

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – APRIL 2023



Cllr Stephen Burroughes - Framlingham Division

- **FEES WAIVED TO CELEBRATE HIS MAJESTY THE KING'S CORONATION**

To mark the celebration of His Majesty The King's Coronation, Suffolk County Council has waived fees associated with applications to close roads for street parties and other local authority led public events.

Charles III's coronation will take place at Westminster Abbey in London on Saturday 6 May, where the King will be crowned alongside Camilla, the Queen Consort. This is the first coronation of a monarch in the UK since the late Queen's ceremony which was staged on June 2, 1953.

Events will be taking place across the country, between 6 and 8 May 2023. This bank holiday gives communities and people throughout the UK the opportunity to come together and celebrate with their neighbours. Many of Suffolk's residents will also be giving up their time as volunteers to bring people together as part of The Big Help Out. For all events planned over the weekend, which is being referred to as The Coronation Big Lunch, Suffolk County Council will not be charging fees normally associated with road closures for events.

Similarly, to the late Queens Platinum Jubilee, if you are looking to organise a street party as a group of residents, or if you would like to apply as a local authority, for an event in a large public space, such as a park, you can view more information at www.suffolk.gov.uk/Kings-coronation

As part of the main criteria for a road to be closed, the road must be residential and not on A or B roads and/or those roads which have a bus route operating during the proposed event.

To be allocated Traffic Management to assist organisers/residents with an event, all applications must be received before 11pm on Sunday 2 April 2023. Traffic management will consist of 4 traffic cones, 1 road closure sign, which may be collected from a local highway depot. An online booking system will be shared with those successful applications.

If any applications are received after 11pm on Sunday 2nd April 2023, these may still be processed. However, Suffolk County Council cannot cover the costs of Traffic Management for the event, nor will Suffolk County Council be able to provide any form of Traffic Management equipment. This is due to possible supply chain constraints and other operational demands.

For full details, including street party event criteria, information on insurance and licences, please ensure you visit this link www.suffolk.gov.uk/Kings-coronation

- **STATE-OF-THE-ART EMERGENCY SERVICES HUB OPENS IN STOWMARKET**

A new police and fire station off Needham Road, Stowmarket, has now opened – providing the facilities needed to enable efficient, effective, and environmentally responsible emergency services for Suffolk. Local dignitaries, including Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the county's Chief Fire Officer, councillors from Suffolk County Council and Mid Suffolk District Council, and Stowmarket's Mayor, attended the official opening of the shared site on 3 March.

Collaborative working remains a priority for Suffolk's emergency services, who recognise that this provides excellent value for money and further benefits for the county's communities.

Stowmarket's new station, situated on the A1120 junction with the B1113 Needham Road, is the latest in a programme of joint blue light hubs across Suffolk. However, it is the first new build, as the other 12 combined fire and police facilities comprise of existing sites which have been extended or refurbished.

The building has a range of green credentials, including photovoltaic panels to convert the sun's rays into electricity, an air source heat pump system, 14 electric vehicle charging points, and insulation informed by thermal modelling to ensure this is of the highest standard and reflects the needs of the hub's users.

In addition, the station's location will enable easy access to the A14, the local road network, and in and around Stowmarket, one of Suffolk's largest market towns, helping to ensure a swift response to whatever emergencies may arise. Suffolk-based business Concertus designed the new station, which Morgan Sindall began constructing in July 2021. The project was made possible by funding of £1.24m from central government and a £431k contribution from Mid Suffolk District Council through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Space has been provided within the station to accommodate the Salvation Army charity, which continues to provide welfare support to response staff during major incidents. The hub may also be used in future by the East of England Ambulance Service as a drop-in facility for their crews, enabling truly joined-up working for Suffolk's three emergency services.

- **FIRST LOOK AT THE NEW CEREMONY ROOM IN SUDBURY**

Couples who opt for a register office ceremony in Sudbury are now tying the knot in a new ceremony room within Sudbury's Town Hall. All Register Office ceremonies taking place at Sudbury Town Hall will now take place in the Mayor's Parlour, previously The Assembly Rooms. Overlooking the market square, the Mayor's Parlour is a beautiful space for couples to get married or to form a Civil Partnership. The new room's ground floor location offers improved access for guests and the smaller space offers couples a much more bespoke and intimate experience than the larger Assembly Rooms. The Mayor's Parlour offers seating for 28 guests plus the couple and a photographer or videographer.

The first Wedding Ceremony in the Mayor's Parlour took place on Saturday 25 February. The Assembly Rooms will continue to be available for private hire from Sudbury Town Council and continue to be used for Town Council business.

Couples wishing to enquire about ceremony availability should contact Suffolk Registration Service on 0345 607 2080 or via www.suffolk.gov.uk.

- **SUFFOLK'S CREATING THE GREENEST COUNTY AWARDS: WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

The votes have been counted and judges have chosen the winners for Suffolk County Council's Creating The Greenest County 2023 Awards. Nine awards have been presented to schools, businesses, community groups and this year's Green Hero: Jason Alexander from Ipswich.

The awards were presented on 8th March at an event at The Hold in Ipswich, hosted by Mark Murphy from BBC Radio Suffolk, with guest speaker Christine Luxton, Chief Executive Officer at Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

The winners of the Creating The Greenest County 2023 Awards, were:

Green Hero: Jason Alexander - Rubbish Walks (Ipswich & across Suffolk)

Jason raises awareness about littering, recycling and waste in general across Suffolk and far beyond. In the last year or so, he has completed a 24 hour Litterthon, been involved with over 340 litter picks and beach cleans, filling 900 bags with Rubbish Walk volunteers. He has also partnered with Ipswich Borough Council, Ipswich Town FC and Suffolk Libraries.

Jason received over one-third of all 2,259 votes cast by members of the public.

Waste Reduction and Recycling Still: Good Food

Still Good Food rescues surplus food and redistribute it to the public through their shops in Bury St Edmunds and Great Barton.

Green Community: Bury Bike Train

The Bury Bike Train is a way for children to ride their own bikes to and from school in a group, supported by adult cyclists.

Green School (Secondary): Sybil Andrews Academy

Based in Bury St Edmunds, the school runs many environmental projects, including a Gardening Club, growing flowers for local residents, and organising trips with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Green School (Primary): Birchwood Primary School

Based in Martlesham, the school has held the Eco School's Green Flag for the eight years running, is a DEFRA egg production unit, has their own school of horticulture, Birchwood Bee hive and rare breeds flock.

Green Business: University of Suffolk

By 2030, the University will be recognised for the major contribution it makes to the health and wellbeing of the people in the region and acknowledged for lasting social and sustainable economic transformation.

Green Tourism: Ivy Grange Farm

Ivy Grange Farm Barn is a newly renovated 17th century grain store and milking parlour, set in the heart of the Suffolk countryside close to the fabulous beaches of Southwold and Walberswick. It offers a luxurious holiday experience, with a sprinkling of adventure all within a sustainable wrapper.

Biodiversity and Landscape: Long Melford Biodiversity Group

The group examines ways in which the village could be made more environmentally friendly, and how more land, both public and private, could be dedicated to nature. They also actively seek deliverable opportunities to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Green Small Business: Depden Care Farm

Depden Care Farm offers therapeutic placements to adults with learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries and those recovering their mental health.

To read more about the Awards, visit www.greensuffolk.org/awards

• COUNCIL'S CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE UPSKILLS AUTHORITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Suffolk County Council has held its inaugural conference as a Centre of Excellence, to support local authorities with Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). Last year, Suffolk County Council was recognised as a Centre of Excellence by the Government for its knowledge and expertise when engaging with NSIPs such as Sizewell C, the Gull Wing, National Grid upgrades and offshore wind farms.

Held at The Apex in Bury St Edmunds on 15 March 2023, over 100 representatives from 46 local authorities and organisations across the country heard from expert speakers including the Government's Department for

Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. There was a focus on how to get the best out of these large projects for local communities, such as increasing skills, jobs and funding. The council's Centre of Excellence was established thanks to the Government's Innovation and Capacity Fund providing £54,000. As a result, it has created a collaborative network across local authorities across the East, to share good practice and knowledge.

A programme of monthly seminars has culminated with this conference, increasing the skills and expertise of local authority officers and politicians across the eastern region, to deal with these complicated projects.

- **CHILDREN'S EXPERT BROUGHT IN TO STRENGTHEN COUNCIL'S CHILDREN WITH SEND**

An independent special advisor has been commissioned to further strengthen reform of special educational needs and disabilities services (SEND) at Suffolk County Council.

Well-respected senior leader in children's services, consultant Anthony Douglas CBE, will work with SEND system leaders and the SEND networks to support the reforms already underway. He will draw on his years of experience to focus on how services are impacting upon the everyday experience of children and young people with SEND.

In chief executive and director roles for the last 20 years, Anthony Douglas has supported children and young people with SEND and their families, across health, care and education. He also carried out a major inquiry in 2020 within a local authority about inclusive education practices in schools and colleges. He works with organisations internationally about the service developments needed for children with special needs of all types, with a view to improving those services. Anthony has chaired the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership since 2019. Mr Douglas will work with the council initially for six months beginning in April 2023.

- **ACTIVE SUFFOLK TO LEAD PHYSICAL ACTIVITY EFFORTS IN SUFFOLK**

From April 2023, collective efforts in Suffolk to promote physical activity will be led by Active Suffolk.

This comes as Suffolk County Council's Most Active County (MAC) programme which ended on 31 March 2023.

Most Active County was established by Suffolk County Council as part of Suffolk's legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Its purpose was to support the excellent work that takes place across the county, by many organisations, to support people to be active and address stubborn levels of inactivity.

Since 2012, the programme has been successful in engaging many more people, young and old, from different backgrounds and locations, in physical activity through supporting initiatives, such as parkrun, the Daily Mile, Doorstep Sport Clubs, Suffolk Walking Challenge, Sporting Memories Groups, Suffolk Care Home Olympics and major sporting events like the Great East Swim, Great East Run, The Women's Tour and the Tour of Britain.

Since the MAC Programme began, levels of inactivity have been steadily falling in Suffolk. According to Active Lives Survey data, between November 2015 and November 2019, inactivity levels in adults fell by 4% and remain below the national average. Suffolk saw the biggest increase of any English County in the number of adults meeting recommended physical activity guidelines during this time.

Active Lives data also shows the number of children meeting the recommended levels of physical activity increased by 5.1% between the 2017/18 and 2021/2022 academic years.

More recently the MAC programme was a finalist in the 2022 UK Active Awards for the Keep Moving Suffolk campaign. The campaign was established just 9 days after the first lockdown, specifically to support people to become active and remain active during and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic. The campaign consisted of a wide range of online resources to support people to become more active at home, alongside 20,000 'Active at Home' booklets distributed and 3,500 activity packs to digitally isolated older people.

The programme also invested £500,000 to support sports clubs and groups to restart after the coronavirus pandemic. The Council recently invested £26,000 for Active Suffolk to extend the Daily Mile programme and £30,000 to extend the Fit Villages initiative for a further 12 months. More information about the physical activity offer in Suffolk can be found at www.activesuffolk.org

The following provides a snapshot of some of the key activities of the Most Active County programme.

- Finalist - UK Active Awards 2022 for Keep Moving Suffolk Campaign
- Finalist – Local Government Chronicle Awards 2017 for ‘Partnership of the Year’
- Over £3,000,000 of investment into physical activity in Suffolk.
- Over 18,500 Suffolk schoolchildren given access to the Daily Mile.
- 17,700 participants in the Great East Swim.
- Over 20,000 attendances at Doorstep Sports Clubs in Ipswich and Lowestoft.
- £2,000,000 generated for good causes through the Great East Run and Great East Swim.
- 22 parkrun’s, including 7 junior parkrun’s, supported to establish across the county.
- 10,400 participants in the Great East Run.
- 12,000 young people received movement and mental health resources.
- £19,500,000 combined economic impact of the Tour of Britain, Great East Swim and Women’s Tour.
- 130 primary schools took part in Walk to School Week Suffolk Walking Challenge from 2019-22.
- £500,000 invested in sports clubs and groups to restart after the coronavirus pandemic.
- 20,000 ‘Active at Home’ booklets distributed to isolated older people during the coronavirus pandemic.
- 3,500 activity packs distributed to digitally isolated older people during the coronavirus pandemic.

• **SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL SECURES £2.65M GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR CHILDREN’S HOMES**

Suffolk County Council has secured £2.65m of funding from the government for the county’s children’s homes. The fund was set up by Department for Education (DFE) to enable local authorities to provide more placements within council run children’s homes, as many councils have to commission residential provision which is costly.

£1.9m of funding will go towards repurposing two children’s homes. One children’s home will be reconfigured into two separate wings to accommodate complex young people, this will provide 2 additional placements. The other children’s home is to be developed into a provision for young people preparing to exit the care system. A wholly separate independence/training flat with its own external entrance will be created. This will be additional capacity at the home. The remaining £0.7m funding will be used, in addition to the £2m already approved by cabinet in November, towards the development of a new residential home for children and young people with disabilities at the Felixstowe Ferry Centre building in Felixstowe. The home will include three residential care places and two shared care beds. Shared care is when a young person spends a portion of time living with parents or carers and the rest at the home.

The £2.65m grant funding has been combined with additional resources to make a total investment into new residential provision for children and young people of almost £4.4 m in the months ahead.

For further information from my report or questions please contact me at:

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Deputy Cabinet Member for Children & Young Peoples Services