

# intouch

W I T H W A V E N E Y



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Waveney District Council  
Serving the Community



# Award Winning Sunrise Scheme

Waveney District Council is celebrating the award of a top accolade in the first annual awards run by Coast magazine.

The award for best regeneration project went to the £14.7m Waveney Sunrise Scheme, which was completed last year, transforming Lowestoft town centre and seafront. The scheme has transformed the infrastructure and image of Lowestoft's town centre, south Lowestoft and seafront areas and these improvements have increased business development and tourism while creating new jobs and prosperity.

Judges said that the Waveney Sunrise Scheme had "had an impact on the whole of Lowestoft" and had "increased visitors to Lowestoft by 143,000 in a very competitive market. It's sustainable too - creating 53 new businesses and 490 new jobs."

The Waveney region also received two further awards from the magazine.



The Lord Nelson in Southwold was joint winner of best coastal café, pub or restaurant for its "charm, heritage and heart", while Southwold Pier won the best seaside attraction prize for its "quirky and individual renovation of a coastal classic, and its breadth of appeal".

## • WAVENEY •

Clare Gogerty, who is the editor of the 36,000-circulation Coast magazine, said the awards had been set up to "recognise the people and places that represent all that is innovative, valuable and exciting around the British coastline, from best fish-and-chip shop to best beach".

And this is not the only award for the scheme having gathered gongs at The East of England 'Celebrate Awards.'

The awards are held to recognise initiatives that have been made possible thanks, in part, to European funding. Project manager, Paul Moss was called to the podium twice. No only did it win the 'Local



Paul Moss (centre) collects the Sunrise Scheme's awards.

Transformation Award' but it also scooped the biggest prize of all - the Pride of European Structural Funds Award. This was a special award judged by a panel which recognises a project that "best sums up the European Structural Fund funding period."

Cllr Mark Bee, Leader of the Council was delighted with news of the win: "These awards are hugely deserved and recognise the vision and hard work of all involved in this fantastic project. Aply led by Paul Moss, Lowestoft has been transformed for the benefit of residents and visitors and I am proud of the role Waveney District Council has played in its delivery. Waveney is receiving the recognition it deserves for its flagship regeneration projects."

## 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** or over the telephone using our automated service - just call **01502 511 805** and have your debit or credit card ready. Or you can head to the Council's website, [www.waveney.gov.uk/payments](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/payments) and follow the instructions.

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.

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## How to get in touch

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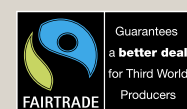
Email: [info@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:info@waveney.gov.uk)  
Post: Town Hall, High Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 1HS.  
Tel: **01502 562 111** Fax: **01502 589 327**  
Website: [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk)



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# Waveney Wins Lottery

Waveney District Council's Community Cohesion Team has secured over a quarter of a million pounds in funding from the Big Lottery to support the development of new play facilities in the district.

The Waveney Play Partnership - around 40 people from organisations and groups across the district - supported the Council in its bid for a state of the art concrete skate bowl in Lowestoft. Young people from the area have long campaigned for this type of facility and a further petition to the Play Ideas Consultation in the spring reinforced this need. Local children and young people will be involved in the design and development and a location has been identified in Normanston Park.



The Play Partnership will also seek local sponsorship to support enhancements to the development. While £160,000 has already been earmarked from the Lottery bid, further funds will ensure a first class facility.

## • WAVENEY •

A second project will secure the upgrade of facilities in three rural areas in Waveney with a funding grant going to the three parishes of Blundeston, Westhall and Barnby/Covehithe to help improve local play areas.

Chair of the Waveney Play Partnership and Waveney District Councillor Chris Punt said: "Members of the Play Partnership have worked really hard to get to this position. This funding will also allow us to move forward with the Waveney Play Strategy and support other play projects in the district that go beyond this fantastic start from the lottery.

For further information or to get involved, please contact the Council Community Cohesion Team on **01502 523 185 or 186**.



Cllr Ardley congratulates Sharna, Tara and Sarah.

# Wall Smart

A joint project between Waveney District Council and the Denes High School in Lowestoft has aesthetically improved the entrance to Belle Vue Park in Lowestoft. Visitors to the park are now greeted with a mural produced by local students.

The Belle Vue mural project came about when Mrs Maria Ardley, wife of Councillor Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder for Operations and Facilities, commented on the recurring graffiti at the entrance to the park. She suggested a mural would improve the area and deter future acts of vandalism. The idea became a reality, thanks to the support of Jenny Chilvers, Business & Enterprise Co-ordinator at Denes High School.

## • LOWESTOFT •

Student, Sharna Thompson produced a series of pieces, working in different media, exploring the idea of people being invited to 'Go See' Lowestoft and her sister Sarah and fellow student Tara Kent assisted her.

Councillor Stephen Ardley said: "I would like to thank all those involved in making this idea a reality. The mural looks fantastic and the students have not only improved the area, they have given the park a new attraction. It shows what can be achieved with a good idea, co-operation and local support. They should be extremely proud."

# Granting more Opportunity

Waveney District Council has reviewed the way it provides financial assistance to voluntary and community sector organisations.

Grants will be limited to an upper ceiling of £2,000, to try and reduce over-subscription and provide greater scope to support a wide range of organisations. If required, the Grants Coordinator will now assist those seeking funds over £2,000 in finding additional support.

In addition, there will be two funding rounds (instead of one), taking place in April and October, giving organisations an additional opportunity to access funding.

Councillor Mark Bee, Portfolio Holder for Community Cohesion, Partnerships and Well Being said:

"The change to two funding rounds

should provide more organisations with the chance to secure vital resources. Organisations that have received funding year on year may find these changes challenging as we attempt to divide a limited pot amongst a wider group. In order to ease the transition, it is proposed that they receive a 'stepped' reduction in the level of grant funding over two financial years."

Organisations wishing to contact Waveney District Council's Grants Co-ordinator for information or funding advice can email: [volgrants@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:volgrants@waveney.gov.uk) or telephone **01502 523 180**.



# Future Development

After widespread consultation, Waveney District Council has produced a document that sets out in strategic terms its overall approach to future development in Waveney.

The Council sent this Core Strategy to the Secretary of State who will appoint an independent inspector to 'examine' it. At the same time it is seeking comments of support or objection on the Strategy and the vision, objectives and policies that it wants to see delivered across the District to 2021.

Councillor Ken Sale, Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment explains: "The Waveney Local Development Framework will guide development in the District to 2021. It is therefore important that people take the time to view the full document and provide us with their comments and feedback."

The Strategy has been published for six weeks consultation from February 25 to April 7 2008 with a public hearing stage due to take place in September 2008. All representations from this consultation will be considered by the independent inspector appointed to examine the document and if it is found 'sound' it will be adopted, incorporating any minor changes that may be required.

Copies of the full document can be viewed online at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk) or at Council offices and libraries. For more information, call Waveney's Planning Policy Team on **01502 523 029**.



# Campus views

Residents, businesses and local groups have enjoyed a first hand look at designs for the exciting Waveney Campus project.

An exhibition, providing detailed plans and artists impressions, has visited a number of locations in Lowestoft and visitors have been encouraged to provide feedback and opinions on what they have seen.

The Campus is a flagship project creating a landmark administrative and state-of-the-art scientific complex to house 1,000 staff from the Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Waveney District Council and part of Suffolk County Council. These partner organisations are seeking to achieve significant savings by sharing facilities in an energy-efficient and sustainable building.

And while questions have already been asked about the design and look of the building, Cllr Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration is

absolutely clear about the project's priorities.

"We aim to create a building that will be an exemplar of sustainable construction, offering low energy and water consumption. It will use sustainable materials throughout and the look and design have been hugely influenced by the required environmental performance of the building. Design is important, but we are also aiming for the BREEAM excellent rating (an environmental assessment for buildings). This is the highest standard for new builds and key measures are in place to achieve low running costs.

## • WAVENEY •

"An independent review by the Office of Government Commerce confirms that the Campus project offers value for money for the taxpayer and with global concern about climate change it is essential that we do far more than just create a good looking building."

To find out more, please head to the dedicated Campus website: [www.waveneycampus.co.uk](http://www.waveneycampus.co.uk)

## Planning for better

Waveney District Council has a responsibility to ensure buildings and land are protected and wants your views.

The Planning Enforcement team deal with alleged breaches of planning control such as work on protected

trees without permission, unauthorised advertisements on land or allowing buildings to deteriorate. It wants to know how quickly YOU think the council should respond to complaints.

There are three 'levels' of complaint.

**Type 1:** Unauthorised part/total demolition of a building that is listed or in a conservation area, development in a Site of Specific Interest. **Type 2:** Unauthorised uses of land, display advertisement and untidy land or buildings. **Type 3:** Incidents that are more minor or appear to be temporary.

Tell us your idea of a reasonable target time for each type. Send your response to Planning and Building Control, Waveney District Council, Town Hall, High Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1HS or complete an online form at [www.waveney.gov.uk/Planning/Enforcement](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/Planning/Enforcement)

A full copy of the Planning and Building Control Enforcement Policy and a Planning Enforcement Code of Practice can be viewed in this area of the website.

# Blueprint for Waveney

A plan to encourage the growth and regeneration of the Waveney district has been officially unveiled by Waveney District Council and its partners. The 'Waveney Prospectus' will serve as a framework for the district over the next 5-10 years.

Announcing the new initiative in Halesworth, Cllr Wendy Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration said: "The Waveney district is currently poised to enter a very exciting stage of development as it seeks to reposition

itself as a modern and competitive destination. The area has tremendous potential for both economic and community prosperity and it is our aim, across the next 10 years, to help deliver what Waveney deserves."



Martyn Burnside (Waveney Economic Partnership), Cllr Wendy Mawer (WDC), Richard Perkins (1st East).

The 'Prospectus' will focus on the major centres of population of Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth, Kessingland, Lowestoft and Southwold. It has been funded by Waveney District Council, East of England Development Agency (EEDA), Waveney Economic Partnership and the Single Regeneration Budget Community Chest.

The prospectus sets a series of targets for the area to reach by 2017. They include raising the full time pay for all those employed in the district, from 83pc of the UK average to 90pc, increasing the number of jobs from 45,400 to 49,500, and improving perceptions of Waveney among residents and businesses.

## Energy Excellence

A hi-tech development in Lowestoft is placing Waveney at the heart of the renewable energy industry.

The Orbis energy centre is being built at Ness Point and is due to open in the summer, housing around 40 small to medium-sized companies involved in offshore energy. This will create around 150 jobs and was recently praised during a visit by Danuta Hübner, the European Union's commissioner for regional policy.

### • LOWESTOFT •

Ms Hübner said: "The Orbis centre is a beautiful place and I am convinced this building will stimulate the development of the offshore industry for Lowestoft and the region. It is important you take the lessons you have learned and share them with others."

Waveney District Council is backing the project alongside the East of England Development Agency (EEDA), the Government Office for the East of England, Suffolk County Council, Renewables East and the EU.

Wendy Mawer, Waveney District Council's Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration, said: "This is the most exciting day we have had in Lowestoft and Waveney for a long time and places Lowestoft amongst Europe's leading renewable energy centres. This is a massive step forward and the people of this town should be very proud."



# Passport to Leisure

The Council's 'Passport to Leisure' is a fantastic scheme, encouraging participation in sport and leisure activities. Could you take advantage of the savings on offer?

Passport to Leisure is a card that offers discounted rates on selected leisure activities across the district. It is available to those that qualify and aims to encourage participation with fantastic special offers.

To participate in the scheme you must meet certain criteria:

- Registered Unemployed
  - In receipt of Income Support
  - In receipt of Incapacity Benefit
  - Disabled
  - Senior Citizen
  - Full-Time Student
  - In receipt of Working Families Tax Credit
- Waterlane Leisure Centre, Bungay Pool and Gym, Beccles and Halesworth outdoor pools, outdoor sports and the Marina Theatre all offer discounts.

Waveney District residents only have to pay £7.50 for the year (from 1.4.08). While non residents pay £21.75. For that

you can enjoy a range of offers.

Examples include:

- A swim at WDC pools would cost £1.70 instead of £3.25. A saving of over £80 if you swim once a week!
- Swimming for disabled customers would cost 40p, plus 40p for a carer (where applicable).
- Badminton off peak would be £2.85 instead of £4.10.

## • WAVENEY •

Simply complete an application form (available at any WDC cash office) providing the relevant proof of entitlement and ID. Further details are also available on the Council's website: [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk) or at any participating facility. Customers can also contact Leisure Services on **01502 588 444** with any queries.

# Active Online

From the comfort of your home you can now check availability, make your arrangements with friends and book and pay for your activity in advance, thanks to Waterlane Leisure Centre's online booking service.

Waterlane Leisure Centre members or Spirit Gym direct debit members can now book and pay for multiple activities, up to four weeks in advance (remember to have your membership details to hand). Non-members are also able to use this service and can book and pay for their activities one week in advance. Head to [www.waterlanebookings.co.uk](http://www.waterlanebookings.co.uk) and have your debit or credit card ready! Visitors to the site can also view availability timetables for activities such as badminton, squash, tennis, basketball, outdoor courts and five-a-side before booking.

Councillor Stephen Ardley, Portfolio Holder for Operations & Facilities said: "This new service will make it much easier to access Waterlane's facilities and we will be expanding this service across our leisure facilities in the future."

To become a Waterlane Leisure Centre member or join the Spirit Gym telephone **01502 569 116** for more details.

**The Standards Committee which, amongst other things, seeks to promote and maintain high standards of conduct in public office, has a vacancy.**

The committee is made up of cross-party councillors and independent members of the public and is looking for an additional member from outside the council. If you are interested in learning more about this important and rewarding role email [standardscommittee@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:standardscommittee@waveney.gov.uk) or call **01502 523 606**.

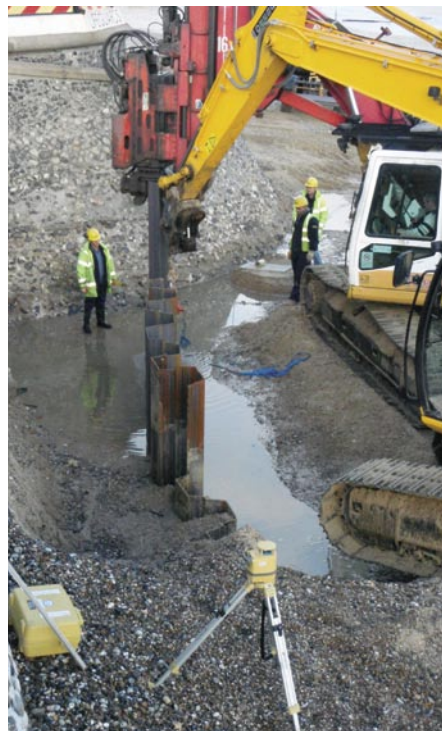
# Beach Improvements

Work is underway at Lowestoft South Beach sea wall on a £250,000 repair programme.

The work, led by Waveney's Senior Coastal Engineer, Paul Patterson, will be robust but the design will not change the appearance of the old flint wall, which has defended Lowestoft since the 1880s and is of considerable historical interest.

The wall and promenade will enjoy improved stability against the action of waves on a section of beach that continues to be at a particularly low level and improvements will also be made to the ramp opposite the East Point Pavilion.

The specified work is expected to be completed soon, before the summer season on this popular Blue Flag beach. The Coast Protection Team will then award a separate contract to repair the face of the flint wall at several locations, and to repair damage incurred during the tidal surge last November.



# Powering in to Waveney

Waveney welcomes not one but two outstanding powerboat events to the region this summer! On July 26/27 the Honda 4-stroke powerboat series (pictured) returns to Lowestoft, a month after the Round Britain Offshore Powerboat Race sets off for the first time in 23 years!

The Round Britain Powerboat Race is the "Everest" of all powerboat races and is the longest and toughest event for powerboat drivers anywhere in the world. This is a huge endurance race with some legs well over 200 nautical miles and it will test boats and crews to the limit.

## • WAVENEY •

Waveney District Council worked with a number of partners to present Waveney as an attractive option for a leg of this prestigious event and has helped to ensure that this event comes to the district. Darren Newman, Service Manager for Tourism & events explained: "The Round Britain Power Boat race is an exciting world class event and the Sunrise Coast is an ideal venue,

boasting an increasing calendar of quality events throughout the year."

The race sets off from Portsmouth on 21 June then travels around Britain stopping at Plymouth, Milford Haven, Bangor (Northern Ireland), Oban, Inverness, Edinburgh, and Newcastle before arriving in Lowestoft on 29 June. The final leg runs from Lowestoft back to Portsmouth.

Event Director, Mike Lloyd said: "The Round Britain Powerboat Race is the 'Mount Everest' of powerboat racing, requiring serious planning and financial commitment just to get to the start line and even more to get around the 1,600 miles endurance racing course along Britain's beautiful coastline. Powerboat racing just does not come any tougher than this."

The Round Britain Powerboat Race last



took place 23 years ago and was won by leading Italian racer and boat builder, Fabio Buzzi. Fabio has already committed to return to defend his title and has confirmed that the Buzzi factory will be represented by more than one boat. It will be interesting to see if new technology can beat the clock as well as the notorious British sea!

The race is due to arrive in Lowestoft from around 2pm on 29 June; there will also be other offshore racing that takes part off Lowestoft to support the event.

For further information contact the Waveney Tourism Team on **01523 523 332** or go to [www.roundbritainrace.co.uk/index1.htm](http://www.roundbritainrace.co.uk/index1.htm)

# Fun for all in 2008!

Tourism continues to thrive in Waveney, proving what WE all already know. It's a great place to be!

Recent statistics from East of England Tourism reveal that tourism is now worth well over £200 million to the local economy, and supports almost 4,900 jobs - some 10.9 % of employment in Waveney. Waveney District Council works closely with the Waveney Tourism Forum to boost visitor numbers and we already have a number of great attractions lined up for the summer.

The fabulous Latitude Festival returns to the Henham Estate on 18 - 20 July, and there are two great powerboat events; the Honda 4-stroke powerboat series on 26 & 27 July and the Round Britain Power Boat Race (see above for more details). Dragon Boat Racing is back at Oulton Broad on 11 May and, of course, the spectacular

Lowestoft Seafront Air Festival is on the 24 & 25 July. A full events programme can be found at [www.visit-sunrisecoast.co.uk](http://www.visit-sunrisecoast.co.uk)

But before all that, April sees the launch of a new annual extravaganza for the district - the Waveney Revels! A month long celebration of a wide variety of arts events and activities with excellent programmes from our theatres and arts venues in the



Photo by Jon Appleby



district plus much, much more - turn to the back cover for more details.

If you would like any ideas or further information on what to do in Waveney please contact Lowestoft Tourist Information Centre on **01502 533 600** or Southwold Tourist Information Centre on **01502 724 729**, email [touristinfo@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:touristinfo@waveney.gov.uk) or visit [www.sunrisecoast.co.uk](http://www.sunrisecoast.co.uk).



# May Elections

On Thursday 1 May, when you head for the polls, make sure you've checked your polling card and are heading in the right direction!



The Council carried out a review of polling places in Waveney last year, to ensure that where possible, electors were allocated the most appropriate polling station. As a result of this review, some residents may find that their polling station has changed. **Please read your poll card carefully** when it arrives.

This year, the following areas or 'wards' will have an election:

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Beccles North    | Kessingland        |
| Beccles South    | Kirkley            |
| Bungay           | Normanston         |
| Carlton          | Oulton Broad       |
| Carlton Colville | Pakefield          |
| Gunton & Corton  | Southwold & Reydon |
| Halesworth       | St. Margarets      |
| Harbour          | Whitton            |

If you would prefer to vote by post and you are not currently a postal voter then please contact the Elections Office (details below), stating your name and address and an application form will be sent to you. A completed postal vote application form for the May elections **must be returned by 5pm on April 16, 2008** to the Elections Office, Town Hall, High Street, Lowestoft NR32 1HS. If you have any queries or concerns then phone the Electoral Services Helpline on **01502 523 238** or email [elections@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:elections@waveney.gov.uk)

## Unitary Debate

Central government has recently asked the Boundary Committee to investigate options for the future of local government in Suffolk.

They have been asked to consider the viability of creating unitary authorities in Suffolk and will consult with councils, public bodies and local communities on a framework.

Cllr Mark Bee, Leader of the Council is somewhat alarmed by some of the suggestions.

"Remarkably the Government appear to be considering absorbing Waveney in to an administrative Norfolk and I am very concerned by this. Personally, my priority is the taxpayers of Waveney and in my view, we need to remain focused on that, without the distractions and uncertainty that this announcement brings.

"This revelation genuinely affects the historic boundaries of Suffolk and Norfolk. Naturally we will work with the Boundary Committee to help them find the best solution and the best outcome for the people of Waveney, but becoming part of Norfolk is the last thing we should be considering and the sooner that conclusion is reached, the better."

### Changes to Polling Stations:

Area	Previous Polling Station	New Polling Station
<b>Beccles Centre</b>	Hungate Church Lounge	Main Hall, Sir John Leman High School
<b>Beccles Darby</b>	Albert Pye CP School	St Lukes Church Centre
<b>Carlton Colville East</b>	Grove Primary School	Bloodmoor Hill Community Centre
<b>Carlton Colville North</b>	Grove Primary School	Grove Primary School
<b>Carlton Colville South</b>	Grove Primary School	Carlton Colville Community Centre
<b>Gisleham North*</b>	Parish Rooms	Bloodmoor Hill Community Centre
<b>Kirkley North</b>	The Kirkley Centre, London Road South	Fen Park CP School
<b>Kirkley West</b>	Whitton Community Hall	Kirkley Vocational Centre, Kirkley High School
<b>Whitton East</b>	New area.	Whitton Community Hall

\*Those who live in the older part of Gisleham Parish can continue to vote at the Parish Rooms. Those in the 'Bloodmoor' area will use the new Bloodmoor Hill Community Centre.



# The Council's Priorities



Waveney District Council has created a 'Business Priorities Plan' which sets out the areas that the Council will be focusing on during 2008/09. Eight key priorities, which the organisation must focus on during this financial year, have been identified, to help the Council move forward.

Cllr Mark Bee, Leader of the Council said: "With the changes at senior level and the work of senior consultants from the Change & Improvement team, we are beginning to see encouraging signs of improvement, but it is vital that we focus on the things that matter to ensure we deliver the very best services to the taxpayers of Waveney."

## Customer Focus

Customer Focus is vital and the customer must be at the centre of service provision. Whilst improvements to customer access were made at the end of 2007, more extensive work will be undertaken to improve all aspects of customer focus across the Council and to consider further provision for the future. A detailed Action Plan has been put in place and revised 'Corporate Customer Services Standards' introduced to the organisation in January.

• W A V E N E Y •

## Enabling Agenda

The Council adopted an "Enabling" Policy in November 2006, with the intention of looking to provide more of its services in partnership. During 2007/08, a project to provide the Council's Operations and Facilities in partnership from June 2008 has progressed well and is on target.

## Planning

An inspection of the Council's Planning Service in 2007 challenged WDC to improve. The Council has responded well to the inspection and has put together a robust improvement plan to address the recommendations within the inspection report. The Council has a good design and conservation service and the planning policy team is making good progress. There is already effective service management and the council can boast a

good record with major applications. But we are determined to further pick up the pace of that improvement.

## Asset Management

An Asset Management Strategy in place as is an Acquisition & Disposal Strategy with some assets already identified for disposal. As part of this ongoing review, buildings, land and assets which are deemed to be surplus or do not directly contribute to the Strategic Direction of the Council would be made available for sale to free up funds for reinvestment in projects more aligned to benefiting residents and visitors to the district. This will ensure that funds are refocused for the benefit of the community.

## Performance Management

The Council recognises that good performance management is fundamental to driving improved performance and is working on a programme to ensure that this is firmly embedded across the organisation.

## Finance / Use of Resources

The Council's overall Use of Resources assessment (December 2007) highlighted a deteriorating position from the previous year. The Council also received an adverse Value for Money judgement from the District Auditor and considerable work will be undertaken on Use of Resources improvements.

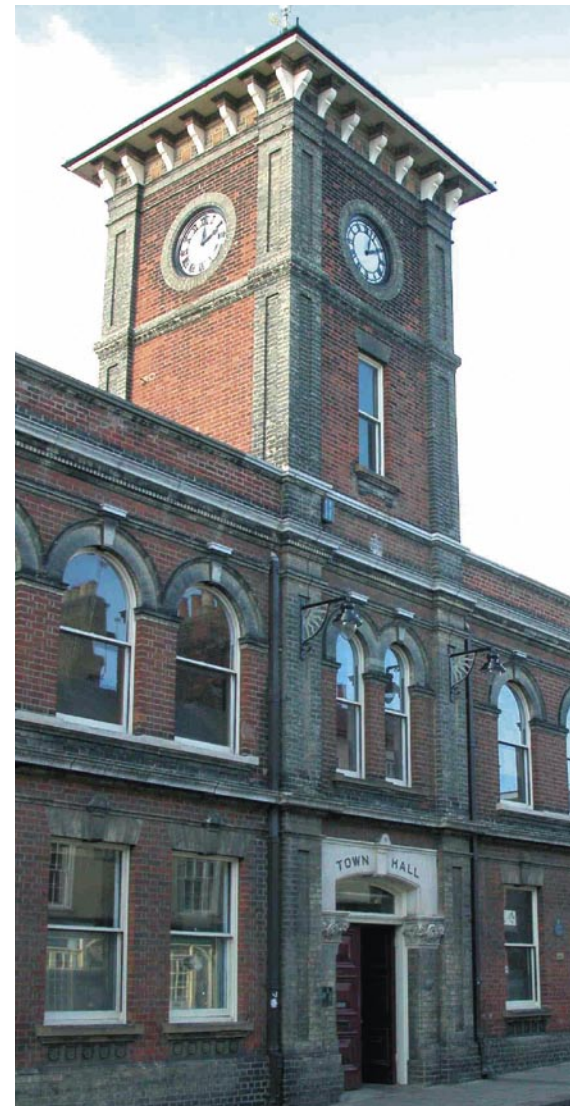
## Waveney Campus

Plans for the Waveney Campus are progressing well and are on schedule. The project is part of a wider regeneration plan for the Lowestoft / Great Yarmouth areas and will create a landmark administrative and state-of-the-art scientific complex to house 1,000 staff from Cefas, WDC and Suffolk County Council.

These partner organisations are all currently occupying old and inefficient buildings around Lowestoft that are no longer fit for purpose and the proposed development will transform an area of waterfront into an attractive area to include public space. It will act as a catalyst for attracting jobs and stimulating wider regeneration, thereby providing a sound basis for the sustainable future of the local economy. The project remains within budget and a recent public exhibition of the design proposals was attended by members of the public and businesses alike.

## Equality Standard

The Council is currently engaged in work to meet the Equality Standard for Local Government. Additional dedicated resources were allocated to this priority in 2007/08 and work is progressing well, supported by partners, to deliver an improved Standard during 2008-09.



# Homeselect

Homeselect, Waveney's new allocations scheme for Council and Housing Association properties is now up and running, allowing applicants on the register and waiting to transfer, a greater say in where they live.

In partnership with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, the new scheme will lead to a better understanding of what the Council can do, dispelling myths and creating an open and transparent process. Those already registered should have received a letter and

booklet containing their details and how it works.

Further information can be downloaded at [www.homeselect.org.uk](http://www.homeselect.org.uk). Surgeries are also scheduled for the market towns and the dates will be advertised shortly. Homeselect lets

you apply for a home of your choice instead of having to wait for an offer that somebody else thinks is suitable.

Application forms can be downloaded from [www.homeselect.org.uk](http://www.homeselect.org.uk) or [www.waveney.gov.uk/Housing/Housing+Advice+and+Options/cb\\_lettings.htm](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/Housing/Housing+Advice+and+Options/cb_lettings.htm) or telephone **HOMeselect** on **(01493) 846 140**.

You can also pick up a form at the Navigator in Lowestoft Library or any of the Council's main reception areas.

If your application is selected a housing officer will visit you to check the details before making an offer.



# Building Better

In April 2006 a major restructure saw three individual service areas merge with one aim in mind - providing Waveney's Council tenants with the best service possible.

Bringing Building Maintenance, the PVCu team, and Housing Maintenance together as one team and re-evaluating their priorities meant that they could focus on the needs of Waveney's tenants.

Prior to the merger the teams had different objectives. Those that focused on the Council's housing tenants were concerned with providing good quality, value for money services. By contrast, the contracting team had various customers, from housing associations to private clients whilst maintaining corporate buildings and the Council's housing stock. They were also more commercially minded and financially driven.

As a result of the merger, the contracting side withdrew services to private and external customers and focused more clearly on the housing stock.

Pooling the team's Support Services has provided a clear and visible benefit to tenants, with increased capacity to handle telephone calls and greater cover for essential tasks.

The team wanted to determine tenants' levels of satisfaction with the service, so when work is scheduled on behalf of a tenant, a satisfaction questionnaire is sent out. Tenants are also asked what they feel could be improved and the responses are used to shape future service delivery.

Satisfaction levels have now been monitored for more than a year and the results are really positive. The team get a great boost from hearing first hand that their hard work is appreciated.

## • WAVENEY •

Overall results since November 2006:

- 90% pleased with how their repair request was handled
- 97% satisfied with the conduct of the contractor
- 96% happy with the conduct of the supervisor (if they met them)

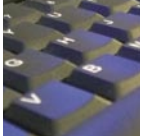
- 98% said the initial call was made within the priority stated or on the pre arranged date
- 93% were pleased with the repair and that it was right first time.
- 78% were satisfied with the overall service they received, 19% were very satisfied and only 3% not satisfied

Visit [www.waveney.gov.uk/Housing/Repairs+Maintenance+and+Improvements](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/Housing/Repairs+Maintenance+and+Improvements) for further details or call the dedicated hotline on **01502 523 593**. Alternatively, you can email [repairs@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:repairs@waveney.gov.uk).





# Online Benefits



Waveney District Council's Revenues and Benefits Service

is going online, giving customers the ability to view current information and details via the website.

Those who pay Council Tax, claim Housing or Council Tax Benefit or pay Business Rates can use it, as well as those who receive Housing Benefit entitlement payments on behalf of a tenant.

You must register to use the service. On receipt of your form you will be issued with your user-ID and password.

You can visit [www.waveney.gov.uk/openaccess](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/openaccess) and fill out an online form. Alternatively, please email [OnlineRevs&Bens@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:OnlineRevs&Bens@waveney.gov.uk). You will receive an email in response, with a simple request form attached to complete and return.



## Fair Pay

From 7 April 2008, there will be changes to the way in which the Council pays and administers Housing Benefits for tenants who rent private accommodation.

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) scheme is the cornerstone of the Government's Housing Benefit reform programme. It aims to simplify Housing Benefit and ensure it supports the wider objectives for welfare reform.

The fundamental aims are to promote:

**Fairness:**

LHA bases the maximum amount paid to tenants on the size, composition and location of the household.

**Choice:**

Tenants can decide how they spend their income - renting a larger property, or spending less on housing and increasing their available income.

**Transparency:**

The current link between Housing Benefit and individual rents is complex and the level of state support available is not clear. A transparent set of allowance rates helps tenants (and landlords) know what financial help is available. Tenants can compare the support available in different areas and for different property sizes.

**Personal responsibility:**

Empowering people to budget for and pay their rent themselves helps develop the skills they will need as they move back into work. Where possible, LHA should be paid to tenants like other benefits.

**Financial inclusion:**

Ideally housing payments go into a bank account and a standing order is set up to pay the landlord. This is a safe and secure method of payment and provides certainty for landlords.

**Improved administration and reduced barriers to work:**

LHA provides working age tenants with greater certainty about the help available in and out of work. A simpler system speeds up payment administration, giving tenants more confidence when starting a job that any in-work benefit will be paid quickly.

• WAVENEY •

To find out more, visit [www.waveney.gov.uk/Benefits](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/Benefits) where the Local Housing Allowance page contains full information for landlords and tenants. Alternatively, you can visit the Revenues & Benefits Department, at Compass Street Annex, Lowestoft NR32 1HS email [benefits@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@waveney.gov.uk) or telephone **01502 523 535**.

**CUSTOMERS FIRST**

Placing customers at the heart of everything we do

# Take part in our survey and you could win £50!

WDC is actively working towards improving the service that you, as a customer, receive from us. It will assist this work greatly if you would answer the following questions about your experiences in contacting the council. Please provide a response for any of the following methods that you have used to contact us.

Individual responses to the survey will remain confidential. However, all named entries will be entered in to a prize draw with £50 given to one participant, drawn at random.

There are different ways in which you can complete this survey. Please cut out or photocopy this page, complete the survey and send it to the following address:

**CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY  
WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
TOWN HALL  
LOWESTOFT  
NR 32 1HS**

You can also hand it in, in person to this address - or any other Waveney District Council office. Alternatively, you can complete the survey online by going to the following web address: [www.waveney.gov.uk/customersurvey](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/customersurvey).

The format is exactly the same - just click on the answers you want to give. You can also call us on **01502 562 111** and provide your answers over the phone. And finally, the closing date for entries is May 1 2008. We look forward to hearing from you!

Where required please place a cross against the most appropriate number. Additional comments are also welcome in the box provided.

### Telephone Contact

**1** How easy was it to find the right telephone number to use?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being difficult and 5 being easy

1  2  3  4  5

**2** How do you rate the speed at which your telephone call was answered?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

**3** How do you rate the way in which your telephone call was dealt with?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

### Visiting a council office

**4** How easy do you find it to visit the relevant council office?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being difficult and 5 being easy

1  2  3  4  5

**5** How do you rate the speed in which you were attended to?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

**6** How do you rate the way in which your enquiry was handled?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

### Using the website

**7** How easy is it to find the information you need on the website?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being difficult and 5 being easy

1  2  3  4  5

**8** How do you rate the length of time it takes to find the information?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

**9** How do you rate the quality of information on the web site?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

### Writing to the council (letter or email)

**10** How easy do you find it to locate the contact details you need?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being difficult and 5 being easy

1  2  3  4  5

**11** How do you rate the speed in which your letter or email was dealt with?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

**12** How do you rate the quality of response you received?

Rate 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

1  2  3  4  5

Please feel free to add any comments or suggestions.

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Your name/address/contact telephone number (all optional)

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# Customer Service Standards

## CUSTOMERS FIRST

Placing customers at the heart of everything we do

The Council's Corporate Customer Service Standards have been amended, reflecting its continued commitment to its customers.

The standards detail the minimum response required for enquiries to the Council and reflect the creation of a 'customers first' culture.

The Council made a promise to improve customer access to information and services and that this would be delivered to the highest possible standard. Revising the standards and reminding everybody at the Council of why they come to work will help set the foundation for a customer first culture. Under the banner 'Customer First - placing customers at the heart of everything we do,' the aim is to refresh and reinforce the standard

of customer service expected from every member of the authority.

Cllr Simon Tobin, Portfolio Holder for Customer Services, ICT and Communications said: "Having standards in place means we can let customers know what to expect from us at all times, whoever they contact at the Council. Defining the minimum expected means we can set targets and actively manage how well we are

doing by measuring and reviewing our performance.

"Putting our 'customers first' ensures that they feel informed, supported and respected and that they receive the right answer, either straightaway or as soon as possible. Our services will appear joined up, clear and user friendly and customers will be able to choose how they contact us. Whatever method they select, it should not affect the standard of service they receive.

### • WAVENEY •

"In short, we need to ensure that we give all our customers the same service and response that we would expect to receive ourselves."

Posters of the standards will be visible at all customer access points. They are also available to view on our website at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk)

# Customer Service Call Centre

Waveney District Council officially launched a brand new Customer Service call centre in December, handling all general telephone enquiries, providing prompt information and resolving queries efficiently, or re-directing callers as appropriate.

Leader of the Council, Mark Bee said: "Customer service is at the heart of everything we do. Providing a swift, efficient response is a top priority. This is the latest stage of our customer service improvement programme. The new call

centre will be many people's first point of contact and so it must offer a first class, highly professional service. We are moving forward with our vision of providing a consistent service to customers, wherever they are in Waveney."

All callers to the Council's general enquiries line, **01502 562 111**, will be handled by the call centre. Individual team and service 'direct dial' numbers will not be affected, although training of call centre staff will be extended throughout the year to provide them with the capacity to handle a wider range of calls to the Council.

The Navigator Centre at Lowestoft Library, Clapham Road South, will continue to offer its excellent face-to-face service and the team is just waiting for you to drop in. This one-stop shop for all the services offered by Waveney District Council and Suffolk County Council is one of the best places to begin any line of enquiry and receive support.

A new Customer Service Centre has been opened in Southwold, on the site of the Council's Tourist Information facility. It still offers tourist information, but it is now revamped and ready to provide customers with a whole lot more. The centre is situated at 69 High Street, Southwold and customers can also call **01502 724 729** or email [info@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:info@waveney.gov.uk). Opening times vary according to season, but the centre is open every day except Sunday.



## Smoke Free

England became Smoke Free on July 1, 2007 and nine months on, the change has been a smooth one thanks to a lot of preparation, hard work on the ground and the positive response of businesses across the district.

Waveney's Smoke Free Officer, Simon Hughes, ably supported by officers in the Food, Safety & Licensing Team and evening shifts from Environmental Health's Out of Hours Team has meant an unprecedented level of compliance has been achieved. All businesses were sent information and many were provided with free signage.

Councillor Ken Sale, Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment said: "In the last three months, less than 1% of businesses investigated were permitting smoking and only 12% had issues with signage. So it's a pat on the back to Simon and his colleagues in Environmental Health and to Waveney's businesses for being positive, constructive and working with us to ensure that they complied with the new law."

For several months, the Council has offered informal, friendly advice and help. But 2008 heralds a tougher approach, were persistent offenders will be targeted with Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecutions.

If anybody is still unclear on any area of the law, they can get further advice from Environmental Services by telephoning **01502 523 115**.



# Pest Control

From April, Waveney will no longer directly provide a pest control service, but a special deal for householders has been negotiated with a Suffolk-based professional pest control company to provide treatments for an extended range of pests.

Callers to the Council will be given the choice of making their own arrangements with their personal choice of pest controller or they can be referred to the Council's 'preferred provider.'

This preferred provider will be able to meet the same response times as the Council service and there will be a £20 subsidy against rat treatments on domestic premises where the householder is in receipt of certain income or disability related benefits.

Councillor Ken Sale, Portfolio Holder for Built Environment said: "Although it has been necessary to introduce a

charge for rats on domestic premises, all bar one of the preferred provider's other charges are below the current rates levied by our in-house service. Following considerable debate, councillors were satisfied that best value could be provided by moving to a preferred provider arrangement, increasing choice whilst maintaining a professional and timely response."

Extensive research was undertaken into the implications of ceasing to directly provide a service. This included discussions with a number of local authorities from across the country that followed this route. In each case there was no reported increase in rats nor was there an increase in the risk to public health.

### • WAVENEY •

The Council will also continue to enforce the aspects of 'Prevention of Damage by Pests Act' and will get tough on environmental crimes such as littering, which can attract pests to public areas. For more details about the new arrangements, visit the Environment pages of the Council's website at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk) or telephone **01502 562 111**.

## Noise Patrol

The problem of noise pollution is especially severe in the summer, when opening the windows suddenly makes you more aware of the noises around you. Last summer the

Environmental Protection team at the Council dealt with the usual increase in complaints of noise nuisance.

This is your annual reminder that Waveney's evening hotline will be available at weekends during the summer. Residents calling to report incidents of noise nuisance out of hours will have the details taken and passed on to the Duty Officer on call.

**Weekend evening hotline:**  
**01502 515 435.**

**Operating May to September:**  
**7pm to 1am on Fridays & Saturdays**  
**7pm to midnight on Sundays and Bank Holidays.**

Noise complaints can also be reported during the normal working day by phoning **01502 523 117**. The Council takes noise pollution very seriously and it will assist affected residents, even if it is outside normal office hours.



# Recycling Result

Waveney's residents are throwing themselves in to recycling and as a result, the Council is delighted to see its household recycling performance improve for the fourth consecutive year.

Following the release of statistics by DEFRA for 2006-07, Waveney is ranked 12th nationwide, out of 393 English local authorities, (11th out of all district and borough councils). In only its fourth year of recycling, Waveney retains its place amongst the elite, increasing its recycling rate to 48.4% of all household

waste, up from 46.6% in 2005-06.

Cllr Ken Sale, Waveney's Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment is delighted that Waveney residents are giving their full support and hopes for even better news next year. He said: "The Council continues to set the very highest standards for its recycling service and the people of Waveney continue to respond. They understand the importance of recycling, its benefit to the environment and the need to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

## • WAVENEY •

"Our recycling team also deserves credit for educating and informing residents both at home and in schools. But they

won't stop here. This year's league table indicates that there is everything to play for, with tiny fractions separating councils from the very top down.

"We remain the second best recycling authority in Suffolk and in the top four for the whole Eastern region. But with the roll-out of a brand new food waste collection service and the continued green waste service over Christmas, we hope for even better results for 2007-08 and a genuine assault on the national top spot."

# Green Bungay



By reducing emissions of carbon dioxide we can reduce the rate of rise in temperature and so lessen the rate and impacts of climate change. We can therefore slow the rate of warming by changing our behaviour.

It was against this backdrop that Waveney District Council was pleased to lend its support to the Climate Change Conference and Exhibition held at the Emanuel Church in Bungay.

Organised by the Church, the event attracted a large audience who listened to a series of presentations. Key speakers brought the message closer to home, talking on the scientific knowledge available, the likely impact of climate change on the Waveney Valley and what could be done about it.

## • BUNGAY •

A debate entitled 'Climate Change - What's Our Future?' boasted climate change experts from the Met Office, University of East Anglia and Natural England and there was the opportunity to visit an exhibition by a number of agencies, schools and environmental organisations,

including Waveney District Council.

For more information on what you can do to combat climate change, visit the CRed Suffolk web site at [www.cred-uk.org/suffolk](http://www.cred-uk.org/suffolk).



# Canine Care

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 changed the way stray dogs will be handled from April 2008. The police no longer have to accept strays brought to the station as the Council now takes sole responsibility.

Andrew Reynolds, Principal Environmental Health Officer explains: "The number of strays we'll have to deal with will significantly increase. We had to review the potential cost and a decision was taken to revise the fees for owners that allow their dogs to stray.

The fixed element of the charge is now £45. Plus, the owner of a dog that is impounded must pay kennel and any vet fees before they can reclaim their dog."

When strays are reported, officers will be recording all the details so they can reunite dogs and owners quickly and also spot those who continually allow their dogs to stray. The Council has adopted a policy that enables those suffering financial hardship to pay a reduced fee to reclaim their dog the first time it is caught as a stray. On subsequent occasions, they will have to pay the full amount.

If you want to be reunited with a lost dog quickly, please make sure it is wearing a collar and tag as required by law.



# REVEL IN IT!

Historic happenings - artistic adventures - loveable language -  
flabbergasting fantasies - creative collaborations - blissful brews - cool creatives -  
melodic merrymaking - sporting sensations - visual ventures - vocal versification -  
fascinating finds - fertile feats - street scenes - dramatic deeds - luscious landscapes -  
earnest endeavours - loud laughs - fantastic foods - singing sessions - enthralling  
eccentricities - meditative moments - dynamic dance - likeable learning - stupendous  
superlatives - outdoor observations - traditional treats - cracking collections -  
wondrous walks - Suffolk style - passionate people - antique artefacts - gallery gazing  
- musical magnificence - Waveney ways - celebratory cavortings - real revelry.....

**Spring sensations – Waveney wide**

## the Waveney REVELS

**35 days** April 1 – May 5 2008  
a celebration of Waveney's amazing arts and heritage

theatre - museums - walks - talks - comedy - music - dance - history - bikes -  
boats - concerts - film - galleries - clubs - pubs - landscapes - star names -  
new ventures - world premiere - old favourites

Waveney-wide: Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth,  
Lowestoft, Southwold and beyond

See ever growing programme of events:  
[www.waveney.gov.uk/REVELS](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/REVELS)

...plus all local press, venues,  
Tourist Information Centres  
and BBC Radio Suffolk

**Take the Revels challenge:  
Go somewhere different...  
Do something different...  
and then write and tell us about it!**

[arts&heritage@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:arts&heritage@waveney.gov.uk)  
Or write to us at: Waveney District Council, Town Hall, NR32 1HS

A WDC Arts & Heritage Service Initiative



**35  
dazzling days!**

**April 1  
- May 5  
2008**