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NEWS FROM WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL DECEMBER 2008

intouch

W I T H W A V E N E Y



Waveney District Council
Serving the Community



Cllr Sandra Keller congratulates David Reeves of Wrentham Parish Council.

Village of the year

Wrentham is the 2008 Waveney Village of the Year.

The county-wide awards, organised by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils rates villages in each district on community spirit, care of the natural environment, the Parish Council and any special activities in the village.

Jo McCallum, Community Cohesion Officer and Judge for Waveney District Council said: "My fellow judges, Councillor John Goldsmith, Barry Hartley from Beach Radio and I, were

really impressed with what we saw in Wrentham. It has a very strong Parish Council and showed excellent community spirit. We were delighted to see the wonderful bowls and tennis facilities along with the village hall and Museum shop in the High Street."

• W R E N T H A M •

Angela Day, Parish Clerk said: "We always enjoy entering the best kept village competition. Working to make our village the best is another way of bringing the community together."

Waveney blooms

Well done to Waveney, for picking up a number of awards at the recent 'Anglia In Bloom' awards.

There was recognition for the following schemes: Relief Road, Lowestoft (Biodiversity), Bungay Staithe community clean-up (Best Community Project), Broadlands Residential Home, Oulton Broad (Grow Your Own Award), The Beach Area, Claremont Pier, Lowestoft (Best Public Open Space).

Meanwhile, in the Neighbourhood Awards category, Oiley Field Footpath,

Lowestoft received recognition. In the individual categories, Silver Gilt were awarded to Bungay and Oulton Broad in the Small Town category and Lowestoft in the Coastal Resort category.

Councillor Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder for Health & Well Being said: "It is particularly satisfying when so much hard work is recognised in this way.



The bands of dedicated volunteers, groups, users and partners who strive to improve our environment should be congratulated."

Making payments

You can now pay for most Council services without having to visit Council offices or send a cheque! Payments can be made **via Direct Debit**, online or over the telephone using our automated service. Visit the Council's website, www.waveney.gov.uk/payments and follow the instructions, or call **01502 511 805** and have your debit or credit card ready.

This service is available for Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Rent, Housing Benefit Overpayment, Sundry

Debtor Invoices, Residents Parking Fines and Car Parks Excess Charges.

Both services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except during a short period between 11.30pm and 00.15am each day. If you have any queries please call our payment helpline on **01502 523 502**. If you are required to leave a message you will get a response within one working day.

An additional charge of 1.5% is payable on all credit card payments for Council Tax and Business Rates payments. There is no surcharge if you use a debit card.

How to get in touch

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Waveney District Council
Serving the Community

intouch

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Oh Christmas tree...

Waveney District Council is always looking to increase the range of items that can be collected from your doorstep for recycling. And as a present to you this year, 'real' Christmas trees have been added to the list!

Real Christmas trees can be disposed of in your **GREEN** waste bin. Please cut the tree up, so that it fits into the bin with the lid down. Do remember to remove the lights and decorations though! You might think this is obvious, but believe us when we say we've seen it all before. Alternatively, trees can still be taken to any of the Household Waste Recycling Centres for disposal.

As well as Christmas trees and green garden waste, you can now put all your food



waste in the green bin. Please remember to wrap your festive leftovers (including the turkey carcass) in approved liners or newspaper and **DO NOT** put any of the following in your green bin or food waste collection caddy:

- Packaging of any sort**
- Plastic bags**
- Liquids and oils or oily fats**
- Glass**
- Textiles**
- Cans**

• WAVENEY •

Rotting food in landfill sites generates methane - a greenhouse gas over 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide. By using your green bin, or food waste caddy you are helping to reduce the amount of food waste that ends up in landfill.

No extra trimmings!

Please **DO NOT** leave extra bags of waste by the side of your bin, they **will not be collected** and could cause you problems later. The Council does not pick up side waste as part of the waste collection service, so if you do find yourself with excess waste take it to one of the local Household Waste Recycling Centres in Beccles, Lowestoft or Southwold. These sites are run by Suffolk County Council and are open every day of the year, except 25 and 26 December and January 1. You can find information on these sites at www.suffolk.gov.uk or by calling **0845 606 6067**.

Why not visit the refuse and recycling pages, in the environment section of the Council's website at www.waveney.gov.uk? They contain a lot of useful information for those who want to do more.

If you have any recycling enquiries, email: recycling@waveney.gov.uk or call the recycling helpline on **01502 523561** or **01502 523117**.

If you have an enquiry about your bin collection, email: refuse@waveney.gov.uk or call the collections helpline on **01502 523460**.

Festive collections

Please take a look at the timetable below and make a note of the changes to your collection days. Whatever your usual date would be, the **CHRISTMAS DATE** will now apply.

Usual Date		Xmas Date
Mon 22 Dec	will be	Sat 20 Dec
Tue 23 Dec	will be	Mon 22 Dec
Wed 24 Dec	will be	Tue 23 Dec
Thur 25 Dec	will be	Wed 24 Dec
Fri 26 Dec	will be	Sat 27 Dec
Mon 29 Dec	will be	as normal
Tue 30 Dec	will be	as normal
Wed 31 Dec	will be	as normal
Thur 1 Jan	will be	Fri 2 Jan
Fri 2 Jan	will be	Sat 3 Jan

Please be aware that **collection times** may vary, so please put your bin out by 7am!

Green Christmas

If you don't try and reduce your waste this Christmas, Santa won't be the only one struggling with a sack-full. Why not follow these simple recycling tips to help reduce your seasonal surplus?

Use your **BLUE** bin to recycle paper, cardboard, cans, aerosols and hard plastics such as plastic bottles and tubs. You can of course also recycle:

- Christmas cards**
- Envelopes**
- Wrapping paper**
- Packaging**
- Plastic decorations**
- Plastic Christmas trees**

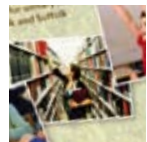
Rather than putting glass bottles into the **BLACK** bin, why not take them to one of the many community bring sites in Waveney. There are over 70 sites across the district, so there should be one near you.



Boundary business



Waveney says 'no' to Lowestoft in Norfolk and a giant One Suffolk mega-council.



Waveney has joined forces with two other councils in Suffolk's best interests.



Waveney believes an East Suffolk Council, alongside authorities for West Suffolk and greater Ipswich is best for the district and the county.

In a nutshell

The Boundary Committee for England has been asked by the Secretary of State to consider the options for introducing unitary local government arrangements within Norfolk and Suffolk. 'Unitary' councils provide **ALL** services for a particular location, unlike the current 'two-tier' set-up where residents here are served by both Waveney District Council and Suffolk County Council.

• WAVENEY •

Having welcomed proposals from local authorities and other stakeholders, the Boundary Committee announced its preferred options and then asked for feedback. In Suffolk, they were:

- A unitary authority for Ipswich and Felixstowe.
- A unitary authority for the remainder of Suffolk, minus Lowestoft which would become part of a single unitary Norfolk.

Though not a preferred option, the BCE asked for opinions on a unitary authority for **ALL** Suffolk, minus Lowestoft as part

of a single unitary Norfolk **OR** as part of a unitary authority with Great Yarmouth and Norwich.

Following the end of the consultation in September, the Boundary Committee is now using the period to December 31 2008 to consider the views expressed and request further information from Councils, as necessary. It will then make recommendations to the Secretary of State who will hold a further, short period of consultation before making her decision in February 2009. If she decides to introduce unitary structures within Suffolk, it is anticipated that they would be operational from April 2010.



Three 'Local' Councils v Giant Suffolk

Waveney District believes a single giant unitary council for Suffolk would be too large and remote with any claimed benefits outweighed by a loss of local accountability.

East Suffolk, West Suffolk and North Haven have distinctly different priorities and needs which one giant mega-council would struggle to balance.

All three councils will be of sufficient size to offer strategic leadership, economy and value for money, but will be much closer to, and empower, local people.

The East and West are very different places, with different futures.

Landscapes, heritage, age profiles, housing, growth, patterns of deprivation, learning and skills needs, densities and patterns of settlement are all different.

Economically they look in different sub-regional directions: West Suffolk to Cambridge; East Suffolk to Ipswich, the Haven Gateway and Norwich.

Both areas demand different and innovative approaches to children and young people, skills, adult care, environmental management, growth, transport, and the way in which services are actually delivered in local communities.

Three councils would be 'local - but not parochial' - councillors will be able to keep in touch with, and be held to account by, people in smaller, more manageable wards compared to a single giant, remote council.

People will get the attention of a council that understands them better

East and West will have different methods, but both will work closely with their local communities so they can do what local people tell them is most important.

Councils with detailed knowledge of their unique areas will be able to target those at regional, national and European levels who can help tackle major issues.

We can afford three councils because savings of around £30 million will be made each year (after set-up costs are paid).

The savings will provide funds for investment in innovative service delivery and ways to bring local people into the heart of decision-making.



Saving £30 million

Waveney District Council has submitted a comprehensive 63-page proposal to the Boundary Committee explaining why it believes a three-unitary structure would be best for Suffolk.

Calling it “a hugely important moment for the future of this county,” Forest Heath District Council, St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Waveney District Council delivered a visionary document detailing how a three-unitary structure would save residents around £30 million a year and also keep democracy local by creating councils with a genuine sense of place, serving their own, local communities.

It rejects a single unitary for a county of 700,000 people as too large and remote and also calls on the Boundary Committee to keep Lowestoft in Suffolk as part of the three councils plan.

Cllr Bee said: “This is a hugely important moment for the future of this county. It is a comprehensive piece of work detailing exactly why a three-unitary structure is the only option that makes sense for Suffolk.

“Throughout the consultation, people told us they want local government to be about local issues. They don’t want decisions which affect their everyday lives being taken by huge organisations based miles away and with limited knowledge of local concerns, priorities and needs. If unitary government is a path we must follow there is no question that this is the best way. Strategically powerful, but locally accountable, an East Suffolk unitary - working closely with our friends in the west and in North Haven - would secure the highest standard of service provision for our residents.”

To learn more about Waveney’s desire to ‘Keep us Local’ go to our dedicated website, www.KeepusLocal.net.

Suffolk & proud

‘Keep Lowestoft in Suffolk’ was the clear message from protestors who gathered in the town centre on September 1 to demonstrate against plans to place the town in a Norfolk unitary authority.

Over 200 people protested against the Boundary Committee’s controversial proposals to create a giant Norfolk unitary council which includes Lowestoft, before marching to the Town Hall where a Suffolk flag was proudly unfurled.

The plan to annex the Suffolk town as part of its proposals for unitary government in the county, was originally met with widespread dismay. The public, local businesses, parish councils and politicians of all parties uniting in their opposition to the Boundary Committee’s

recommendations. This translated in to a protest where the strength of feeling was clear.

Cllr Mark Bee, Leader of Waveney District Council said: “We wanted to show the Boundary Committee and the Government how strongly we feel and we hope they will wake up and realise that no-one wants this, no-one asked for this and the people of Lowestoft are not going to stand for it. This is a Suffolk town steeped in history and these proposals will only disrupt existing communities. Having seen this protest, I would be amazed if this government would dare have the front to proceed with something so pointless, unwanted and unpopular.”



Have your say!

The official consultation may be over, but there is still time for you to have your say. The Boundary Committee **WILL** accept views, opinions and constructive criticism prior to making their final recommendations! To have

your say fill out an online form here: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/boundary-reviews/open-consultations/online-submissions_reviews@boundarycommittee.org.uk or write to: Review Manager (Norfolk/Suffolk Review), The Boundary Committee for England, Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW.

Street talking

Waveney District has taken to the streets to engage with residents and encourage discussion with its communities.

Historically, 'Local Area Forums' provided the opportunity for community discussion, but after holding workshops with stakeholders and reviewing existing arrangements the Council agreed that it needed a more pro-active approach to community engagement. From this, the new 'street meet' style Community Engagement Forums were launched.

This flexible format takes Council teams to a wide range of venues and the people that matter. Beccles was the first to benefit and so far, the Council has delivered seven new style forums across the district. In addition, it also used a popular local event as a location, with a team spending the day at the Henham Steam Rally, discussing local needs, providing information and gathering views.

Councillor Colin Law, Deputy Leader, with responsibility for Community Cohesion said: "We have been really



Community officers Jo McCallum and Kath Scott welcome you to the Bungay event.

pleased with the how well the first wave of Community Engagement Forums have been received. Taking the event to the people of Waveney appears to be the way forward.

"The many Councillors taking part found it hugely beneficial and some plan to use this format for their constituency meetings in the future. Discussions

about where and when we hold the next round of engagement events will take place shortly."

For further information on community engagement, please contact Jo McCallum, Link Officer (Rural) **01502 523 186** or Stuart Halsey, Link Officer (Lowestoft) **01502 523354**, or email communitycohesion@waveney.gov.uk

Text generation

Waveney District Council is proud to announce a new mobile phone text message service providing updates and project news for residents!

Sign up to the service and WDC's community cohesion team can now tell you about upcoming community and consultation events in your area, in an instant! You can also send messages yourself if you want communicate directly with the team.

Texting is another great way to communicate with residents, including 'hard to reach' groups, such as young people who often don't think about how their Council works for **THEM**. A recent message informed local people

of a public meeting to discuss the proposed skate park in Normanston Park, North Lowestoft. The Council's Housing Team has also adopted texting so it can now communicate with tenants across Waveney.

Stuart Halsey, Community Cohesion Officer at Waveney District Council said: "This is a great way of keeping people up to date whilst giving them every opportunity to have their say on local issues."

Text the Community Cohesion team on **0779 7871 011**. You can also email communitycohesion@waveney.gov.uk or call **01502 523354 / 523186**.

Play underway

Waveney District Council is delighted to have secured funding from the Big Lottery for key 'play' projects including a new £20,000 play area in Westhall.



This is the first of four projects identified by the

Waveney Play Partnership - a union of likeminded groups from around the district - that will utilise no less than £250,000 from the Big Lottery Fund. This includes a £1.5million Skatepark in North Lowestoft and developments at Blundeston and Barnby/North Cove.

Waveney District led the partnership's bid for funding and Councillor Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration, is very proud. She said: "We were delighted that the bid for funding was successful and are thrilled to see the real benefits it will bring to young people in the district."

Chair of the Waveney Play Partnership and Waveney District Councillor, Chris Punt commented: "It is always hugely exciting

to see such a project come to fruition. Members of the WPP have worked hard to get to this position and I would also like to extend our thanks to the Community Council and the people of Westhall for their views and input, as well as Playscape and the Big Lottery fund for supporting the project.

"The Partnership facilitates and emphasises the need to put local communities, children and users in the driving seat; allowing them to have control and take decisions over developments and investments within their own community. This creates ownership and greater sustainability of projects."

• WESTHALL •

After the success of the Lottery projects the Waveney Play Partnership will continue to conceptualise and develop future play projects and assist parishes and communities with their own projects, utilising the resources of the group's members to help secure funding and aid delivery.

For further information on play in Waveney, please email chris.ames@waveney.gov.uk or telephone **01502 523391**.

Thinking big for leisure

Waveney's Cabinet has agreed recommendations which will help secure the future of high quality, sustainable leisure services in the district.

Following the launch of the Council's new 'Leisure Services Strategy' in August 2008, which explained Waveney's ambition for leisure in the district, an 'Options Report' has now been approved, fleshing out some of the detail.

Cllr Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing said: "We are thinking big and thinking about how best to deliver leisure services right across Waveney. Resources will be reviewed to ensure the Council has the capacity to deliver improved services and facilities across the district, to those that need them. We will be taking account of each locality as part of the wider leisure picture and not just reviewing services in isolation."

Among the recommendations, the Waterlane Leisure Centre refurbishment project will be progressed as a matter of priority and that additional support, from existing resources, is assigned to the Halesworth Playing Fields Association project, to assist them with their leisure development proposals to address the apparent lack of leisure provision in that area of the District. The Beccles Sports Complex project will be progressed to outline planning stage and further development of Bungay Pool and Gym will be explored, to broaden its offerings for the people of the area.

He continued: "These measures will enable the Leisure Services team to prioritise its efforts across the district, ensuring distribution of the service will be fair and achievable and provides good quality, sustainable leisure services to the whole community. Where appropriate, further options will be explored for some services, with the intention of producing satisfactory and robust long-term business cases for each one. Any decision we take will be in the best interests of Waveney and its leisure users."

The full report can be read here: <http://www.waveney.gov.uk/agendas/2008/September/cabinet/item4a.dot>



George Harvey and Lindy Fletcher of Westhall Community Council and Cllr Chris Punt, open the new play area in the village.

Customers first

The brand new Marina Customer Service Centre is now the first point of contact in Lowestoft for all customer enquiries relating to the Council.

The new site also houses the council's call centre and with Housing Options, Private Sector Housing, Benefits, Council Tax, Planning, Building Control and Land Charges teams all occupying the Marina building, Waveney now offers a total service for all of these areas from one central point. We can also deal with enquiries about all our other services and payments can be made at the Centre. It truly is a one-stop shop for all your council needs!

• WAVENEY •

The Marina Customer Service Centre opened on August 4 2008 providing a limited service and since then, more staff have moved in to the building increasing the level of service provided from the centre. The reception points at Mariners Street and Compass Street and the payments office at the Town Hall have now been closed.

A fresh start

Creating a brand new customer delivery centre is no straightforward task, but Cllr Simon Tobin, Portfolio Holder for Customer Access believes that WDC has produced a new facility to be proud of.

He said: "Our customers deserve the highest standard of service delivered conveniently and efficiently and the Marina Centre fulfils that 'brief' perfectly. It was vital that we moved from poor accommodation, which simply wasn't cost-effective to repair, in to facilities that are fit for purpose and designed with the customer in mind.

"It means we now have Lowestoft services in one place, we retain a presence in the town centre and as well as making things easier for residents, it improves staff morale too."

The project cost £2.5 million but as Cllr Tobin explains, it will be 'cost neutral'. He said: "We will raise the finance for this project through the sale

of other assets and there will be no additional burden to the taxpayer. We wanted to get this project right, but we also wanted to ensure that the price was right too.

"Our collaboration with Suffolk County Council at the Navigator Centre worked well as a pilot scheme, but it was not suitable in the long term. Now we have an outstanding facility geared to delivering a far wider range of service information."

The normal opening times for the Marina Customer Service Centre are

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday:

9.00 am to 4.30 pm

Thursday: 9.30 am to 6.00 pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

We also have offices in Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and provide service from the Tourist Information Centre in Southwold and these remain open for customers who prefer to deal with their local office. Normal opening times for these offices are:

Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth

Monday to Thursday: 9.00 am to 4.30 pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)

Friday: 9.00 am to 4.00 pm (closed from 1pm to 2pm)

Saturday & Sunday: Closed



Head of Customer Services, Bev Herring & Portfolio Holder for Customer Access, Cllr Simon Tobin, settle in at the Marina.

Southwold

Winter Hours November 1 to March 31

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

10.30 am to 3.30 pm

Wednesday: 10.30 am to 3.00 pm

Saturday: 10.00 am to 5.30 pm

Sunday: Closed

Survey Results

Waveney District Council has listened to your opinions about its customer service and has made many improvements.

We gather opinions in many ways and one of the most valuable was via a survey conducted in this magazine earlier this year.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the questionnaire and, as promised, we have selected one respondent at random who wins £50! Congratulations to Anthony Corner of Lowestoft.

Here are some of the findings of the survey:

78% of people responding did so via our website although some have commented that things are difficult to find on the site. Since the survey we have re-launched the site to make things easier to find. You should now get to the information or transaction you want with less "key clicks". Please let us know if you think further improvements can be made.

And although not everyone has internet access, our own staff use it



to assist you when you telephone us or visit the office - so it actually helps everyone! You can also access the internet at each of our local offices and our teams are always on hand to assist you.

Broadly speaking our customers are satisfied with our telephone answering although there are improvements that can be made. 57% of people responding said that they are happy with the speed at which phone calls are dealt with and 59% at the way we deal with calls. Naturally we are looking to improve these figures still further.

Concerns were raised with regard to our performance when dealing with written correspondence, including emails and that is being addressed. With your comments in mind, our system for tracking correspondence internally has been updated and we will ensure that we respond to correspondence quicker and more efficiently.

Meanwhile, only 43% felt it was easy to locate relevant telephone numbers so it is important to remind customers of the many different ways you can find the number you need. They are available in the local telephone directory, on our website and on a range of correspondence and leaflets. But of course, if you are unsure who or which department to contact just call **01502 562111** and our Customer Service team will be able to help you, take a message or transfer you to the relevant department.

Christmas opening

Once again this year, Waveney District Council will be open for business at Christmas! Our opening hours for this period are shown in the table:



	Marina CSC Lowestoft	Local Office Beccles	Local Office Bungay	Local Office Halesworth	TIC Southwold
Mon 22nd Dec	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
Tue 23rd Dec	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
Wed 24th Dec	9am to 4pm	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	Normal
Thu 25th Dec	Christmas Day - All Closed				
Fri 26th Dec	Boxing Day - All Closed				
Mon 29th Dec	9am to 4pm	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	Closed	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	Normal
Tue 30th Dec	9am to 4pm	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	Closed	Normal
Wed 31st Dec	9am to 4pm	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	Closed	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	Normal
Thu 1st Jan	New Year's Day - All Closed				
Fri 2nd Jan	9am to 4pm	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	9am to 4pm (closed 1pm to 2pm)	Closed	Normal

Making things better



Following a detailed inspection, the Audit Commission has praised Waveney District Council's environment services, citing a range of improvements that have 'made things better for users of this service.'

The Audit Commission inspection team visited the Council earlier this year, examining a wide range of services in great detail, and has awarded Waveney a 'fair' rating, with 'promising prospects for improvement.'

These services incorporated waste management - including waste collection and recycling - the management of open spaces - including beaches - and a variety of other areas such as street cleaning, litter & fly-tipping enforcement, abandoned vehicles, stray dogs & dog fouling, contaminated land, graffiti and the

condition of street lights, footpaths & cycleways.

In particular, the Audit Commission applauded the high levels of recycling and composting, how Waveney keeps the local environment 'generally clean' and believes that the Council provides 'good value for money' in this area.

• WAVENEY •

Cllr Ken Sale, Cabinet Member for the Environment said: "I am very pleased with the findings of this report and the praise we have received from



the Audit Commission. We remain on an improvement journey, but this report is a great boost and provides genuine, tangible evidence of the real improvements being made. I am delighted that so much of our excellent work has been recognised and I hope that our residents and customers feel reassured by the progress we are making."

The full report is available here: www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports.

Clean streets

Back in May, the Council joined forces with the Lowestoft Journal to call for untidy and littered trouble spots in Lowestoft to be taken care of and cleared up. The Keep Lowestoft Tidy campaign has been running in the paper ever since and each week it highlights environmental issues and encourages responsibility.

Cleansing Manager Mike Daniels said: "Working with The Journal has been an extremely useful exercise, with information and updates flowing both ways. Reports of incidents or hotspots can come to us directly or via the paper and we report back on how things are going and the issues we've faced.

"When we are not wasting time and resources clearing up after an irresponsible minority, we can be out improving things for the majority. It is our hope that bringing attention to these issues and offering alternatives may make people think twice."

• LOWESTOFT •

If you would like to organise a litter pick email operations@waveney.gov.uk or telephone **01502 523468**.



Big tidy

Waveney District Council is calling on local groups to join England's biggest ever litter campaign, The Big Tidy Up 2008.

The six-month initiative, being run by Keep Britain Tidy began in September and will run through to March, encouraging communities to get together and clean up their patch. Waveney District Council fully supports the initiative and would like to show the country how much the people of Waveney care about their environment.

Registration is easy - all groups need to do is register on www.thebigtidyup.org and they will be sent a kit containing tabard bibs, refuse sacks, posters, badges, stickers and a guide on carrying out tidy ups safely.

Cllr Ken Sale, Porfolio Holder for the Environment said: "This exciting campaign can pull communities together and make a real difference to the area. We think this is a great idea and could make a real difference."

A green Christmas?

Christmas is a time of joy and often of excess! So how can we enjoy ourselves but also do our bit for the environment during the festive season? Waveney District Council has some top tips!

Christmas cards

According to Friends of the Earth, no fewer than one billion Christmas cards are dumped each year in the UK. So if you are sending cards, make sure they are recycled and spread a sustainability message. You could even make your own from last year's or even send an e-card. The following website will show you how! www.foe.co.uk/cards/index.html.

Food and drink

Some sustainability factors to look for: Try and buy local produce to cut down those 'food miles' and make the most of local shops and farmers markets. As for the things that are only produced overseas - coffee, bananas etc - buy Fairtrade! Food from growers who have been fairly paid for their labours. For more information go to www.fairtrade.org.uk.

Travel

Car journeys can be particularly fraught over the festive season as drivers become over-tired and seasonal stresses take their toll. Aim for a few car-free days this Christmas.

Heating

Be cosy this Christmas - check that your home is fully insulated, your heating appliances are serviced and working efficiently. Close doors windows and curtains (at night) and turn down your thermostat one degree.

Lights

It's not compulsory to cover your roof with flashing santas, but if you crave festive lights, look for products using LEDs instead of traditional bulbs. LEDs last 10 times longer, produce virtually no heat and dramatically reduce power consumption.

Recycle, recycle, recycle

If you haven't seen it already, turn to page three for a comprehensive list of what you can recycle this Christmas! From trees, to wrapping paper, to leftovers we have all the detail you need!

Bright ideas

Waveney District Council lent its support to two environmental campaigns over the summer - 'World Environment Day' and 'Change your World' week.

The Council repeated its popular low-energy light bulb giveaway to mark World Environment Day on 5 June, asking residents to sign a personal carbon dioxide (CO₂) reduction pledge and receive a low-energy light bulb in return.

The initiative was organised by CRed Suffolk, which provides information and advice on identifying easy, everyday energy savings and our changing climate, via the CRed Suffolk Climate and Energy helpline **08000 288 938** or the CRed Suffolk website www.cred-uk.org/suffolk.

Meanwhile, Waveney took part in 'Change your World' week, encouraging people to make one less car journey, in an effort to reduce road traffic.

Staff were also encouraged to take part and help reduce car traffic by 10%. Speaking at the launch, WDC Leader Councillor Mark Bee, said: "We can all become over-dependent on our cars and it takes initiatives such as this to make us aware of the impact this can have on the environment. All those little journeys soon add up and so it is important to stop and think if it is essential that you take the car."

Over 8,000 people from across the UK signed up to swap a car trip. Change Your World returns next year, running from 29 June to 4 July 2009 - so please put the date in your diary and look out for more exciting green initiatives.

Visit www.changeyourworld.org.uk for more information.



WDC Leader Cllr Mark Bee & CRed's Kate Simms light up the way.

Building for the future

An independent Inspector has been examining a vital council strategy which maps out a vision for the future of Waveney's towns and villages.

The Waveney Local Development Framework (LDF) sets out the council's vision for Waveney and will guide and manage building development in the District during the next decade and beyond. The 'Core Strategy' then explains what this vision means for the main settlements in the district and this examination of the document will determine if it can be adopted.

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The inspector's task is to consider whether it is fit for purpose and has been prepared in accordance with regulations and he will publish his binding report in December. If he

considers the Core Strategy to be 'sound,' a revised version will be adopted in January, incorporating any changes he considers necessary. To find out more, visit the Local Development Framework pages in the Planning Policy section of the council's website at www.waveney.gov.uk/Planning/Planning+Policy.

Meanwhile, the Council is seeking opinions on its preferred sites for future community facilities and services, as well as those for potential economic and residential development.

After extensive discussions with the local community and other interested organisations, the Council will publish a document detailing the preferred

sites for future development in the district (or Site Specific Allocations).

Over 1000 individuals / organisations initially gave their views on land suggested for future development and the Council is now seeking views on these preferred sites.

Exhibitions have been taking place across the district, where Planning Policy Officers have discussed the preferred sites with local residents. Plans are also available online at www.waveney.gov.uk/Planning/Planning+Policy along with a comments form. For more information on consultation dates for your area, visit the website, email planningpolicy@waveney.gov.uk or call **01502 523029**.

Forward planning

Waveney District Council is working towards providing a more customer and community focused Planning Service. Over the next year, it will focus on:

- Better customer service.
- Improving the time it takes to deal with planning applications.
- Ensuring that the community benefits of developments are realised.
- More engagement with communities and parishes.
- Setting the framework for development to 2021.

For more information on Planning's ambitions visit www.waveney.gov.uk/Planning/planning_ambitions.

The latest news and developments the service has to share are as follows:

Information expanded

Neighbour and full consultee comments on planning applications are now available to view online through the planning public access pages. They can be accessed from the current planning applications link on the Council's website home page at www.waveney.gov.uk.

Conservation Areas Appraisals

Conservation Area Appraisals for Wangford and Beccles are currently underway. It is hoped that around December, draft documents will be available for viewing on the consultations pages of the Council's website. A period of consultation will follow and the aim is to complete the appraisal by the end of this financial year.

What can you do without planning permission?

On 1 October 2008 the rules surrounding planning permission changed. Those starting a project may wish to check out the available guidance prior to making plans. Visit the planning permission page on our website and use the Planning Portal Householder Guide link for more information www.waveney.gov.uk/Planning/Planning+Permission/.



Campus back on

After a thorough review, the Waveney Campus partners have unanimously agreed to re-start the Campus project. The resumption begins immediately.

The project will create a state of the art public service building in Lowestoft but was halted in the summer to consider the implications of Local Government Review and possible boundary changes. Although the project partners had planned for possible local government re-organisation, the Boundary Committee's recommendations, published in July 2008, contained options that were unexpected.

Nevertheless, after detailed discussions, the local authorities that could yet play a role in the delivery of services to Lowestoft have all confirmed their support for the continuation of the Waveney Campus project - Waveney District Council, Suffolk County Council, Norfolk County Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council - together with the East of England Development Agency and the 1st East Urban Regeneration Company all believe

the project is viable and much needed for the town. Local government services will continue to be required, whatever authority or authorities are administering the area and none of the aforementioned authorities have suitable alternative premises in the vicinity. So the need for the Waveney Campus will remain.

Cllr Wendy Mawer, Waveney District Council's Portfolio Holder for Regeneration said: "The Local Government Review has created uncertainty and it was vitally important that all current and prospective partners took time out to consider their options. I am absolutely delighted, therefore, that all are unanimous in their commitment to the project and share the view that there remains a clear need for this facility in Lowestoft."

For more information about the project go to: www.waveneycampus.co.uk.

Future prosperity



Waveney District Council has published an important

document, laying out its regeneration priorities to the year 2017.

The Council's Economic Regeneration Strategy sets a clear 10-year framework, establishing how the Council intends to address the economic challenges faced by the Waveney district during this period.

The Strategy reinforces the Council's commitment to the future economic prosperity of the district and demonstrates how the Council will respond to the recommendations of the recently launched 'Waveney Prospectus'. It provides context, identifying the factors that influence the Waveney economy, clarifying the key challenges and committing to clear three-year action plans which show how WDC intends to measure success.

Cllr Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration said: "An Economic Regeneration Strategy is one of the most important documents produced by a Council, especially in an area such as Waveney. This document lays out proposals to address the challenges facing

the district and maximise economic growth from the significant opportunities available to Waveney.

"For too long Waveney has been seen as

simply an area of need. Despite possible changes to the future shape of local government in Suffolk, we are determined to show the true value of Waveney as a wealth creator of regional and national significance."

The strategy can be downloaded from the WDC website: <http://www.waveney.gov.uk/Regeneration/Economic+Regeneration/>.



Cllr Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Head of Regeneration Malcolm Perrins think ahead.

Sense of place

Waveney District Council, in partnership with all other districts in Suffolk, is asking people to tell them what they think about where they live in a comprehensive annual survey.

Questionnaires for The 'Place Survey' have been sent to a random selection of households in the district and anyone who completes and returns their form will be placed in a draw for one of two £50 High Street shopping vouchers.

Cllr Colin Law, Deputy Leader of Waveney District Council said: "Waveney is responsible for delivering a number of services either directly or through partners and we need to know what you think of the services the authority provides. The results of the survey are important and will be used to help us understand what you think about your local public services and how they can be improved."

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To ensure you are entered in to the draw for the prizes you need to return your questionnaire by 19th December 2008. Details of how to complete and submit your questionnaire are included in the survey. The winners will be randomly selected from all of the respondents that have completed and returned their questionnaire. Results are expected in early 2009 and will be available on the WDC website, www.waveney.gov.uk.

In the loop

The law says you must tell us if there is any change to the information we have used to decide whether you are entitled to Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit (or both). So what exactly do we need to know?

You need to tell us about any change that could affect your benefit. Here are some examples.

If there are changes to your DWP benefit or changes in income (for example, if there is any change to your or your partner's wages or tax credits) we need to know. You should always tell us when the income starts, stops, goes up or down.

If the people who live with you change or if there are any changes in your bank accounts or savings, please let us know. If you are renting privately and your landlord puts your rent up or down or if you change your address - you need to tell us straightaway!

And if you are starting work, your benefit will change so you need to tell us if you start a new job, increase your normal hours, start working overtime or get a pay rise.

If you don't tell us, we're likely to go on paying the same rate of benefit as before and this may be wrong. If we have paid too much, we will expect you to pay it back, and we may take it out of the benefit we're still paying you.

We may find out about a change in some other way and this might make us suspect fraud. If this is the case, we may need to ask our Investigation Team to check the situation. So do tell us as soon as your circumstances change.

Please tell us in writing and give us your Benefits reference number which is on the letters we send you. Tell us what's changed and the date it changed - help us to help you.

To contact the Benefits Section email: benefits.benefits@waveney.gov.uk or call 01502 523 535.



Norse bodes well

The transfer of Waveney District Council's operational services to a newly formed partnership has been hailed a success by both sides. Staff have been praised for their positive attitude in helping ensure a seamless handover.

At the end of June, the Council signed a contract with Norfolk County Services Limited to form a partnership providing many of its prominent, public-facing

services. A Joint Venture Company called Waveney Norse was formed and it took over operations on 1 July.

Councillor Stephen Ardley, Waveney's Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing, said: "The Waveney Norse Team is still very much a part of WDC and we have seen improvements across the board, which clearly demonstrates that this a positive and beneficial way forward for the delivery of these services and for the people of Waveney."

WDC Chief Executive, Stephen Baker (back right) & Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing, Cllr Stephen Ardley (front right) sign on the dotted line with representatives from NCS.



Insuring success

In partnership with two other Suffolk district councils, Waveney recently struck an important deal to help make collective savings of over £1 million.

Suffolk Coastal, Waveney and Babergh wanted to see if joint working could help them negotiate a better deal for their insurance costs and their efforts will realise huge savings on insurance premiums across the next five years.

Cllr Chris Punt, Waveney's Portfolio Holder for Performance believes this is an excellent achievement. He said: "Effective partnerships between councils deliver efficiency and real value for money and I am delighted that we are all able to make such a considerable saving.

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"We have a duty to the council tax payer to provide high quality services and to use the resources available to us as wisely and efficiently as possible. Thanks to the efforts of three neighbouring councils we have made a saving that can only benefit the people we serve."

After a lengthy tender process Zurich Municipal emerged as the preferred insurance company. The new five year contract with Zurich will begin shortly and will include an option to extend by a further two years. Waveney led the tendering process and the other parties provided financial and legal support.

Drink order

Waveney District Council, with support from the Waveney Community Safety Partnership and Suffolk Police has taken a positive, proactive step in an attempt to crack down on drunken behaviour.

The Council proposed providing police with the power to confiscate alcohol from people who are causing a nuisance and conducted a public consultation on the issue, which ran until October.

Councillor Mary Rudd, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety said: "Like many other similar towns, Lowestoft has experienced problems with a small but significant minority of people that drink to excess. This is also a step in the right direction in helping reduce the considerable adverse health impact associated with heavy drinking."

The Order, if approved, will come into force on 1 March 2009. The consultation is closed, but a copy of the draft Order can be viewed online by visiting www.waveney.gov.uk.



Festive fun

Waveney will be chock full of festive events this Christmas and here is our pick of the bunch. But this is just the tip of the iceberg! For further information on events in and around the area please visit www.visit-sunrisecoast.co.uk or call Lowestoft Tourist Information centre on **01502 533 600**, or Southwold Information centre on **01502 724 729**.

BECCLES

Christmas lights switch on and late night shopping - Friday 28 November.

Christmas festivities begin in Beccles, with the town's big Christmas Light switch on as part of a special late-night shopping event on Friday 28 November. There's entertainment for all with live music and 'Suffolk Samba' dancing. Many local shops will stay open late and there will also be stalls and children's rides to complete a great evening for all!

LOWESTOFT

Christmas lights switch on - Saturday 29 November.

Late night shopping - every Friday from November 21.

'Pirates at Christmas,' is the exciting theme, for this year's Lowestoft Christmas lights event! The cast of the Marina theatre's panto, Peter Pan will switch on the lights between 4pm - 4.30pm on Saturday November 29th. Why not dress up as pirates too for the fancy dress competition? YOU could be a winner!

And to ramp up that festive feeling, why not use the ice rink that's coming to Lowestoft the weekend before Christmas? Tickets can be purchased from the East Point Pavilion.

SOUTHWOLD

Christmas lights switch on and late night shopping - Friday 5 December.

The Southwold event takes place on Friday 5 December on the High Street. All shops will be open from 6pm and the lights will go on at 7pm. The evening also includes Christmas carols and a procession through the high street as well as an appearance from Father Christmas himself! The high street will be lined with traditional Christmas stalls selling items like mulled wine, Christmas puddings, mince pies and roasted chestnuts.

BUNGAY

Christmas Street Fayre - Sunday 7 December.

The Bungay Christmas Street Fayre on Earsham Street takes place on the 7 December between 9am and 4.30pm. This popular Christmas event will see stalls selling a range of Christmas products lining the streets.

HALESWORTH

Winter Street Fayre - Sunday 14 December.

The wonderful Halesworth Winter Street Fayre takes place on the Thoroughfare from 10am to 4pm on Sunday December 14. There will be Christmas stalls lining the streets, loads of festive activities and a grand raffle.



Peter Pan-to!

Fly away to the magical world of Neverland this Christmas, when Waveney's Marina Theatre hosts Peter Pan, a star-studded traditional pantomime full of family fun and festive cheer.

Peter Pan will be the first resident professional pantomime in the town since the early 1960s. Ken Farrington, known to millions as Tom King in Emmerdale and Jamie Rickers from CITV children's television show, Toonattik head the cast.

Tickets for Peter Pan are now on sale and start at just £5 each with concessions available for the over 60s, children and students. Family tickets and generous party rates are also available. In addition a number of shows have been specially scheduled to allow for school parties and on December 30 there will also be a sign language interpreted performance.

Performances run from Thursday 11 December through until Sunday 4 January. For more information or to book seats please call the Marina Box Office on **01502 533200**. www.marinatheatre.co.uk.