

My thanks to those that were accepted to attend a public meeting with our MP public and to those that managed to ask a question. We have been asked to support Therese Coffey MP with a Petition and updates can be found on her website, as and when. <https://www.theresecoffey.co.uk/> If possible, please share this link to the Petition:

<https://www.theresecoffey.co.uk/energy-petition-review-onshore-connections>

It was very disappointing that numbers were limited re such a small venue as many were left disappointed that they did not get a place.

There isn't much time left to submit your views for the two NG separate consultations, I understand they are keen to start their 'surveys' very soon. Like many of our community, I found the events to be extremely poor but well attended.

Many thanks to all that have contributed towards the Christmas celebrations, however large or small, the events are very much appreciated.

Below is an update re winter gritting, I am asking if you could help by spreading (excuse the pun) the below mentioned but understandably sometimes difficult to implement ***if we can't fit, we can't grit!***

Useful information and reminders:

I would be most grateful if you would share and out the below information on your websites, newsletters, and notice boards.

In the event of an emergency the below website will be updated, you can click on the links to report a highways issue, check for flooding alerts and power cuts etc:

<https://suffolkprepared.co.uk/>

This website then has links to:

Met Office Weather Warnings
Flood Warnings (sign up to receive)
Suffolk County Council
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service
Suffolk Police
Suffolk Trading Standards
Cadent Gas
National Highways
Network Rail
Environment Agency
Anglian Water
UK Power Networks

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you and the many others within our communities for everything they do, it's not been an easy few years and more challenges, in many forms face us as we go forward together into 2023.

Merry Christmas and my very best wishes for the New Year

TJ

Winter gritting



Despite experiencing what feels like the mildest winters we have had in very long time, our highways teams have been carefully planning our winter gritting operation for months to ensure we are prepared for whatever the weather throws our way.

On Sunday evening, 36 gritters including the public-named Father Gritmas, Gritty Gritty Bang Bang and Spread Sheeran went on their first run of the season, a county-wide treatment of priority 1 roads which took place as the road surface temperatures were forecast to drop below 0°C.

The gritting treatment of our roads in Suffolk is vital to ensure people can continue to travel and do so safely during the wintry weather. During the 2021/2022 winter season, Suffolk used around 9,388 tonnes of salt to treat a total distance of 129,367 miles – which equates to travelling the circumference of Earth over five times! Suffolk Highways currently has a stock of around 24,000 tonnes of salt across the county for the season ahead and is well prepared for any further drop in temperatures.

Our highway teams are responsible for gritting 36 Priority 1 (P1) routes, which amounts to around 1,259 miles, including all A and B roads, roads to fire stations, hospitals, main bus routes and rail stations. They also have 34 Priority 2 (P2) routes, which amounts to around 843 miles of the network, this includes other bus routes, roads leading to rural villages and access to schools. The P1 routes are completed when road surface temperatures are forecast to drop below 1°C and P2 routes are carried out when the forecast predicts there to be a longer period of hazardous conditions.

This entire operation is one which requires extremely careful pre-planning and running throughout, every single decision to grit or not is based upon forecasted road surface temperatures, whilst also considering the impact of other factors, such as wind and heavy rain.

But gritting the priority network isn't all that the teams do to prepare our county for wintry weather; Suffolk Highways has also refilled the 2,100 grit bins across the county at registered locations, such as the bottom of hills, or on junctions of minor roads. Grit bins are owned by parish and town councils and to ensure that the contents of grit bins are used to make roads safer, our communities are encouraged to monitor how and where the grit is used and if more is required to contact Suffolk Highways.

Suffolk's residents can also do their part to support us with our gritting efforts by parking considerately and leaving enough room so that our vehicles can grit the road – if we can't fit, we can't grit!

Anyone who would like to know when and where we are gritting over the coming months, all gritting activities will be posted to Suffolk Highways' Twitter and Facebook accounts – so I encourage you to give us a follow and keep abreast of all our teams movements this winter season.

To find out more about which roads are gritted, how we deal with the network in the event of snow, or grit bins, please visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/gritting.

Suffolk Highways' winter gritting efforts forms part of the county council's wider 'Winter Matters' campaign, to provide Suffolk's residents with tips and advice on how to help look after their money, health, wellbeing and safety during the colder months. More information can be found by visiting www.suffolk.gov.uk/wintermatters.

Other useful information and reminders:

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- Suffolk Trading Standards
- Cadent Gas
- National Highways
- Network Rail
- Environment Agency
- Anglian Water
- UK Power Networks

Celebrating Suffolk's environmental champions

Creating the Greenest County Awards 2023 launched

The Creating the Greenest County Awards return for a 12th time to celebrate the achievements of Suffolk's residents, businesses, schools, communities and organisations who are protecting our environment and reducing their carbon emissions.

Nominations are now open online and close on 1 February 2023, with an environmentally-friendly ceremony to be held in March.

As Suffolk continues to work together in pursuit of being net zero by 2030, the Awards recognise those who are connecting with people, sharing best practice and collaborating to help make Suffolk the greenest county.

To go alongside awards such as Greenest Business, Greenest School and Enhancing Biodiversity and Landscape, this year a new category has been introduced - The Greenest Tourism Award.

This Award recognises the good work being done across the county by the numerous organisations in this vital sector, from visitor attractions to accommodation providers.

Suffolk County Council organises the Awards, Councillor Richard Rout, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment, said:

“The Awards celebrate those doing amazing things to protect our environment in Suffolk. Following COP27, the challenge posed by climate change is in sharp focus but it’s also the financial climate that is a concern for us all.

“We must continue making significant changes to the way we live, by protecting our natural environment, reducing carbon emissions, making homes more efficient, and reducing our energy and water use. By doing this, we save money on our bills – it’s the right thing to do for our planet and for our pockets.

“Our Award winners will be inspiring people who are reducing their energy costs and reducing their impact on the environment. No individual can solve the challenge of climate change on their own, but together we can make a real difference and avert a crisis which poses the biggest risk to the least well-off, both here at home and across the world.

“If you, your community or business are working hard towards net zero, please put yourself forward for an Award. Or if you know someone who is making a real difference, nominate them for an Award, so Suffolk can celebrate them and inspire others to follow their lead.”

One of the most popular categories, the Green Hero, will be returning; turning the spotlight on those individuals who have taken it upon themselves to lead the way in working for the environment. It’s the only award for which both the nominees and the winners are chosen by the public.

Nominations can be submitted online at www.greensuffolk.org/awards

**Statement following Chancellor announcing a devolution deal for Suffolk
Councillor Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, said:**

“We welcome the Chancellor’s announcement that the Government has committed to agreeing a truly historic deal for Suffolk – the first county deal of its kind in the country. This deal will be a significant step on our county’s journey towards devolution and more control over our future.

“If agreed, this provisional deal would deliver decades of significant additional investment into local priorities that will improve the lives and outcomes of Suffolk’s residents; secure greater decision-making powers around transport, infrastructure and skills; and give us the powers we need to achieve our net zero ambitions and create the Greenest County.

“The powers and funding on offer have changed since we made our initial bid in August 2021. The Government is actively progressing only the most ambitious devolution deals but, in return, is seeking greater changes to the way local government is led. Therefore, in exchange for the greatest freedoms and funding, we are now minded to pursue a model whereby the Leader of Suffolk County Council is directly elected by the people of Suffolk. This proposed change would not add any new levels of bureaucracy nor create any new offices.

“In keeping with Suffolk’s collaborative way of working, we have developed this deal in partnership with our district and borough colleagues, the Police and Crime Commissioner and our MPs. It will now be taken forward to public consultation with Suffolk’s communities and businesses.”

Suffolk County Council launch All Age Carers’ Strategy

Suffolk County Council has launched its All-Age Carers’ Strategy at today’s Health and Wellbeing Board.

The strategy which has been developed with young carers and adult carers across Suffolk aims to support carers across Suffolk in their roles and will lead to the development of an action plan in the coming months.

This will help SCC to provide carers with the right kind of quality support at the right time, in the right place, and in the right way.

Many carers do not identify themselves as carers for approaching 2 years - they are reluctant to do so - therefore a key goal within this strategy is to reduce this timeframe and help them access the support they need. The five key priorities are;

1. Early identification of carers
2. Improved information and advice
3. Young carers to have the same priority as adult carers
4. Systems and services that work for and support all carers
5. Improved health and well-being for carer

An action plan will be developed in the coming months which will provide more detail how the priorities will be delivered and raise the profile of carers in Suffolk.

Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, said:

“The work of unpaid and family carers must be better understood and supported, and the new All Age Carers’ Strategy will certainly help to do that.

“Unpaid family carers play an essential role in our society. Their compassion, dedication, and selfless commitment to those they care for is both humbling and in many ways essential to the wider care market.”

Councillor James Reeder, Cabinet member for Children and Young People’s Services said:

“It is a source of great pride for me that for the first time Suffolk has an All Age Carers’ Strategy which includes the incredible contribution of young people and children who care regularly for family members.

"I have no doubt that this strategy will help to support young people in their caring roles. They will be seen as children first and carers second and I am hopeful that with early recognition of their caring roles through schools, and other institutions, they will be able to access the support they need to continue to care safely, whilst also reaching their full potential and aspirations."

In 2020, research from Carers UK indicated that there were 13.6 million unpaid carers in the UK, which is estimated to have saved the country in the region of £193 Billion during the COVID-19 pandemic alone. In the 2011 census, 17,194 carers in Suffolk said they provided 50+ hours of care per week.

Currently, about 1 in 5 people living in Suffolk are aged 65 or over. It is estimated that over the next 20 years, this is forecast to change, with 1 in 3 Suffolk residents being aged 65 or over, compared to 1 in 4 for England.

Projections also suggest that the number of people aged 65 and over who provide unpaid care in Suffolk will increase between 2019 and 2035, from 25,300 to 33,700 (an increase of 33%).

Katch all-electric taxi-bus pilot draws to a close

Katch, the pilot all-electric taxi-bus service run by Suffolk County Council, is to conclude at Christmas.

The demand-responsive service, which ran in east Suffolk, will formally cease operation on its scheduled end-date of December.

However, negotiations with other potential operators have begun to see if a version can continue in 2023.

Katch started running in May 2021 and was extended by six months to December 2022 to encourage passenger usage and for the council to be able to establish a truer picture of demand as bus services recovered following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.

It was funded largely by Suffolk County Council, but with support from East Suffolk Council and East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership.

It operated as an on-demand service, with users able to book via a mobile phone app or a phone-line.

Katch used two Renault ZE electric minibuses on a fixed-route link between Framlingham, Wickham Market and Wickham Market railway station (at Campsea Ashe).

The six-month extension saw the route expanded to Snape and Blaxhall.

Councillor Alexander Nicoll, Suffolk County Council Deputy Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy, said despite launching at the height of the pandemic, usage rose from 29 in the first week to an average of 100 journeys, peaking at 185 per week in June 2022.

Councillor Nicoll said:

“Unfortunately, the numbers have not risen to the point that the service can operate without financial support and the seed funding has now been exhausted,”

“Likewise, despite regular calls to the industry at large to provide buses or alternative services on Sundays and later in the evening, usage at those times simply did not materialise during the pilot, so regrettably the service must end.

“On behalf of Suffolk County Council, I would like to thank Cabs Smart, East Suffolk Council, The East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership, Greater Anglia Railways, Snape Maltings and Framlingham Town Council for their assistance with the pilot.”

Councillor Steve Gallant, the leader of East Suffolk Council, said:

“Through East Suffolk Council's Community Partnership programme we were delighted to provide funding for the Katch scheme.

“Community Partnerships were created to help address local issues, and rural public transport issues for isolated locations remains a priority topic which we will continue to seek a sustainable solution for.”

A full analysis of the pilot is due to take place in 2023, with lessons learned being used to help develop future rural transport across Suffolk.

Katch users will still be able to access journeys through the Connecting Communities Coastal service, operated in east Suffolk by Coastal Accessible Transport Services, and contactable via the **Suffolk On Board website**.

Suffolk County Council signs the Good Youth Employment Charter

Suffolk County Council has signed the Good Youth Employment Charter, a framework for employers committed to providing employment opportunities for young people.

Developed by the charity Youth Employment UK, the charter features five core principles:

- Creating Opportunity
- Recognising Talent
- Fair Employment
- Developing People
- Youth Voice.

By signing the charter, the council has become a Youth Friendly Employer, and indicated its commitment to recruiting and developing young people based on their ability, talent and potential, regardless of their background or experience.

It will incorporate existing work being completed in the council including its Young Adults Network and the Rising High in Suffolk programme, which aims to help young people start a career in the public sector through apprenticeships, internships and graduate placements.

At Suffolk County Council, we want to provide good quality opportunities for young people to gain skills and experiences, which is why we are committed to upholding the five principles of this charter. Young people have a vital role to play in the future

of our organisation and the wider local government community, but they are currently underrepresented in our workforce compared to Suffolk's population.

Careers in local government are diverse and offer a great opportunity to make a difference in your community. We'll be looking at how we attract and support young staff to develop successful and rewarding careers with the council.

The signing is the result of the work of the council's yearly cohort of interns. Together they developed a recruitment guide for how managers can shortlist CVs with less experience, proposed a peer-to-peer mentorship scheme, carried out a young staff survey and produced day-in-the-life videos to show what it's like to be a young person working at Suffolk County Council.

The Goal: let's unite to end violence against women and girls

Suffolk County Council is supporting the White Ribbon campaign. White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls, and this year's campaign, #TheGoal calls on people to make the White Ribbon Promise: never to use, excuse or remain silent about violence against women and girls.

This year, White Ribbon Day, fell on the same week as the start of the FIFA men's World Cup. There has never been a better time for us to come together and start playing as a team to end violence against women and girls.

We are sadly all too aware that domestic abuse can increase during major football tournaments. Research by the University of Lancaster suggests that nationally, violent domestic abuse incidents increase by 38% when England loses football matches. Rates are also 26% higher when the team wins or draws. During the last World Cup in 2018, the NSPCC saw a 33% increase in contacts.

The White Ribbon campaign highlights 11 traits men and boys can nurture to help create a world of equality and safety for women: Ally, caring, empathetic, courageous, gentle, resilient, reliable, hopeful, principled, reflective, supportive. All men can join the team to end violence against women and girls. Whether you're a football fan or not, we can work together to achieve gender equality.

Last Friday I, alongside colleagues from the County Council, Suffolk Police, District and Borough Councils, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Domestic Abuse services and organisations, signed the White Ribbon pledge, to say 'no' to violence against women and girls.

Wearing a White Ribbon is a powerful visual way to share this message and this can help to start important conversations with others. This is why I choose to wear mine.

There is lots of work happening locally to make Suffolk a safer place for women and girls. Earlier this year we updated Suffolk's Violence Against Women and Girls strategy, which was accompanied by an action plan as well as £357,000 funding for projects aiming to stop violence and support victims. We have now allocated almost £300,000 of this funding to six three-year projects. Further projects will be supported in round 2, successful projects will be announced early next year.

The winner of this year's award is Teri Cudby, who has been training Domestic Abuse Champions on behalf of Suffolk County Council since 2019.

Teri has now trained over 1050 champions across Suffolk and these champions are 'go to' people in organisations, businesses and communities who are trained to spot the signs of domestic abuse, give appropriate safety advice and signpost to support agencies following a disclosure of domestic abuse.

This training is free to anyone who lives or works in Suffolk. If you would like to book on to the training, or to find out more, please visit [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) and search 'Suffolk Domestic Abuse Champions Network' or email dachampions@suffolk.gov.uk

In June 2021 Suffolk Libraries launched themselves as "Safe Spaces" for victim-survivors of domestic abuse. The idea of Safe Spaces is to provide an accessible safe and discrete environment where anyone, whether they are experiencing domestic abuse themselves, or if they're worried about someone else, can speak to someone in the library in confidence and be referred to the organisations who can support them. A visit to the library may offer someone the chance to get away from their abuser and so provides an ideal opportunity to speak to someone in confidence.

Suffolk Libraries are one of a number of organisations who have signed up to the national UK SAYS NO MORE Safe Spaces initiative, visit [Safe Space Locations | UK says no more](#) for more information and to find out how your organisation can get involved.

Lastly, if you are experiencing abuse, or are worried about a relative, friend or colleague, please call the Anglia Care Trust 24 Hour helpline for support on 0800 9775690 or visit the [Suffolk Domestic Abuse Helpline](#).

White Ribbon began 16 days of action to highlight support available for women and girls, both nationally and locally. You can get involved by following Suffolk County Council on Facebook and Twitter and using the hashtag #TheGoalSuffolk.

Together, we can stop violence against women and girls.

Thousands more new trees for Suffolk

7,526 trees will be planted across the county this winter by Suffolk's councils.

Suffolk County Council successfully submitted a joint bid on behalf of itself, Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council and West Suffolk Council.

£138,219 will come into the county as one of 100 grants under the government's Local Authority Treescapes Fund, directly contributing to achieving the country's ambitious tree planting targets. The funding is for the planting of the trees and three years' maintenance.

The trees are to be planted in non-woodland areas, including those that have been neglected in the past, ecologically damaged or affected by tree diseases like ash dieback.

Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment, said:

"This is the second year that we have been successful with this funding, a true testament to how Suffolk is committed to working together for a net zero future and reversing the decline in our biodiversity.

“The county council has been instrumental in securing new trees for Suffolk, itself planting 200,000 trees and 20 kilometres of hedgerow over just the last couple of years, along with the creation of healing woods.

“Establishing thousands of new trees in Suffolk is a team effort, and I’d like to thank colleagues at our borough and district councils for their commitment to making this happen. Of course, trees must be planted in the right places, and we cannot just leave them. It’s thanks to the extraordinary work of volunteers such as the Suffolk Tree Warden Network, that will help to make these programs a success.”

More green spaces around Suffolk will support wildlife and offer the chance for people to get in touch with nature and support their health and wellbeing.

One of the projects will see the creation of a second ‘Miyawaki’ tiny forest in Sudbury, Suffolk, following Ipswich Borough Council using previous funds to create a number of these across the town last year.

Named after the renowned Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, this form of woodland management sees local species of trees densely planted in small urban plots of land. This enables them to create biodiversity-rich habitats quickly and absorb more carbon than a traditional forest.

All planting schemes will be delivered by borough and district councils and will continue to contribute to Suffolk’s commitment to support the Queen’s Green Canopy project. This announcement comes on the eve of National Tree Week (26 November to 4 December).

Partner comments

Councillor Jane Gould, Babergh District Council Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Transport, said:

“Increasing tree coverage in our district, with the right sort of trees in the right places, is one of the key elements of our Biodiversity Action Plan.

“The results of our recent tree canopy survey showed Sudbury as one of our key areas of focus. So, I’m delighted that £40k of this funding along with an additional £14k in council funding, will see us plant nearly 7,000 small trees to create a ‘Miyawaki forest’ in one of our open spaces near Essex Avenue in the town. It’s a great step in helping our wildlife, tackling climate change, and making Babergh greener for years to come.”

Councillor James Mallinder, East Suffolk Council Cabinet Member for the Environment, said:

“For good reason, trees are sometimes referred to as the lungs of the earth. By converting carbon dioxide into clean air, they are literally helping the planet breathe. So, it is vitally important that we not only protect and maintain our existing woodland areas but try to reinforce and enhance it where possible. We’re blessed in this part of the country with a rich and diverse landscape – and I’m delighted that the LATF has allowed us to add to that for the future.”

Councillor Philip Smart, Ipswich Borough Council Portfolio Holder for Environment & Climate Change, said:

“We are delighted to have secured funding to plant more trees in Ipswich to support carbon offset as we work towards Net Zero ambitions by 2030.”

Councillor Jo Rayner, West Suffolk Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Heritage and Community Hubs said:

"I welcome this replacement tree funding which we used last year to replant trees at George Lambton Playing Fields in Newmarket. One way our Environment and Climate Action Plan improves biodiversity is by putting the right tree in the right place. This year we're continuing to replant at Holywater Meadows in Bury St Edmunds. In replacing ash trees along the path and alders along the River Linnet, we'll be providing habitat and connectivity for wildlife, managing the flood plain, and enhancing a lovely open space for residents."

New scheme 'Multiply Suffolk' to offer adults a chance to improve their numeracy skills

A new initiative named Multiply Suffolk, which will offer adults an opportunity to improve their numeracy skills, has launched in Suffolk.

The scheme is for those who do not already have a GCSE grade C/4 or higher in Maths or equivalent.

Adults can sign up for free courses and activities including Money Management and Numeracy for Parents/Carers. Unaccredited, informal learning as well as Level 1 and Level 2 accredited learning is available to residents on either a part-time or intensive basis and are offered in flexible settings to fit around people's lives.

Multiply Suffolk has been created thanks to a £3.7m government investment from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund aimed at boosting opportunities for more people to progress and secure well-paid jobs. SCC's Multiply Suffolk Team will work with subcontractors Realise Futures and Menta to deliver the scheme.

Councillor Rachel Hood, Cabinet Member for Education, SEND and Skills said:

"This is an exciting new initiative that will help adult learners across the county. The scheme is aimed at improving numeracy skills, and it has been widely shown that people who improve their numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages and have better mental well-being.

"We are pleased to be delivering Multiply Suffolk alongside Realise Futures and MENTA and I hope that adults in Suffolk take full advantage of the scheme." Multiply Suffolk was officially launched during the adult learning engagement event at Trinity Park, Ipswich on 9 November 2022.

For more information and/or to sign up for the scheme visit: <https://learnsuffolk.org/multiply-coming-soon/>