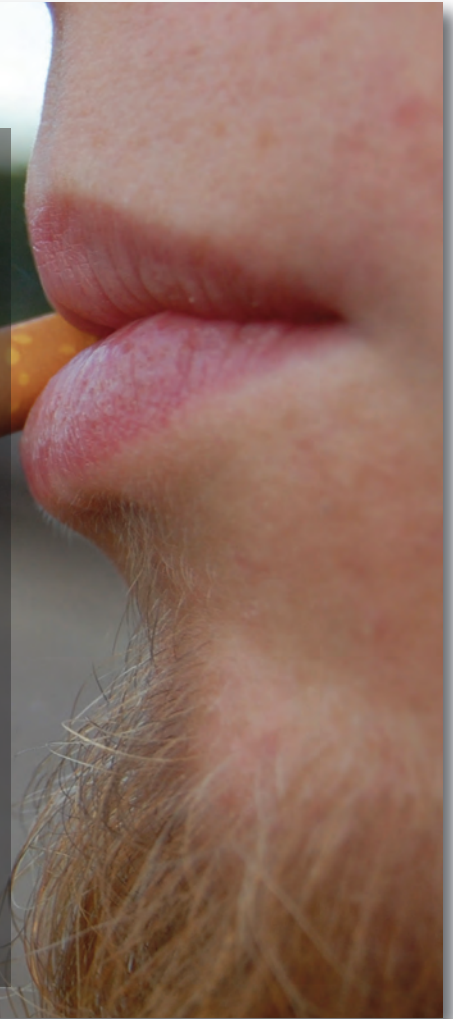
hard for the benefit of the whole community. It can be difficult for rural communities, as there can be an assumption that they are well provided for. However, this is not always the case and in my experience they have to work really hard to achieve funding success".

SMOKING: A NOISY HABIT?

One surprising side-effect from the smoking ban is a four-fold rise in complaints about noise from licensed premises; and residents or licensees affected are being advised to contact the Environmental Health team.

The ban, which has resulted in 1,200 fewer hospital admissions for heart attacks in England in the first year is estimated to have saved the NHS over £8m. However, the flip side is that legal action has been necessary to deal with noise complaints. In the two years since the ban came into force, legal action to control noise and “regulated activities” in licensed premises has been up, again by around 400%, on the period immediately before the ban.

Cllr Mary Rudd Portfolio Holder for Safe Communities said: “Even the least attractive smoking areas generate a steady stream of people in party mood who do not necessarily appreciate the disturbing effect their enthusiasm has on the neighbours. Add to this the extension in opening hours and efforts made by some enterprising publicans to improve the experience of their customers by piping music to the smoking area, and we have a problem. “This Council wants to be fair to everyone, however noise nuisance is a real problem for some communities and we are very keen to spread awareness and greater understanding of any noise issues.” Contact the Environmental Health team on 562111 (office hours).



TAKING THE AIR

News stories about the environment often focus on bad things like oil in the Gulf of Mexico and the melting ice caps, but do we take enough time to appreciate the good things around us locally?

The draft 2010 air quality report for Waveney was completed in May this year and has been submitted to DEFRA for scrutiny. Its findings show that the district's air quality is good and that we have no areas where air pollution causes concern. How do we know this? The Council's Environmental Health team deal

with many air quality issues on a daily basis,

from complaints about garden bonfires to controls on emissions from large boiler installations and certain types of commercial and industrial processes.

As you might expect, there are government guidelines on air quality and the same guidelines also set out the steps your Council has to take to monitor air quality in the district to make sure it meets these standards. Here at Waveney, we have around 15 permanent monitoring points for air quality situated around the District. These provide us with the information we need to ensure that the ac-

ceptable standards are maintained. If we discovered that air quality fell below the acceptable standards, we would take a closer look at the problem areas and, depending on the results, possibly declare them to be “Air Quality Management Areas”. This would be the trigger for tighter controls on activities likely to cause air pollution, such as certain types of industry and traffic controls. As it stands, we can all breathe easy. You can download a copy at www.waveney.gov.uk. It provides detailed information about the way we assess air quality together with the results. So take a deep breath and enjoy it!

MARK OF SUCCESS

Waveney District Council is celebrating an important award which recognises the ongoing efforts of the council, its partners and the police to keep the district safe.

Waveney's Operational delivery partners Waveney Norse have received the 'Park Mark Safer Parking' Awards for Royal Green, Claremont Pier, Kirkley Cliff and Clifton Road Car Parks, indicating that the area has been vetted by the Police and has measures in place in order to create a safe environment - reducing criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. Lowestoft Safer Neighbourhood Team Inspector Sarsfield Donohue

said: "We continue to work with the council to make district car parks a safe and secure environment for motorists and this is an important step towards recognising the work that has been done."

Cllr Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, said: "We have had to work hard to achieve these awards and I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all the services that have helped, with fencing, signage, cleansing and so much more. We have a responsibility to work with partners to ensure our communities feel safe wherever they go and this award rightly acknowledges these efforts."



FLYING THE FLAG

Beaches in Waveney flew the prestigious Blue Flag again this year - an internationally recognised symbol of a clean and well-managed beach. Beaches at Lowestoft North and South of Claremont Pier have been awarded Blue Flags for the 2010 season.

The Blue Flag Campaign is an environmental initiative to recognise beaches that promote positive coastal environmental care and management. Clean beaches and quality awards are no accident and Waveney is proud of the effort it puts in to maintaining its beautiful coastline.

Waveney has also had further success as four other beaches have won Quality Coast Awards, bringing the number of award-winning beaches in the district to six. Southwold Pier, Southwold North of the Pier, Southwold Denes and Kessingland have all been awarded flags for the 2010 season.

The Quality Coast Award was launched in 2007 and recognises the diversity and quality of England's coastline. All beaches achieving this award have one thing in common - they have been recognised for providing the very best standards for their visitors.

NEVER FORGETTING



Waveney marked this year's Holocaust Memorial Day with a number of special events to remember the part this district played over 70 years ago. Waveney District Council has been working in partnership with local schools and organisations to tell the story of how our region helped to house many Jewish refugee children.

On Holocaust Memorial Day, around 60 children from Gisleham and Lothingland Middle Schools re-

traced the last leg of the refugees' journey, from Beccles to Lowestoft and on to Pontins in Pakefield, where the original Kindertransport refugees were billeted. The children made and carried replica identity cards and suitcases, like those carried by the evacuees.

On arrival at Lowestoft Station, they were greeted by the Mayor of Lowestoft, Cllr Malcolm Cherry, in the same way Dr Barraclough (the Mayor at the time) greeted the

refugees back in 1938. There was then a special public service and a commemorative plaque was unveiled by the Mayor.

Councillor Simon Tobin, Deputy Chairman of Waveney District Council added: "I'd like to thank all those involved for their efforts – Gisleham, Lothingland and St Felix schools and those Waveney District Council officers involved in organising the event. Visit www.hmd.org.uk for more info.

REACHING OUT

Waveney District Council is hosting a number of Information sessions to highlight its services for people who feel their voice may not get heard.

These sessions are designed to create a better understanding of the services provided by Waveney and how we are able to shape them, ensuring equal accessibility to all. They will provide an opportunity for older people to understand the benefits and financial support available to them, to support their well-being, quality of life and access to services. Cllr Sue Allen, Portfolio Holder for Inclusive Communities, said: "This is an opportunity for our communities

to meet teams from the Council, ask questions and gather information about our services. This will really help us improve future services for all our communities. It will also ensure that the help that is available is reaching the people who need it most."

Sessions have already taken place at Lowestoft 60+ Club, Waveney Centre at Beccles and the Millennium Centre at Southwold. Sessions are also being planned for Halesworth and Bungay.

For further information on future events, or if you would like the Council to attend a specific venue, please contact: Kathleen Scott on telephone 01502 523180, email

Kathleen.scott@waveney.gov.uk

In October last year Waveney hosted a Forum of Faith event by SIFRE (Suffolk Inter Faith Resource), to bring together members of different Faiths in an informal setting to meet and share their traditions to promote a mutual understanding.

The next Forum of Faiths event will be in Lowestoft on Thursday 27th November 12-2pm at Lowestoft Town Hall, with the theme being 'What can we offer the community?'. This will form part of Inter Faith Week.

A series of events are planned for the forthcoming year, if anyone would like further information please email office@sifre.org.uk or telephone 01502 523186.

WAVENEY WORLD CUP!

Lowestoft South beach hosted its first ever Community World Cup in June, attracting teams from a variety of communities across Waveney.

Waveney District Council hosted the successful 5-a-side Beach soccer tournament and family fun day with funding from Suffolk County Councilors Deanna Law and Kathy Gosling, and brand new goals from Harrod UK. The tournament involved teams from Waveney's Portuguese, African, Indian and Bangladesh communities, with teams from Waveney District Council and Suffolk Police also taking part. Stuart Halsey, Community Development Officer at Waveney District Council said: "The event was a great success and I was pleased to see the friendship between the teams throughout the day. It just shows the benefits of using sport to bring people from all backgrounds together and address issues around community cohesion". The final certainly did not disappoint with the tournament continuing to be played in good spirits. It was Portugal who came out on top and were able to lift the Waveney Community World Cup with a well deserved 2-1 win over Spain, the Waterlane Leisure Centre team from Waveney District Council. The Waveney Community World Cup was organised as part of the launch of 'Lowestoft Beach Games', which will see the introduction of future sports and activities to take place for the communities of Waveney on Lowestoft's award winning blue flag beach. For more information on this and future events, please call Waveney District Council on 01502 523354.

LIVING HISTORY

Waveney District Councils Culture, Tourism and Sport team have put together a programme of events as part of the National Heritage open day weekend.

Heritage open days take place between the 9th and 12th September and are co-ordinated by English Heritage to open up heritage venues to the community and visitors. This is the first time that Waveney has co-ordinated a range of activities for Heritage Open Days and the Culture, Tourism and Sport team have been delighted by the response from local venues who have registered to take part. Cllr Wendy Mawer Portfolio Holder for Prosperous & Vibrant Economy, said: "Heritage Open days provide a great opportunity to showcase our local and varied heritage, from churches, to cas-

ties and museums to maritime history. We hope our community and visitors will enjoy the opportunity to view some of our great heritage venues. To promote the event Waveney will be producing a programme of events that will be available at Tourist Information centres, local offices and other venues throughout the district. Heritage Open Day events will also be listed on the tourist website www.visit-sunrisecoast.co.uk. Events to date include, a tour of Anchor Smoke House to watch the smoking process, Lowestoft's Lost Heritage at the heritage workshop centre, open cockpit at the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum, tours of Bungay castle and Beccles Tower, a tour and history of the Marina Theatre, tours and history of the Council Chambers at Lowestoft, Beccles and Bungay, plus many more events.



YOUR SAY ON DEVELOPMENT

With contributions from thousands of residents, businesses and other groups to important documents about future building in Waveney, the Council has submitted the papers to the Government for Examination.

The 'Site Specific Allocations' details the land which is suitable for future development, such as housing or employment, while 'Development Management Policies' details policies to help decisions on planning applications. The examination of the documents is now underway, with a public hearing expected to take place in October. Final 'adoption' of the documents by the Council, taking into account the Inspector's findings, is expected in February 2011.

BETTER PLANNING

Customers are happier with the Council's Planning service following continued improvements to the way Waveney delivers the service.

Speed of delivering planning decisions continues to be amongst the best in the country with figures showing that during the 2009-10 financial year over 81% of major planning applications were dealt with within the 13 week target and 90% of minor applications within the eight-week target.

Performance on appeals has also been high with the independent Planning Inspectorate confirming that around 78% of referred decisions made have been correct (the

national average is around 65%). Meanwhile all customer satisfaction indicators show an upward trend compared with the same period 12 months ago.

Portfolio Holder Cllr Ken Sale said: "These results confirm that the considerable efforts put in by both Members and staff to modernise the way we do things have been really worthwhile and our customers are reaping the benefits.

"Planning by its very nature will always be controversial. However, combining the Development Control performance with the fact that the Planning Policy team were in the first 10% in England to deliver the Core Strategy, the residents of the Waveney District can be proud that they have one of the best Planning teams in the country."

IMPROVING LOWESTOFT

A final consultation is underway on the crucial Area Action Plan for central Lowestoft.

The document, produced in partnership with the Urban Regeneration company 1st East, supports the creation of jobs, particularly in the energy sector, new homes, improved pedestrian cycle & vehicle links, flood risk management measures and better connections to the waterfront. All comments are being taken into account in preparing a final draft for consideration by the Council at the end of September. This will be the



version that the Council wishes to see 'adopted' and implemented. However, if residents are not happy with the content of the final document they still have an opportunity to comment. Another six-week consultation starts at the end of October and all views expressed will be taken into account

when the document is assessed by an independent Inspector starting in January 2011.

All documents, consultation and feedback is published on the Council's website. Meanwhile the Core Strategy which details the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and core policies that will guide development until 2021 and can be viewed at waveney.gov.uk/LDF.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

To help deliver an exciting future for the Marina Theatre in Lowestoft, Waveney is seeking a partner to manage and operate the popular 750-seat venue.

As a major cultural asset to Lowestoft, the Marina Theatre has been operated and managed by Waveney for many years. However, the Council is committed to ensuring culture and leisure services are delivered in the most efficient and effective way, and Councillors have taken the decision to explore management options for the theatre. By seeking expressions of interest for the theatre's future management and development, further opportunities for grant funding and future income generation should be increased.

Cllr Stephen Ardley, Portfolio holder with responsibility for the theatre, said: "This is a way of sustaining the Marina as a successful theatre whilst preserving the high quality programme of the shows it produces. Importantly, the Council will retain creative control to ensure a broad cultural appeal, and will continue to contribute funds. However we are keen to offer another organisation the opportunity to manage the theatre and take it to levels that, as a Council, we are unable to achieve."

HIP HIP ARRAY!



Waveney is working with partners to promote the East Anglia Array, a 1,000-turbine wind farm due to be built 15 miles off the Norfolk and Suffolk coast.

This £24-billion investment is set to create over 1,000 jobs directly and a further 4,000 in the supply chain, according to industry experts. Around 5,000 people are presently employed in the UK wind industry, by 2020 that figure is set to rise to 57,000.

Cllr Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Prosperous & Vibrant Economy said: "There is clearly a huge opportunity for Waveney to play a role in providing new jobs, inward investment and to ensure that the UK remains the world leader in off-shore wind power generation."

At recent presentations organised by urban regeneration company 1st East around 800 young people from local schools and colleges together with

business men and women at a Waveney Chamber of Commerce breakfast heard from the Crown Estate how the Round three developments could change their lives.

With Round three having such a direct impact on our local community it is important for our young people to gain knowledge about the breadth of career opportunities. These include electrical and

electronic engineers, structural and marine engineers, health and safety specialists, construction project managers, maintenance workers, geologists, marine scientists, welders, mathematicians, physicists, architects and lawyers to mention just a few careers that will become available to them in future years.

For further information please go to www.waveney.gov.uk/Regeneration/Economic+Regeneration/business_energy.htm

FINANCIAL WORRIES? WAVENEY CAN HELP

Make sure that you are not paying more council tax than you should be.

Did you know that council tax is worked out on two people living in the property? If you are living alone you should have a discount of 25%. For a bill of £1000 that is a £250 reduction! Other discounts include: for Under 19s and at, or have just left, school; a full-time student, a student nurse, an apprentice or a youth training trainee; a care worker working for low pay (usually for a char-

ity); caring for someone with a disability who is not their husband, wife or partner. If you think anyone in your household is on the list or for more details, ring us on 01502 523435, email counciltax@waveney.gov.uk or go to www.waveney.gov.uk/Council+Tax Please remember though that the Council can charge a penalty of £70 for those who seek to defraud the Council and will do so for any cases where it can prove a fraudulent discount has been claimed.



We all live to our income, which only works when you can rely on your income and when the prices stay the same.

When your hours and pay drop or stop altogether, and when the cost of your bills and shopping go up, where do you turn?

As well as making sure you are getting the benefits and discounts that you are entitled to, get the most out of discounts from the companies you use. Most utility companies

will offer discounts for paperless billing. Let companies know you are struggling, many would rather offer a discount than lose your custom!

Contact one of the FREE debt help charities who can give you advice and guidance as well as practical help. For further information and to find out where you can get more help, go to www.waveney.gov.uk/benefits or go to the Marina Customer Centre or your local office.

Waveney can help those on a low income through Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Second Adult rebate.

If you have claimed in the past, but your income has dropped, or it has been more than a year since your last claim, apply again, as the rules change all the time.

Already being helped, but still have a shortfall? Discretionary Housing Payments are an extra payment we can give to those already receiving Housing or Council Tax benefit, but who need extra help towards their housing costs. For more information on Benefits, find us online at

www.waveney.gov.uk/benefits or visit the Marina Customer Contact Centre or our local offices in Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and Southwold. Phone 01502 523535 or email benefits@waveney.gov.uk or visit the nationwide site www.direct.gov.uk.

Would you like to get involved in shaping the Benefits Service for the future? If so, we would like to hear from you.

We are forming a Benefit Focus Group. If you feel that this is for you please ring Customer Services on 01502 562111 and leave your name and a contact number. Heidi Sampson will be in touch. And we also need your opinions on our service to be sure that we are giving our customers the service they need. Please take your time to complete the Customer Satisfaction Survey. Good and Bad opinions – if you don't tell us, we can only guess what you need!

BETTER CHOICE THAN EVER

People in Waveney will now find it easier to seek social housing and will enjoy a wider choice thanks to the council's decision to join the 'Home-choice Partnership' with seven other eastern authorities.

Residents will now have real choice and mobility in terms of where they want to live with housing now available in all areas. The new system will also utilise online applications making the process far simpler. More than 80% of applications are now online and telephone support will be available for those without electronic access.

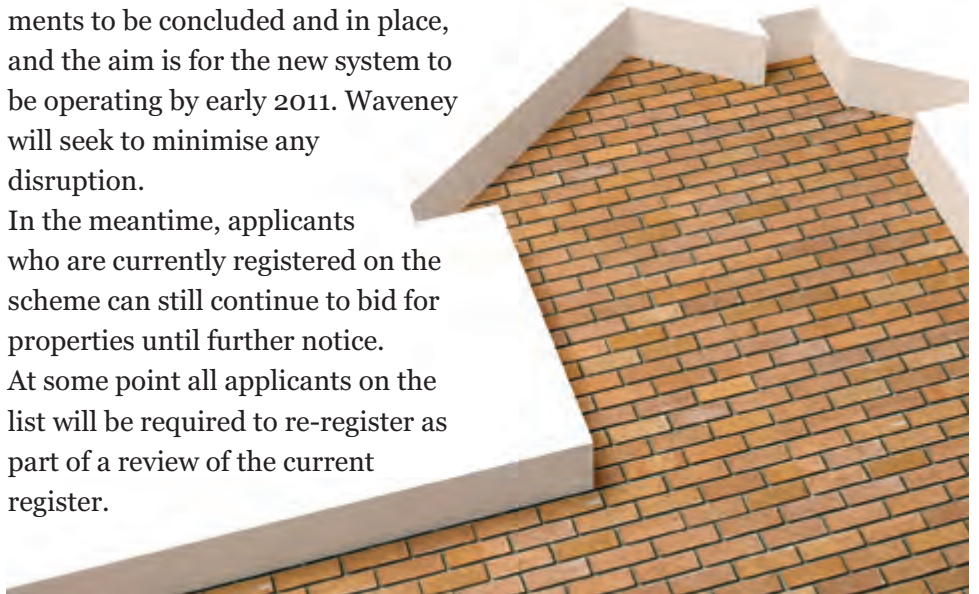
Portfolio Holder for Housing Sue Allen said: "This is a great opportunity and will benefit both homeseekers and the council. The switch will be funded from the existing budget and should produce a saving on current expenditure, as the cost of newspaper advertising is eliminated.

"In addition, the overall costs of the scheme will be shared and therefore reduced with Waveney now working in partnership with several other councils, including our preferred partner Suffolk Coastal District Council. The link to Coastal will also assist in the harmonisation of the strategic housing service."

It will take approximately six months for all the organisational arrangements to be concluded and in place, and the aim is for the new system to be operating by early 2011. Waveney will seek to minimise any disruption.

In the meantime, applicants who are currently registered on the scheme can still continue to bid for properties until further notice. At some point all applicants on the list will be required to re-register as part of a review of the current register.

Go to www.waveney.gov.uk/Consultations/consult_home-choice_jul2010.htm for more details or a copy can be viewed at our main Council Offices. Look out for further updates on Waveney's website as the project progresses. All current applicants will be notified when Waveney will be starting the re-registration exercise.



HOME PRIDE

The Council has set up a fund of £50,000 to help enhance the areas where Council tenants live.

This can range from improving parking or play areas, planting trees and shrubbery, to developing a Green Flag Open Space. Anything that helps to improve the community and where we live.

Tenants will be asked to provide the Environmental Grants Panel (a body of tenants from the Tenants

Forum) with all the information they need to assess the bid. The Panel will also help ensure the best possible bid can be made.

Cllr Sue Allen, Portfolio Holder for Housing said: "The aim is to get a range of community activities underway with this money, from small scale projects such as planting flowerbeds, to larger scale community initiatives that could involve whole streets.

"Residents can also do this in asso-

ciation with other groups, or to link in other funding. The only criteria is that the suggested areas must be where tenants live. Please play your part in helping us to improve where you live."

Call Kath Scott on 01502 523180 or email Kathleen.scott@waveney.gov.uk or call Tenant Forum chair Roy Pointer on 07765 506838. They will send you an application form to fill in and will provide you with more details.

HELPING YOU STAY SAFE

New teams dedicated to tackling anti-social behaviour are in place across Suffolk thanks to the police and local councils.

In an innovative partnership initiative, teams staffed with police, council officers and staff from other agencies are using their combined expertise to clamp down on the most complex cases of anti-social behaviour affecting local communities.

Suffolk is one of the safest places to live in the country, yet we know that anti-social behaviour (ASB) concerns a lot of people. Tackling it is a high priority for the police and councils. A team of police and council officers looked at the way we currently deal with ASB, and concluded that we



needed to share information about ASB incidents – big or small – much faster. To solve these issues, ASB teams made up of different agencies are being set up. They will deal with the complex ASB cases, and advise Safer Neighbourhood Teams on more simple cases.

Cllr Mary Rudd, Portfolio Holder for Safe Communities said: “Our aim is to make Suffolk even safer – and further improve everyone’s quality of life. Working together, the new teams should be able to resolve complex incidents much more effectively and cases are likely to be resolved faster”.

Waveney District Council, as part of the Waveney Local Strategic Partnership (WLSP) has contributed to a £40,000 fund to provide over 500 households with better protection against burglary.

They have had their property ‘SmartWater marked’ with a colourless, odourless liquid which forensically links burglars to crime scenes and stolen property. It was officially launched in Lowestoft in December 2009 and since then hundreds have had their TVs, audio equipment and other valuables marked with the fluid.

The WLSP, made up of key partners such as the NHS, police and voluntary sector works together to deliver outcomes for people in the Waveney area to improve Waveney as a place to live and work.

This year, the WLSP Annual Event takes place on Friday 15th October at the OrbisEnergy Centre on Wilde Street, Lowestoft and everyone is invited along.

To find out more about the WLSP and what they do, go to waveney.gov.uk/My+Community/WLSP or contact the LSP Manager on 01502 523306 for details.

The Chief Constable of Suffolk is backing Waveney to help the police in the fight against crime.

By signing up to the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, front line Waveney staff will be given powers to tackle such issues as anti-social behaviour, litter, graffiti, disorder and nuisance. Council teams will have powers to request a name and address for Fixed Penalty Notices given for offences that cause injury, alarm or distress and to those acting in an anti-social manner. The scheme assists anyone involved in community safety and security to help improve quality of life. Accredited staff will be badged to show they are part of the Scheme. For more go to suffolk.police.uk/csas or call Waveney Community Safety on 01502 523182.

YOUTH MATTERS!

Waveney is celebrating after bringing home the Overall Winners trophy for the sixth consecutive year at the 2010 Redrow Homes Suffolk Youth Games.

Up to 700 youngsters aged between nine and sixteen as well as hundreds of supporters, coaches, team managers and volunteers from the seven participating Suffolk districts, contributed to this well established annual sporting event, this year held in Bury St Edmunds.

The Redrow Homes sponsored Games consisted of nine events which covered athletics, badminton, basketball, hockey, skateboarding, bmx, squash, table tennis, tag rugby and tennis with athletics including participation by many disabled athletes.

On behalf of Waveney District Council's Culture, Tourism & Sport Team, who were tasked with the co-ordination of Waveney's representation, Councillor Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, said "To be overall winners once again is a great achievement and is richly deserved for the hard work and dedication that the team managers, volunteers and coaches have shown."

For further information, please contact Claire Henwood, Service Manager – Sports & Leisure Development on 01502 523010 or e-mail claire.henwood@waveney.gov.uk

Waveney District Council has created a Youth Council (WYC) to ensure Young People have a voice in their community.

At present, there is representation from the following High Schools; Kirkley, Denes, Benjamin Britten, Bungay and Sir John Leman, as well as The Ashley and Warren School. With a constitution in place and various committee members in post, the young people are ready to start looking at how they can really make a difference to Waveney.

As well as organising events such as National Youth Take Over Day 2010, which will take place on November 12th, the young people are in the process of developing a Waveney wide consultation, which will take

place later this year, to ask young people who live in Waveney what they think of where they live.

Ryan Holt, Chair of the WYC said: "I'm really pleased to be a part of the Youth Council and feels this is a great way to make sure young people can have a say on what happens in their area. I also enjoy interacting with new people from other schools and finding out what ideas for change they have".

To see how you can get involved please contact Ryan Holt, Chair of WYC, 01502 446161 or email ryan@ryanholt.co.uk. Alternatively, call Stuart Halsey at Waveney District Council on 01502 523354 or email stuart.halsey@waveney.gov.uk

AND FINALLY...

Waveney is conducting a survey to find out what residents think about the quality and provision of public toilets in the district.

The results of this survey will help the Council plan future provision. There are currently a number of public toilet sites open across the district. Some of these facilities are under-used and some are not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act and therefore would need significant refurbishment.

In the current financial climate it is likely that the Council will have to make significant savings on its services, including public toilets, whilst also ensuring that we provide residents and visitors to Waveney with a good standard of public facilities. This is likely to lead to the closure of some facilities. However the closure of some facilities could lead to the improvement of remaining ones, or new alternatives. To take part, please go to the consultation section on www.waveney.gov.uk.

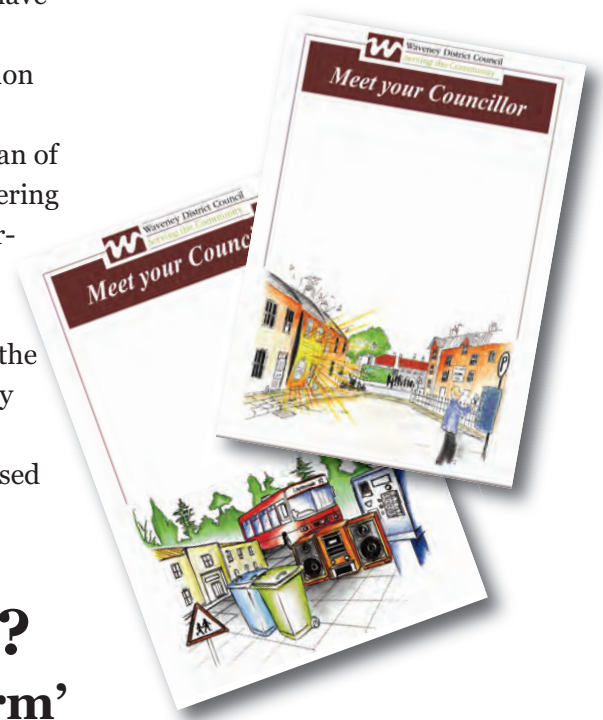
Students on the BTEC National Certificate in Art and Design course have designed posters to promote Councillor Surgeries and produced a range of illustrative images that incorporated key elements of Council services.

These included recycling, planning and the environment. The project was handled as a group activity and two of these compositions were then chosen for different locations (urban or rural setting). Previous projects for Waveney District Council have included posters for the Harm Protection Group and a Question Time event.

Councillor Colin Law (Chairman of the Member Development Steering Group) said: "It is really important that Ward Councillors engage with local people and have a good understanding of the issues that affect their lives. By working in partnership with Lowestoft College, we have raised

awareness of local democracy and the role of a Councillor with young people and also given the college students a meaningful project to include within their art portfolios." Ward Councillor contact details can be found via the Council's website. If you are unsure of your Ward boundaries, you can log onto the 'Electoral Area Finder' on the website, inserting your postcode to find your Ward or follow the link below:

<http://www.waveney.gov.uk/outsideCMS/apps/wards/Default.aspx>
Alternatively, you can email democratic.services@waveney.gov.uk or phone (01502) 523257."



Are you registered to vote? Your annual 'voter registration form' will be delivered soon

If there are no changes to your details you can register using the telephone, internet or text-message service (details on your form). If there are changes to your details, complete the form in pen and post it back to us.

Call 01502 523 238 if you have any questions