

Annual Report.

We would once again like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you, our communities and all those that have helped during what has really been an unprecedented and unusual year, it has been very hard on most people, but we have worked and pulled together throughout the year finding different ways of working, doing everyday activities and supporting each other. This work continues and we are hopefully on the right track to ease into a bit of normality

Enabling Communities Grants

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, each district councillor allocated £1,000 or £2,000 from their 2020/21 Enabling Communities Budget (ECB) budget towards a new Covid-19 hardship fund. A further £45k was subsequently added to the Covid-19 Hardship Funding from councillors ECB.

We **donated £2000.00** each from our pot this year towards supporting Covid-19 leaving us with £5500.00 each.

Council tax freeze to further support residents

In response to the challenges faced by local communities during the pandemic, East Suffolk Council has frozen its element of council tax for the coming year.

The pandemic has seen many residents with reduced income and many more with serious concerns about maintaining their financial security. Whilst only a small percentage of each household's council tax bill goes to East Suffolk Council, it is our hope that freezing our element of this year's bill will provide further support for those in need.

Wildlife to benefit from more wild spaces

More conservation areas are being created to benefit wildlife as part of East Suffolk Council's commitment to increase biodiversity areas.

Last year, 40 wild spaces were created across East Suffolk as part of the Council's 'Pardon the weeds, we're feeding the bees' campaign, where grass was left to grow longer and wildflowers planted to help wildlife thrive. These spaces were cut back for winter and the signs removed but will be returning over the next couple of weeks.

This year, a further 60 wild spaces have been identified, meaning there will now be 100 wild spaces across East Suffolk where grass and wildflowers will be left to grow and the areas will not be cut until the end of the season.

These areas, which are large enough to provide an environmental benefit and do not present any safety issues for local communities, will be marked with our 'Pardon the weeds, we're feeding the bees' signs to make residents and visitors aware.

Suffolk partners with environmental charity in new campaign to stop people trying to recycle disposable nappies

National survey reveals that more than one million UK nappy users are putting them in their recycling bin.

The Suffolk Waste Partnership has joined forces with environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy and other local authorities across the country to launch a new campaign aimed at stopping the millions of disposable nappies that are contaminating recycling. The campaign comes after a new survey revealed that seven per cent of nappy users – parents, grandparents and carers – wrongly put their disposable nappies in with their recycling, which equates to more than *one million people.

Locally, around 150 tonnes of nappies end up in Suffolk recycling bins each year. This equates to approximately 3000 nappies needing to be removed from the recycling every day. This truly unpleasant job needs to be done by hand by staff at Suffolk's Material Recycling Facility (MRF) in Gt Blakenham. So, by keeping nappies out of our recycling bins, you are not only helping to get our recycling right but protecting staff at the MRF.

The national survey, carried out by YouGov, also revealed that younger people, aged 18-24 were more likely to put them in their recycling bin (15%) and more than one in ten Londoners who used disposable nappies (11%) tried to recycle them.

Now, the Suffolk Waste Partnership is trying to reach nappy users with a new campaign that has been tested with them and offers a clear message that disposable nappies should never go in their recycling. The campaign is fronted by 'Ted' and will be appearing on billboards around the country and on social media to drive the message home. In Suffolk, additional information will be shared on the Suffolk Waste Partnership's website, social media channels and newsletters.

Progress shown on delivering Local Plans

Data showing the progress on the implementation of the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans has now been published.

Every year, East Suffolk Council produces a report to show the progress on producing Local Plans and the delivery of policies and proposals. The Authority Monitoring Report 2019/20 is now available and contains a range of monitoring data covering housing, economy, retail and town centres, the historic and natural environments and many more topics. More info on the website.

Helping East Suffolk businesses thrive online

Small businesses in East Suffolk are invited to sign up to free support to help their businesses thrive online using digital skills.

The Digital Advice Service, launched by East Suffolk Council in November 2020, offers free support to small businesses in East Suffolk – especially those in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors, who may need help with creating or improving their website, online shop or social media presence. The service offers extensive digital business support, a personalised session with a dedicated business growth coach, access to workshops from local experts and industry experts and group coaching sessions, as well as signposting to other forms of support.

Once enrolled, businesses are also eligible to apply for an East Suffolk Digital Grant of up to £1,000 to help them implement new digital changes, such as improving a website, installing new online systems or attending further training.

Celebrating East Suffolk's best building design

The winners of an annual awards programme which celebrates the best building design and conservation projects in East Suffolk have been announced.

East Suffolk Council's 'Quality of Place Awards' recognise the efforts of people across the district to enhance the quality of the environment, by creating high-quality designs in both the built and natural environment and helping to conserve historic buildings.

Building Conservation Award, Highly Commended - Aldeburgh Moot Hall Regeneration Project.

An extra £3m for warmer, greener Suffolk homes

More Suffolk residents are set to benefit from Government Green Homes Grants thanks to a further successful bid for £3m funding by a Suffolk consortium of local authorities, adding to a previous award of £1m secured last year.

The funding, provided by the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, will provide energy efficiency measures for owner occupiers of properties with poor energy performance ratings. Partner local authorities are already working on delivering five projects and have a completion deadline of September for the five new schemes. These are external wall insulation of 100 park homes in West Suffolk, 150 park homes in East Suffolk, and 70 Flagship Group properties, insulation and air source heat pumps on 100 homes in Babergh and Mid Suffolk, and internal wall insulation for 10 properties through Leiston Net Zero/EDF.

Further funding secured to help rough sleepers

East Suffolk Council has secured nearly half a million to help support rough sleepers in the district. In September 2020, East Suffolk Council received £93,312 as part of the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) to provide accommodation and support to rough sleepers during the pandemic.

Following a successful bid, the Council has secured an additional £389,482 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in the next stage of the NSAP to provide additional support to rough sleepers in East Suffolk and to deliver units of longer-term move-on accommodation.

East Suffolk households asked to follow bin rules

Households in East Suffolk are being reminded to follow bin guidelines as more household waste is created during national Covid-19 restrictions. To help ensure an efficient refuse service, East Suffolk Council is asking that households follow a few simple guidelines as set out below:

- Put bins out by 6am latest on collection day
- Recycle where possible through the blue bin
- Present bin at the boundary of your property where your access meets the public highway or other agreed collection point
- Don't force too much waste into a bin as it can stick inside, meaning it won't come out when emptied

- Ensure bins do not contain any incorrect items, as it may not be emptied
- Ensure the lid on bins are closed for collections, otherwise we won't be able to empty it
- Take bins in as soon as possible after collection as they can cause a serious obstructions and block access, particularly when left on public pavements and access ways

[See more information](#) on what items goes into what bin, to check your bin collection day and to report a missed bin collection. <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/waste/waste-collection-and-disposal/refuse-collection/>

Council aims to help vulnerable people stay active EAST Bags

Hundreds of vulnerable people in East Suffolk are set to benefit from EAST bags which will help them stay active during winter months. East Suffolk Council has been putting together 2,000 EAST bags, which will be delivered over the coming weeks to vulnerable older residents who have been identified as being at risk of loneliness and/or social isolation.

The EAST bag (Everyone Active, Supported Together) is a reusable jute bag which has been funded by the East Suffolk Community Partnership Board and Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group. Thank you to everyone that donated, packed and delivered the bags.

Council continues to fight impact of climate change

East Suffolk Council continues to tackle the impact of climate change as it works towards becoming carbon neutral. Since its creation in April 2019, East Suffolk Council has had an ambitious environmental vision to build the right environment for East Suffolk and it's committed to be carbon neutral by 2030.

To support this vision, the Council voted unanimously to declare a climate emergency in June 2019 in a bid to reduce its own carbon emissions and to encourage local communities to get involved in fighting climate change. Since then, the Council has taken a number of actions to help it achieve its ambitions plans and deliver its environmental vision to residents and stakeholders. As a direct result of the declaration, a cross-party [Environment Task Group](#) was established to ensure the Council's policies meet its environmental vision and identify areas for improvement through the development of a Climate Action Plan.

Council passes on Government grants to Towns and Parishes

East Suffolk Council has agreed to a new scheme which supports Towns and Parishes when setting budgets next year. Nationally, the Government is providing £670m in grants to support councils in respect of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on council tax income. East Suffolk Council will receive £370,000 of this grant, which includes an element relating to the effect on town and parish councils, estimated to be around £110,000.

East Suffolk Council agreed to a scheme that directly passes on the £110,000 to town and parish councils with allocations based on reductions in income from council tax to ensure that support is directed at the Towns and Parishes mostly affected.

Have your say on Council's budget priorities – We asked for your views.

Residents and businesses were invited to have their say on East Suffolk Council's spending priorities before budget was set.

East Suffolk Council launched a consultation to enable local people and businesses to have their say on what they would like the Council's 2021/22 budget to focus on to ensure it continues to deliver vital services and support to communities and businesses.

East Suffolk does its bit for National Tree Week – keep planting

East Suffolk councillors 'dug in' to help support National Tree Week, the UK's largest annual tree celebration.

As part of East Suffolk Council's commitment to the environment, councillors supported National Tree Week, which marks the start of the winter tree planting season, by digging in and planting new trees.

Have your say on new planning document, we asked for your views.

East Suffolk residents were invited to have their say on new planning document which seeks to protect and enhance the district's historic environment. East Suffolk Council sought the public's view on a new Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) with an eight-week consultation.

East Suffolk has an historic environment which is widely recognised as being of very high quality and importance, with approximate 4,000 listed buildings and 52 conservation areas. Its local character and distinctiveness are derived from the diversity of architecture, landscape and coastal settings, which have given rise to an architectural typology of farmhouses, picturesque cottages and churches as well as resort tourism, military research and defence, fishing and agri-industry, park and garden structures, energy and landed estates.

Free was parking made available

To coincide with the easing of national coronavirus restrictions which will enable a wide range of businesses to reopen, free 30-minute parking was made available in 48 of East Suffolk Council's car parks.. East Suffolk Council agreed to extend its existing free parking scheme to an additional 13 car parks in response to concerns from local businesses about the impact of Covid-19. These changes were introduced on Friday 4 December, meaning that the Council's 30-minute free parking tariff will be available in 48 different car parks across the district.

Thank you once again for those that did take part, advertised and contributed towards the Car Park consultation.

Simplified parking tariffs to be rolled out

Following a delay caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, East Suffolk Council rolled out new parking tariffs across the district - including a simplified pricing structure and free half hour parking across a number of sites. Reducing over 50 different price points to just three or four main ticket types across the district, the new price structure will see prices reduced or frozen in over 70% of cases. Additionally, the council has introduced 30 minutes free parking in a number of car parks to support people who have told us that they make regular short visits. This will also support local businesses who will benefit from drivers making quick turnarounds in our car parks.

RingGo Available in all East Suffolk's car parks, RingGo is a quick and easy to use mobile phone service which lets people pay for their parking with a credit or debit card, via an app, rather than using cash at the machine. This means that drivers no longer need to queue at the machine or handle cash to pay for their parking. Whilst there used to be a convenience fee of 20p to use the app, East Suffolk Council covers this cost, so drivers do not get charged extra for using this payment option. There is however a small extra charge if drivers choose to opt in to receive SMS reminders, of when your time is running out.

To register with RingGo and go contactless, go to <https://ringgo.co.uk/>.

Parking management moved from the police to East Suffolk Council in April 2020, to improve parking locally and tackle nuisance and unlawful parking, enabling the Council to address the parking problems that are affecting communities the most.

People urged to stay away from cliffs – please keep safe at all times

Residents and visitors are being urged to take care when visiting the East Suffolk coast after a child was seen playing at the base of cliffs. Earlier this year, a campaign was launched by Coastal Partnership East in conjunction with HM Coastguard to remind people to stay safe on the coast, especially when walking near cliffs.

Green tips to reduce your energy usage and bills!

New nationwide restrictions mean that more of us are working and worked from home and thereby using more energy – from running lights and laptops to boiling the kettle more often. With more people working from home due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, East Suffolk Council encourages residents to find out more about how they can reduce their energy use to save money on their bills and help protect the environment.

There are many simple steps you can take now to start reducing your energy usage, including:

- Turn off the heating in rooms you don't use and avoid having it on all day. Try turning the thermostat down degree by degree to find a comfortable temperature
- Unplug all chargers and turn off tablets, laptops and consoles when not in use
- Avoid turning on lights during the day unless you need them and make sure everyone turns off every light when leaving a room
- When making hot drinks, only boil the amount of water you need for the number of drinks you're making at the time
- Wash laundry at 30 degrees unless it's really dirty
- And remember, you need to 'switch off' too and plan regular breaks during the day when working from home - why not enjoy a walk in your local park or in the countryside?

New eBook celebrates East Suffolk's volunteers

Hundreds of volunteers stepped up and dedicated their time to help in their local communities in East Suffolk during the pandemic – it is our turn to say thank you! East

Suffolk Council created a new eBook to celebrate the people, organisations and businesses who have given up their time, knowledge and skills to help make a difference in their communities since the start of the Covid-19 outbreak. The eBook tells the stories of some of our volunteers and showcases the important work they have carried out – and continue to carry out – to support the most vulnerable in their communities.

Shared ownership scheme is district first

As part of a comprehensive development programme to deliver vital new housing, East Suffolk Council was delighted to introduce six new shared-ownership properties to its housing stock – the first of their kind in the district. The properties are located in Brampton with Stoven near Halesworth and provide an affordable ownership scheme, which combines purchasing a share in a home with a rental agreement for the remaining unowned share.

Residents encouraged to tackle air pollution at home

East Suffolk residents are being encouraged to take simple steps to protect their health, and the health of their families, from air pollution at home.

Clean Air Day is the UK's largest air pollution campaign and aims to tackle and raise awareness of air pollution. Due to coronavirus restrictions, Clean Air Day was held online and was and is a chance to find out more about air pollution, share information with friends and colleagues, and help make the air cleaner and healthier for everyone. Resources, including air pollution videos, checklists and a personal air pollution calculator, are available at www.cleanair.org.uk

New service for council tenants.

East Suffolk Council's housing tenants are able to manage their tenancy more easily using a new online service.

A new portal, called 'myHome East Suffolk' was launched and enables those living in council properties to manage payments, request repairs and make appointments quickly and easily. The portal is accessible at any time of day, every day of the year meaning that tenants can access the portal at a time most convenient for them, removing the need to contact the Council's Housing or Customer Services teams during office hours.

New 'Local Plan' approved

East Suffolk Council have adopted the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan - an ambitious strategy to guide and manage new development for the former Suffolk Coastal area in a sustainable and plan-led way.

It proposes to deliver at least 6,500 jobs and 9,756 new homes over the period to 2036, supported by the delivery of appropriate infrastructure whilst also setting out an approach to protect, maintain and enhance the high quality built, historic and natural environment; and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

East Suffolk Council elected a new Chairman

East Suffolk Council elected a new Chairman at virtual Annual Meeting, which was held on 23 September. Cllr Keith Robinson, who represents the Oulton Broad ward, will be Chairman for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year, taking on the post from Cllr Colin Hedgley.

Council charges forward with new electric vehicles

East Suffolk Council has introduced new electric vehicles to its fleet as part of its commitment to tackle climate change. East Suffolk Council is continuing to proactively take steps to reduce its carbon emissions by introducing six new electric vehicles to its fleet run by partners, East Suffolk Norse. The environment is a key principle of East Suffolk's Strategic Plan and, alongside its declaration of a climate emergency last year, the council is committed to environmental issues and fighting

East Suffolk towns to be digitally transformed (previously an SCDC initiative)

Twelve towns in East Suffolk will benefit from new technology including free WiFi and footfall tracking, to help high streets and town centres recover from the impact of Covid-19. Following a successful pilot in [Framlingham last year](#), East Suffolk's 'Smart Towns' Project will now be rolled out to 11 other market towns across the district. The project will provide free WiFi for visitors in the main shopping areas of each town, as well as providing footfall tracking technology to help town councils and business groups understand how and when residents and visitors use these areas. This data will enable them to improve services and offerings to attract more visitors, as well as gauging the success of events and specific promotions.

'Smart Towns' uses the same principles as 'Smart City' technology, where urban areas use electronic data to continuously monitor and improve services. However, 'Smart Towns' will instead use this technology to benefit rural town centres, high streets and communities.

Many local businesses have been adversely affected by Covid-19 and it is hoped the project will help ensure business sustainability. As well as free WiFi and footfall tracking, the 'Smart Towns' project will provide a 'digital springboard' for local businesses, enabling them to maximise the benefits of the digital economy. Businesses will be able to access digital diagnostics, workshops and coaching to help them get the most from new technology, such as improved websites and social media use, contactless payments, online booking systems, or attracting customers through digital vouchers, apps and loyalty schemes.

In addition to Framlingham, the scheme will now be introduced in Aldeburgh, Beccles, Bungay, Felixstowe, Halesworth, Leiston, Lowestoft, Saxmundham, Southwold, Wickham Market and Woodbridge.

Council trials new scheme to reconnect older residents Grandpads

East Suffolk Council started trialling a new scheme which helps reconnect older residents who are vulnerable due to social isolation.

The East Suffolk Grandpad Loan Scheme is aimed at tackling social isolation amongst mainly older residents who have little or no contact with loved ones or the outside world due to a lack of Wi-Fi, equipment and/or skills. Grandpads have been specifically designed around the need of older adults, and the large buttons and intuitive interface make it easy for older people to use the device to connect with loved ones and the outside world without the complicated features of other tablets.

We asked for your views - New scheme launched to support fishing industry during pandemic

An initiative providing practical support to the fishing industry across the country was launched a scheme specifically to help those in the East of England.

[Call4Fish is a nationwide initiative](#) designed to facilitate and enable practical support to the fishing industry during the Covid19 crisis and beyond. It helps reconnect customers with suppliers, helps rebuild the supply chain and protects jobs. It also ensures customers can safely purchase high-quality sustainable fish and shellfish caught by British boats in home waters. Local authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership are working in partnership with Call4Fish and have launched Call4Fish (East) to support the local fishing industry from Kings Lynn to Felixstowe.

Call4Fish (East) will provide a range of services and work alongside local organisations who understand the issues and have a direct stake in supporting their communities. This local knowledge and expertise will help to deliver a much more joined-up and coordinated approach that can help protect jobs and ensure fishermen can go to sea.

A new campaign was launched to support those with financial worries

East Suffolk Council and its three local Citizens Advice services launched a new campaign to remind residents with financial worries that free support and advice is available. To encourage people to talk about any money worries they have to avoid financial problems building up over time, East Suffolk Council and East Suffolk's Citizens Advice services (CAs) have joined forces and launched a new campaign, titled 'Money Matters – Managing Debt Together.'

The aim of the campaign is to direct people to the CAs, which provides free, independent, impartial, and confidential quality assured advice to those with money worries. The team can talk about any financial issues people may have – whether this is advice on debts, or if you're worried about going into debt in the current climate – and explain the options and solutions available to address the issue.

Conservation areas identified across East Suffolk As part of plans to increase biodiversity in East Suffolk, forty new conservation areas were created to benefit wildlife.

Non-essential grounds maintenance, including grass cutting, [was temporarily suspended in April](#) to ensure the safety of staff and the public. During that time, only grassed areas which presented a safety, visibility or access issue were cut. Some of the areas where grass was left to grow longer over the past two months have started to 're-wild', with anecdotal examples of increases in insect and pollinator levels, and an increase in the numbers of wildflowers.*updated and added March 2021

Helping young people take positive next steps

A new online service was launched in East Suffolk, helping young people to find employment. The East Suffolk Youth Employment Service (YES) has been designed to help people from any background who may be struggling to find or apply for jobs, courses and training. The service is aimed specifically at 16 to 24 year olds. Funded by East Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and the former East Suffolk Partnership, YES is delivered by Inspire Suffolk with the support of Access Community Trust.

The YES programme was originally designed to be provided through hubs in Lowestoft, Leiston, Saxmundham and Felixstowe however the Covid-19 restrictions have meant the service is now being provided online. To support this, a new website (www.yessuffolk.co.uk) has been launched. Young people can visit the website to view current job opportunities, find training programmes, and other support information and advice. Referrals can also be made by community groups. Young people will be allocated an employment coach to support them into appropriate work, education or training. Wellbeing services are also available, provided by Inspire Suffolk.

Over 5000 businesses in East Suffolk received vital funding

East Suffolk Council makes its 5000th business grant payment in May 2020 and it continues to step up its support during the pandemic. East Suffolk Council received applications from businesses eligible for the Government's business grants scheme. As part of this, the Council has contacted over 7000 businesses who they believe may be eligible for the Small Business Grant Fund of the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Fund and anyone who thinks they may qualify under the Government's criteria.