

Framlingham Ward

March /April 2024 Newsletter

Vince Langdon-Morris District Councillor

The Framlingham Flood Resilience and Recovery Working Group

Thanks to everyone who came to the very well attended Public Flooding meeting on 21st February at the Castle Community Hall. A follow up meeting is planned for 24th April, with a presentation by the Flood Risk Assessment consultant (see invite below).

The Flood Resilience group has been meeting regularly at the Town Council offices, and we recently worked through a comprehensive first draft **Framlingham Emergency Response Plan**, which we plan to 'test' in the near future!



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING & FLOOD REPORT

MEETING TO INCLUDE:

- A presentation with findings from our Commissioned Flooding Report
- An update from Framlingham's Flood Resilience & Recovery Group
- An Annual Report from Framlingham Town Council
- Plus Reports from other Charities & Community Groups within the town

Wednesday
24th April 2024

FROM 6.30 FOR A 7PM START
(To finish approx. 9pm)

Porter's Theatre,
Framlingham College

Plus online access via Zoom:
Meeting ID: 412 205 2322
Passcode: 096006

*We have listened to your feedback from the flood meeting.
We have chosen a larger venue and will be improving the sound system at this meeting.*

To register your attendance
PLEASE EMAIL:
DTC@FRAMLINGHAM.COM
OR CALL 01728 720 183
www.framlingham.com

As mentioned, the Flood Risk consultant is near to completing the risk assessment. The draft is being reviewed and is set for release soon. The Town Council will convene the second public meeting at the Porters Theatre, Framlingham College (kindly offered by the college, to facilitate a larger public gathering). This meeting will again provide a forum for community discussion about the results of the flood assessment, and what needs to happen next to protect our town!

Please note that Framlingham Town Council requires participants to register attendance by email, via dtc@framlingham.com or phone in to the council offices on 01728 720183. If you do not rsvp, it is challenging to prepare and cater for the number attending.

Framlingham Sorting Office: The Town Council wrote a letter on 17th January to Royal Mail Sorting, signed by the Town Council chairman and myself, expressing our serious concerns about the closure of the sorting office (note this is a private company, separate from the Post Office and who made the decision to move to Saxmundham, including our posties)!

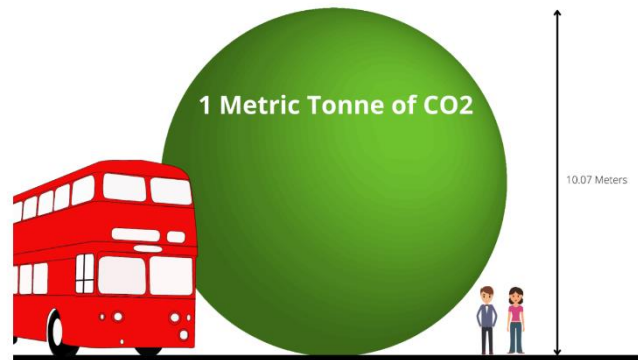
A response was received from Royal Mail on 1st February, stating that since moving to Saxmundham they have seen "an improvement in quality of service for our customers" due to local managers being able to draw on a wider number of postwomen / men. That 'delivery

efficiency' is at a high level (99.7%) and the impact on customers in Framlingham is extremely small. So according to Royal Mail, the new business model and efficiency figures stack up, and there is no need to reverse their decision to move back to Framlingham.

There is however the small issue of the significant economic multiplier effect / benefit of having a sorting office in our town. Or the tiddly annual rental charge of £24,000 for the sorting office (which is 'small change' to this company, but very important to our sub post office business) and finally the small matter of an additional 40 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide issued into the atmosphere by this move. Note, it is

Royal Mail's stated objective to be a net zero business by 2040. But yet again the 'warm heart' of the **private sector** and profit overturns an important **public service** need.

What does 1 metric tonne of CO2 actually look like?



Support after Storm Babet: The government funded support schemes for residents and businesses (many of these in Framlingham ward) closed on 25 January 2024. The East Suffolk Council finance team distributed flood relief funds as quickly as possible, after complying with government criteria, administering payment of:

- 264 Community Recovery Grants applications from residents, totalling £132,000. A total of £181,805.82 of Council Tax Discount was also applied to approved applications as per the scheme guidance.
- 34 Business Recovery Grants of £2,500, totalling £85,000.

Please note that **Suffolk County Council** is responsible for the government [Flood Recovery Framework](#) that makes grant funds available to communities (following specific storm events that results in severe flooding). An element of this framework is the **Property Flood Resilience** £5,000 grant as mentioned, administered through Suffolk County Council. I am aware that many ward residents have applied for these grants. In addition that there are several residents in need in further need of assistance from Suffolk County Council, especially highways, in regards to the ongoing impact on their properties during the recent flooding.

HOUR Community support: For the last two years HOUR has been asked to distribute Household Support Grants to those in need, with community funds provide by the Department of Works and Pensions. Last year HOUR received £30,000 and this year £10,000, which we used to buy Coop vouchers and distributed to 60 families in need.

Following the dreadful floods on Friday, October 20th, HOUR launched a further funding appeal, and were amazed by the generosity of local people and businesses who donated just over £30,000. These funds are being distributed to flood affected residents in March 2023.

HOUR would like to say a BIG thank you to everyone who volunteers and works for them, to their funders and Trustees, without whom they would not be able to provide the support that

they do for those in need in our community. If you would like to volunteer or need support, please contact us on 01728 440511 or email admin@hourcommunity.co.uk

Suffolk's Flood Risk Management Strategy: Please see this link, recent publication and supporting documents. This is a valuable tool to help us understand and manage flood risk in our county. The strategy summarises the information available on the risk of flooding in Suffolk and ways to manage the risk. The document has been published by the **Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership**, made up of all relevant Risk Management Authorities in Suffolk.

The activities identified in the strategy can only manage flood risk. *It would not be possible, even if there were unlimited money available, to protect all properties from any flood risk. Instead, efforts need to be made by all partners, organisations, and householders alike, to reduce flood risk in practical ways.* Sometimes this involves focussing not just on decreasing the probability of flooding, but also its impact, making sure that the properties and households can cope in the event of a serious flood.

Thomas Mills and Framlingham College Eco Councils: Teachers and students at the environment councils at both schools have met and agreed to partner in establishing wildflower meadows this spring. I've been able to use my District Council 'Enabling Communities Budget' to provide some funding to Thomas Mills High School to set-up of these meadows. It's great to see young people so interested in the health and wellbeing of both our communities and our wildlife.

I'm also working with the Swift and Wildlife Group in Fram to expand last years wildflower plots across the town in the coming spring. This is agreed with the local authorities, and we hope to establish both



annual and perennial wildflowers, replacing the need for widespread mowing in future, and provide a rich habitat for birds and insects!

The picture to the left is what has been achieved along many roads in Rotherham.

The East Suffolk 'Be Well' Bus: The 'Be Well' bus rolled into Fram on Tuesday, 24th February. This is an NHS initiative, using a re-purposed covid bus and funded through an Integrated Care Board. The bus will continue to visit sites across East Suffolk, including Framlingham, providing a variety of health services. I am following up with the bus management team to find out about its next visit, what is on offer, and what services can be added. I will coordinate and communicate this information working with and through Framlingham Town Council and website.



Field to Fork: Grow for it! Residents encouraged to grow their own: Field to Fork aims to encourage people in East Suffolk to grow their own food and improve their health and wellbeing. This is the second year of this successful programme, with residents, young and old, being encouraged to grow their own vegetables. 1,500 growing kits were distributed to primary schools last year, and this year, 1,900 kits will be made available, each containing compost pellets, vegetable seeds and free access to Groundwork East's online GROW Programme. Each growing kit was packed by Poppys Pantry staff, in Melton.

Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: *"We want to help people feel more confident with growing their own fruit and vegetables, which can help save money and help people make healthier food choices. The growing kits were well received last year, and we are looking forward to seeing everyone's produce as the weather warms up."*



Next month, a small grants scheme will open to support community farms, allotments, and gardens to help people get involved with growing their own food. The Field to Fork scheme will provide grants of up to £2,000 to help engage local people with 'grow and eat' projects that will feed communities and help people stay active and connected.