

# COASTLINE

The Newsletter of Suffolk Coastal District Council

Issue 39, Spring 2009

## **Rethink on review welcomed by Suffolk Coastal**

The Boundary Committee for England (BCE) now has until July 15 to reconsider, and perhaps rethink, its increasingly ill-fated review of local government in Suffolk.

Suffolk Coastal says the latest delay shows the Government's strong concerns about the previously proposed BCE options. The new BCE proposals are now due to be published on March 19, giving people until May 14 to comment.

"I hope it means that North Haven, Rural Suffolk or the one giant Suffolk will never see the light of day. The BCE should offer an Ipswich unitary on a much tighter boundary with the rest of the county being split into East and West Suffolk as we have previously suggested," said Councillor Andy Smith, Suffolk Coastal's Deputy Leader.

"The continuing delays and uncertainty will definitely further harm local government in our county but the BCE must now look both at creating three new local unitary councils, and address the strong demand for the existing local councils to be allowed to remain in an updated and modernised way.

"There were strong concerns in our district about the lack of real consultation, as highlighted in our survey of town and parish councils. I can only hope that the BCE offers realistic proposals this time and genuinely listen to the results of its consultation," added Cllr Smith.

## **Get ready for Euro and County votes**

Thursday, June 4 will see polling stations open from 7am to 10pm across the district with the first-ever joint Suffolk County Council and European Parliamentary elections.

This will be local voters chance to elect the district's 11 county councillors who will spend 76 per cent of your Council Tax and control local services such as education, roads and libraries during what could be the last year or two of the county council, and also help elect the East of England region's seven European MPs.

Residents have until May 19 to make sure they are on the register and so eligible for a vote. It is also possible to apply for a postal vote if you would prefer not to go to your polling station by calling the elections team on 01394 444329 before May 19.

Anyone wanting to be a candidate for the county elections can also call the elections team for a nomination paper or find out more by visiting [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/elections](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/elections).

The full list of candidates will be available at 4pm on May 8 for the European elections, and at 12 Noon on May 12 for the County elections.

The county council results will be announced on June 4/5, with the European votes being counted the following Sunday. The full results will be on our website.

## **Saxmundham lift**

The news that Waitrose is setting up store in the town, taking over from Somerfield, has given a big boost to Saxmundham. The changeover will occur in early May, bringing another prestige name to the district.

## **Vulnerable people get a helping hand at home**

Suffolk Coastal's Helping Hand agency has just had one of its busiest years assisting people whose homes need to be improved to meet their requirements, or who find it hard to carry out basic repairs and odd jobs around the house.

“Last year, Helping Hand made it possible for 64 major adaptation and renovation projects with a combined cost of £418,504 to be completed, £294,161 of which was secured through charity donations and grant funding. It also carried out 267 jobs through its small repairs service,” said Councillor Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

To be eligible for help, people must be vulnerable, which usually means they are elderly or disabled, and living in a privately owned or rented home in Suffolk Coastal.

The service offers advice and support for those who would like to make their home better suited to their needs, and organises the whole project for them from start to finish, and can help them apply for any grants that may pay for the work.

There is also a small repairs service, aimed at the elderly or people with disabilities, which can carry out odd jobs such as putting up shelves, repairing leaking taps or fitting smoke alarms, which is run with the support of the Suffolk Heritage Housing Association.

Elderly or disabled people can contact Helping Hands on 01394 444644 or email [ps.housing@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:ps.housing@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk).

## **Contact numbers for Suffolk Coastal District Council**

Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU

**[www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)**

Fax: 01394 385100

Minicom: 01394 444211

Email: [scdc@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:scdc@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

**Emergencies outside office hours:**

**07771 816535**

**Planning Advice 01394 444403**

**01394 444423**

**Council Tax 01394 444855**

**Housing Benefits 01394 444838**

**Port Health 01394 614933**

**General Enquiries 01394 383789**

**Office Hours**

Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.15pm

Friday 8.45am - 4.45pm

**Refuse and Recycling 01394 444000**

Also call this number for street cleansing, car parks, pest control, public toilets, abandoned cars, ground maintenance, coast protection - all provided by Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd.

**Tourist Information Centres**

Aldeburgh **01728 453637**

Felixstowe **01394 276770**

Woodbridge **01394 382240**

**Leisure Centres (managed by DC Leisure)**

Felixstowe **01394 670411**

Brackenbury **01394 270278**

Leiston **01728 830364**

Deben Pool **01394 384763**

## **Olympics teams visiting?**

Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal hope to be a gateway to the London 2012 Olympics with negotiations underway with both Azerbaijan and Barbados for some of their team camps to use our local approved facilities.

## **Volunteers help trees and hedges take root**

Volunteers across the district helped plant over 4,000 native hedges and trees as part of Suffolk Coastal's Parish Tree Scheme which links our countryside team with town and parish councils to encourage planting to enhance the local landscape.

“This marvellous initiative has helped improve the look of the district for over 30 years, making a lasting contribution for future generations. I would thank everyone who has played a part, particularly all the parish councils and local residents who have been involved in the planting this year, or during the last three decades,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside.

As well as around 4,000 hedge plants to help create habitat areas, 150 trees were also planted, including the rare native black poplar, and other species such as buckthorn, hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, spindle and oak.

At Westleton 400 metres of hedges were planted around its new recreation field, and some of the areas where the green fingered volunteers planted for the future were Blackhall, Wenhaston, Wickham Market, and Aldeburgh.

Suffolk Coastal has over 70 tree wardens who advise parish councils and run planting and conservation projects within their areas. Anyone interested in this rewarding role can contact their local parish council.

## **Help needed for our countryside**

Want to play your part in helping Suffolk Coastal's countryside and open spaces? Our Footprints campaign will launch in May to attract local people, visitors and businesses to help us protect the hundreds of acres of natural greenspace that we manage.

“We look after areas as diverse as internationally important heathland and local village greens. Footprints will be a rewarding way to enhance your local environment and leave a lasting legacy, helping us to make these places even more special,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside.

The Footprints campaign is after sponsorship, donations or voluntary labour or expertise, whether it be a picnic table, or planting, pond clearing, woodland coppicing, or giving a tree or hedging for the Parish Tree Scheme (featured in the above story).

“We are especially looking for sponsorship for our project to improve access for disabled people at Melton Riverside amenity area to make it a unique attraction for people with severe physical or mental disabilities,” added Cllr Neale.

To find out more about Footprints, contact John Davies on 01394 444602 or email [john.davies@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:john.davies@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

## **Historic buildings**

Free advice on looking after historic buildings, and how to cut bills by conserving energy, will be available at Suffolk Coastal's next Period Properties talk at Stratford St Andrew Village Hall on Thursday, May 14, from 7.30pm to 9pm.

## **IiP success**

Suffolk Coastal's workforce 'are genuinely committed to the success of the organisation and are proud to work for the Council' according to the inspection report that confirmed the Council's Investors in People status for a fourth time.

## **Leiston bench**

A new replacement bench is being designed for Leiston's Old Post Office Square to replace the rotten wooden ones. Students from Leiston Middle School have been involved in drawing up the designs for the new granite bench will go on display soon.

## **Strategy for the future of the district**

The priorities and vision for the district from now until 2021 has been officially laid out in a document drawn up by the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and agreed by Suffolk Coastal.

"The Sustainable Community Strategy is probably the district's most important document as it sets an overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the district and its communities," said Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal and Chairman of the Suffolk Coastal LSP Board.

The vision of the district in 2021 that underpins the strategy is that of it being a place where people want to live and to invest, to care for others and the environment. The full strategy can be found on the LSP's website [www.sclsp.org.uk/keyissues](http://www.sclsp.org.uk/keyissues)

Among the issues set out in the strategy are affordable homes, the needs and aspirations of older people, young people, access to services, health and wellbeing, crime and the fear of crime, vulnerable people, business growth, improving skills and learning, climate change, the district's rich and valued environment, and its coast and estuaries.

“Our more detailed vision for life in 2021 explains how we want our residents to access services, with strong and supportive communities, in a district facing up positively to the challenges of climate change, with a strong economy and skilled workers, with healthier lifestyles for all, with young people playing a central role in the future.

“The strategy identifies our priority outcomes that we want to achieve between now and 2021 and although they are challenging they can be reached by all those with a role and interest in our district working together,” added Cllr Herring.

### **More homes go green**

At the end of April, another 6,000 homes will join Suffolk Coastal's improved recycling service, meaning that 42,000 or nearly three-quarters of the district will now have three wheellie bins.

The latest areas are Woodbridge, Bucklesham, Foxhall, Brightwell and parts of Martlesham, Rushmere St Andrew and Kesgrave, and all homes will already have been asked what size recycling bin they want for their fortnightly collection of paper, cans, foil, cardboard and plastic containers.

“Thanks to our residents getting into the recycling habit and making use of our recycling services, almost half of all household waste was diverted away from landfill during the last 12 months, and that figure will rise as even more homes get our improved service,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

“Thanks to more investment we can promise that every home will be linked up by the end of March next year. The best thing about rolling out the service in phases has been that we have been able to work in each new area with residents to resolve any queries or concerns.

“Despite the scare stories that are appearing regularly in the national media, I can assure residents that none of Suffolk’s recycling is being landfilled and I would urge them to continue to make use of all our recycling services as it costs far more to throw things away,” added Cllr Nunn.

Those on the new service have a new blue-lidded recycling bin, plus their old brown bin which takes all food and garden waste for composting, which are collected every fortnight, with a new-grey lidded bin for their household waste emptied every other week.

## **Over 60s can swim for free**

We are not fooling you - anyone aged 60 or over can swim for free at any our three swimming pools from April 1 thanks to Suffolk Coastal and DC Leisure who manage the pools.

Suffolk Coastal is backing the national initiative to encourage more people to get healthy, and there’s no better way to exercise than swimming.

“By signing up for one of our free swimming cards, anyone aged 60 or over will be able to go swimming at either Felixstowe Leisure Centre, Woodbridge Swimming Pool or Leiston Leisure Centre,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside.

“This excellent initiative will run for two years initially, up to March 2011, and I hope as many people as possible take up the opportunity as it is a particularly good way to exercise, especially for anyone with problems with their mobility or joints.

“It may also encourage people to enjoy what else is on offer at our centres as well, and I would remind all our other residents that anyone can get a great deal at our centres with a CoastalCard. More than 6,000 card-holders get a cheaper rate when they use their passport to leisure,” added Cllr Neale.

Those aged 60 and over can register for their free swimming card at any of the sports centres from March 16.

To get a CoastalCard visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/leisure/coastalcard/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/leisure/coastalcard/) or visit one of the centres. Call 01394 670411 for more information.

## **Working to protect Central Felixstowe**

Members of the public have been asked for their views on a shortlist of coast protection projects to help consultants decide which option would be best for Central Felixstowe.

“Following the success of our £10 million project to defend south Felixstowe with 21 rock fishtail groynes, completed last October, Suffolk Coastal is pressing on with plans to protect the rest of Felixstowe from flooding and coastal erosion,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Coastal Management.

Consultants have drawn up a range of plans to put approved coastal defences in place between Jacob’s Ladder and the war memorial by the Town Hall.

Mott MacDonald and Terry Oakes Associates will now display the preferred option at Felixstowe Town Hall on Monday, March 30.

It will then be submitted to the Environment Agency who will decide whether to give it the go-ahead to the project, and award it funding in its forthcoming programme. It is planned to exhibit the final version of the scheme on June 27.

For more information on the central Felixstowe coastal defence project, call Victoria Tonks on 0208 774 3902 or visit [www.projecttownbeach.com](http://www.projecttownbeach.com)

- Work on updating the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is also now underway.

The SMP will set out a long- term approach to flood and coastal defence, assessing the risks and how to reduce them.

The public will have their chance to find out more about the SMP from July and there will be more details in the next edition of Coastline.

There is also a special website [www.suffolksmp2.org.uk](http://www.suffolksmp2.org.uk)

## **We win good rating for access to our services**

The latest independent Audit Commission report has confirmed that Suffolk Coastal is out-performing most councils, with residents receiving good access to the Council's services and being involved in how they are provided.

“This tremendous result shows we have improved significantly over the last three years and that our services are both available to and in tune with our customers' requirements,” said Councillor Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners.

“Few councils achieve the good two star rating, with Suffolk Coastal one of only four nationally in the last 12 months. This report shows that we are providing our services equally and fairly to all our residents, even though they are spread over 100 different towns and parishes,” added Cllr Savage.

The Audit Commission report states that Suffolk Coastal’s approach is good ‘because it has invested significant resources to effect improvement in customer services and its website’. It also says the Council is ‘generally effective at engaging services users, the business community and vulnerable groups to inform service delivery’ and has ‘good local intelligence’ to understand local community needs.

It also states that ‘the Council is working hard to address issues arising from rural isolation and meeting the needs of both older and younger residents, particularly in the north of the district’ and that ‘the Council is aware of where it needs to improve and has plans in place to address these.’

## **More grants for local groups**

Four more local organisations are getting financial help from Suffolk Coastal bringing the grand total to over £120,000 committed during the last year in grants.

The latest grants were

- £10,000 to Alderton Parish Council, for improvements to the play area at Alderton recreation ground,
- £10,000 to Campsea Ashe Parish Council, to enlarge and improve the village hall car park,
- up to £8,000 to Stratford St Andrew and Farnham community centre, for its play area, and
- £6,000 for Woodbridge Rugby Union Football Club.

For more information about Council grants, call 01394 444626, email [committee.section@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:committee.section@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/communitygrants/councilgrants](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/communitygrants/councilgrants)

## **Reinvesting to support the local economy**

A further £6 million could be attracted for local projects, thanks to Suffolk Coastal's ambitious £1.5 million investment package which is funded from the Government's Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme.

“We will use this one-off windfall to invest in a range of projects that could make a lasting difference to the future of our district by helping regenerate areas and encouraging local businesses to grow,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for the Economy.

The investment plan includes improving town centres and parking and passenger facilities at the district's railway stations, business development initiatives, projects to boost tourism, and funds to support the work of the Felixstowe and Trimleys Peninsula Futures Programme and the regeneration of our market towns.

“As well as looking to help Woodbridge town centre remain competitive and attractive to shoppers, we will also invest in Aldeburgh, Framlingham, Kesgrave/Rushmere St Andrew, Leiston, Saxmundham and Wickham Market to help these key parts of our district through these tough economic times,” added Cllr Hart.

## **Council Tax up eight pence a week**

Despite continued under-funding from the Government and falling income, Suffolk Coastal will keep its Council Tax increase in April to just eight pence a week on its average Band D bill.

The Full Council agreed a 2.9 per cent increase in Suffolk Coastal's share of the Council Tax bill, meaning that it will now charge £145.26 a year for a Band D house, up £4.05.

“The ongoing failure of the Government to properly fund rural councils means that we have once again been under severe financial pressure, having to fill a gap of £850,000 between our estimated income and planned spending,” said Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal.

“We remain committed to providing good value for money services to our residents and this budget means we will have achieved £9 million of savings since 2001 and in these tough times for all of us we recognise the importance of keeping our Council Tax rise as low as possible,” added Cllr Herring.

The Government increased its grant to the Council by only 1.96 per cent or £156,000, while the collapse in the housing market and the fall in interest rates will reduce the Council's income at least £680,000.

The Council's new budget includes minimal allowance for inflation, while most Council charges, including car parks, will be frozen in recognition of the financial squeeze affecting local communities.

“We have identified a further £1.3 million of efficiencies, but we will also invest in improving some of our key services, with nearly £500,000 to give all our homes our improved recycling service.

“The ongoing distraction and uncertainty of the review of local government in Suffolk makes it difficult to take medium or long-term decisions but this budget does not use smoke and mirrors to put off tough decisions to another year” added Cllr Herring.

## **Where your Council Tax goes**

The average Band D bill in the district is **£1,440.85**, which is made up of:

**£1,110.16** for Suffolk County Council,

**£156.06** for Suffolk Police Authority,

**£145.26** for Suffolk Coastal District Council, and

**£39.37** for town and parish councils.

This will be the 13th year that Suffolk Coastal has set a single figure increase in its Council Tax.

<b>How we compare</b>	<b>Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>Government grant per Band D home</b>
Babergh	£134.96	£187
Forest Heath	£133.46	£333
Ipswich	£306.90	£290
Mid Suffolk	£147.49	£178
St Edmundsbury	£171.99	£185
Suffolk Coastal	£145.26	£165
Waveney	£143.28	£287

## **Buses one route to better air quality**

Visitors to Woodbridge are being asked to play their part in improving air quality by considering using a bus for their journeys to the town.

Information about buses and other public transport is now easier to find than ever before on [www.suffolkonboard.com](http://www.suffolkonboard.com) which contains all the timetables and other details that you could want.

“Air quality in the district is generally good but we have two problem areas, one of which is at the busy Woodbridge junction of Lime Kiln Quay Road, Thoroughfare and St. John’s Street. One part of our action plan to reduce emissions is to encourage more people to use local bus services,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

The latest bus timetables for the district can be picked up from the Council’s Melton Hill offices, or any of the tourist information centres at Felixstowe, Aldeburgh or Woodbridge.

Other, greener ways to travel include walking and cycling or try car sharing by visiting the increasing popular [www.suffolkcarshare.com](http://www.suffolkcarshare.com) which could put you in touch with someone else doing your journey.

## **Our schools are going green**

Students at Farlingaye High School and Middleton Primary School have proved themselves the best in the district at cleaning, litter-picking, composting and recycling by winning Suffolk Coastal’s Litter Free School Award 2008.

Thirty primary, junior and infant schools, one college and five high schools participated in the award, and standards were high at every school.

“They were assessed on the cleanliness of their grounds, the condition of paths and verges in the surrounding area and what was being done to educate students about litter, recycling, and caring for the environment,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

The winners each received a £400 cheque for their efforts while the runners-up will receive a £200 cheque each.

All the schools reduced litter by putting up antilitter posters, encouraging students to take part in local litter picks and making litter bins and compost bins available in the playground.

## **Help spring clean our district**

Suffolk Coastal wants to encourage people across the district to get involved in a local clean-up as part of a county-wide campaign to Spring Clean Suffolk.

“Suffolk Coastal Services is ready to take away any rubbish collected by volunteers. Last year over 3,500 volunteers collected more than 7,000 black sacks full of rubbish across 54 parishes as part of the annual Spring Clean supported by Suffolk Coastal,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

Help such as sacks, gloves and disposal of the waste collected is on offer throughout the year from SCS. Anyone interested in organising a clean-up can contact their parish or town council or call Suffolk Coastal on 01394 444033 or email [waste.management@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:waste.management@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

## **Free green training on offer**

Do you want to speak up in your community and help persuade people to make a change to their daily habits, reduce carbon dioxide emissions and so help tackle climate change?

The Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership and the Greenprint Forum have linked up to offer a day's free COIN training on Saturday, March 21 to anyone who wants to develop the expertise and skills to deliver a powerful and persuasive speech.

COIN is an experienced national charity which gives new speakers the confidence to speak without being a scientific expert and seasoned speakers the chance to obtain new skills for communicating more effectively.

To find out if places are still available, call Anne Keen on 01394 444624 or email [environmental.protection@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:environmental.protection@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

## **Suffolk Coastal 2009 survival guide**

**Suffolk Coastal has pulled together a brief list of some of the assistance that is on offer to residents, businesses and communities to help them combat the economic gloom. The most important advice to any resident or business is do not ignore or store up problems – advice and help is on offer that can help everyone plan their way through the current maze. Take action now!**

## **Housing**

The Council's Housing Options team tries to stop people losing their homes, or help them find and keep a new home that meets their needs. The team provides advice and assistance relating to all areas of housing, including:

- Debt;
- Mortgage and rent arrears or increases;
- Harassment and illegal eviction;
- Housing rights, domestic violence and relationship breakdown;
- Disrepair in your home;
- Mediation between families or with a landlord;
- Types of accommodation available;
- The Housing Register;
- Landlords and letting agents;
- Finding a rent deposit;
- Homelessness.

Anyone concerned about their housing situation should contact the Housing Options team as soon as possible – call them on 01394 444264 or email [homelessness@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:homelessness@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit

[www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness).

Young people can visit

[www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness/youngpeople16and17](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness/youngpeople16and17) for help tailored to meet their needs.

## **Council Tax/Housing Benefits**

The Housing and Council Tax Benefits team assists residents who are unemployed or on a low income and need help with their rent or Council Tax payments. It is important that residents understand what benefits they may be entitled to and how to claim them.

Trained members of staff help customers complete the application process quickly and efficiently and you can even apply online using the website service which is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/benefits/online/claimonline/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/benefits/online/claimonline/) or call the Council's benefits team on 01394 444838 during normal office hours, who will be happy to explain what people need to do.

As well as benefits to those who are on a low income or unemployed, reductions in Council Tax can also be granted in certain circumstances, such as:

- Single resident discount (25%) for those living alone, or where all other residents are disregarded because of their status e.g. students, hospital patients etc;
- Reduced charge or exemptions for some empty properties;
- Disability Reduction Scheme - where a property is occupied by, and has certain features to cater for the needs of, a person with a disability.

Council Tax is split into eight bands from A-H. It is important to make sure that your property is recorded in the right band or you could end up paying too much. If you feel your property is in the wrong band, call the Valuation Office on 01473 587800.

## **Business Rates**

Suffolk Coastal offers Business Rate relief to charities, registered community amateur sports clubs and non-profit making organisations. The Council also deals with applications for SBRR, which can reduce your bill by up to half if your rateable value is below £10,000, and has discretion to give Hardship Relief in special circumstances.

For further information call 01394 444546/544 or email [businessrates@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:businessrates@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/businessrates](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/businessrates)

## **Concessionary travel**

Suffolk Coastal residents aged 60 or over, or who have a qualifying disability, can have a concessionary bus pass and travel for free for all journeys that start in Suffolk and free on any off-peak buses anywhere in the country. However, this does not include travel on long distance or express coach services, or 'special' services such as tours or excursions.

For further information call: 01394 444647 or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/travelconcessions/nationalbuspass/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/travelconcessions/nationalbuspass/)

## **Grants on offer from the Council**

- Disabled facilities grants are available for adapting dwellings to meet the needs of people with disabilities to enable them to live more independently in their own homes. Call 01394 444506.
  - Minor works grants for energy efficiency funds insulation work for owner/occupiers of properties in Council Tax bands A, B or C. Call 01394 444506.
  - Small repairs service carries out basic repairs and odd jobs for disabled and elderly people – call 01394 444644.
  - Renovation grants to repair, adapt or improve private homes to bring them up to the decent home standard. Call 01394 444506.
  - Grants to support local organisations that are providing useful services or facilities across the district. Call 01394 444626.

For information about grants from other sources visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/communitygrants/fundingsources/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/communitygrants/fundingsources/)

## **Help on hand for residents**

### **Relate**

Advice and counselling on relationship issues.

0300 100 1234

[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

### **National Domestic Violence**

#### **Helpline**

Support for women suffering domestic violence.

0808 2000 247

[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

### **Ipswich Women's Aid**

01473 745111

[www.ipswichwa.org.uk](http://www.ipswichwa.org.uk)

### **Patients Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

Advice and support for patients across Suffolk.

Freephone 0800 389 6819

[pals@suffolkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@suffolkpct.nhs.uk)

### **Age Concern**

An independent local charity working with and for senior citizens in Suffolk

Tel: 01473 257039

### **Age Concern benefit advice services (age 60+)**

45a Ipswich Street, Stowmarket, IP14 1AH

01449 674222

[www.ageconcernsuffolk.org.uk](http://www.ageconcernsuffolk.org.uk)

### **Help the Aged: your money matters (age 60+)**

01473 214287

### **NHS Direct**

A telephone and online service to access information and experience, from trained staff, about health concerns.

0845 4647

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

### **Suffolk Council for Racial Equality**

46a St Matthews Street, Ipswich, IP1 3EP 01473 408111

## **Support for people with mental health issues.**

### **East Suffolk MIND**

Hyntle Barn, Hill Farm, Silver Hill, Hintlesham, IP8 3NJ

01473 652847

[www.suffolkmind.org.uk](http://www.suffolkmind.org.uk)

### **Samaritans**

24-hour, confidential, non-judgemental emotional support.

08457 909090

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### **Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)**

Cedar House, Pytches Road, Woodbridge, IP12 1EP

01394 387070

### **Suffolk Family Carers**

01473 232679

[www.suffolk-carers.org.uk](http://www.suffolk-carers.org.uk)

## **Consumer Rights**

### **Consumer Direct**

08454 04 05 06

[www.consumerdirect.gov.uk](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk)

### **Coastal Homeless Action Group**

Saxmundham: 01728 602529

Felixstowe: 01394 276115

### **Shelter**

The housing and homelessness charity. 0808 8004444

[www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

### **Suffolk County Council trading standards**

01473 401122

[stoploansharks@suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:stoploansharks@suffolkcc.gov.uk)

### **Suffolk Legal Partnership**

(Babergh, Suffolk Coastal and Mid Suffolk) 01473 407129

### **Citizen's Advice Bureau**

See general concerns

## **Community legal advice**

Free, confidential and independent legal advice Tel: 0845 345 4345

[www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk](http://www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk)

## **Ipswich and Suffolk Credit Union**

53 Austin Street, Ipswich

01473 690690

[www.onesuffolk.co.uk/ipswichandsuffolkcreditunion](http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/ipswichandsuffolkcreditunion)

## **Help on hand for businesses**

### **Business Link**

Free, confidential, independent and impartial advice for existing or potential businesses.

08457 171615

[www.businesslink.gov.uk/east](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/east)

### **The East of England Development Agency**

The EEDA Business Map helps businesses navigate the range of business support available and includes information on grants, loans and reducing running costs.

[www.bizmapeast.co.uk/finance](http://www.bizmapeast.co.uk/finance)

### **Train to Gain**

See help on hand for workers

### **Jobcentre Plus**

See help on hand for workers

### **Carbon Trust**

Help for organisations wanting to reduce carbon emissions and develop commercial low carbon technologies.

0800 0852005

[www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk)

### **Business debtline**

A business helpline providing free, confidential and independent advice on how to deal with debt problems

0800 197 6026

[www.bdl.org.uk](http://www.bdl.org.uk)

## **General Concerns**

### **Citizen Advice Bureau**

Advice and information for individuals on a wide range of issues.

Felixstowe and district Citizens Advice

01394 275958

[www.felixstowecab.org.uk/](http://www.felixstowecab.org.uk/)

Ipswich and district Citizens Advice

01473 219777 <http://ipswichcab.org.uk/>

Leiston, Saxmundham and district Citizens Advice (Leiston)

01728 832193

[www.leistoncab.org.uk](http://www.leistoncab.org.uk)

## **Help on hand for workers**

### **NextStep**

NextStep provides advice, information and guidance for people looking for work, volunteer positions or training.

0845 603 1059

[www.nextstepeastofengland.org.uk](http://www.nextstepeastofengland.org.uk)

### **Jobcentre Plus**

Jobcentre Plus supports people of working age from welfare into work and helps employers to fill their vacancies. Looking for a job?

0845 6060 234

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

### **Inland Revenue**

Advice on tax credits.

0845 3003900

[www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk)

### **Train to Gain**

A government service offering independent advice on improving the skills of employees to improve business performance.

0800 387326 [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

### **ACAS Helpline**

Advice on employment issues.

01284 774500

08457 474747

[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

### **Help to tackle money worries**

#### **Consumer credit counselling service**

Advice and information for people experiencing financial difficulties.

0800 138 1111

[www.cccs.co.uk](http://www.cccs.co.uk)

#### **National debtline**

A national helpline offering debt advice.

0808 808 4000

[www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk)

#### **Energy Saving Trust**

The Energy Saving Trust offers information on reducing your fuel costs through improving the energy efficiency of your home and through cutting motoring costs.

0800 512 012

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

Or call SEAL on 01394 444506

### **For help and advice visit**

**[www.onesuffolk.co.uk/creditrunchsuffolk](http://www.onesuffolk.co.uk/creditrunchsuffolk)**

### **Helpful news about business rates**

The Government has announced that from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010 no rates will have to be paid on any empty business property with a rateable value of up to £15,000. The previous limit from April 2005 to March 2009 was £2,200 so this will help many more businesses.

Suffolk Coastal's business rates team will carry out this one-year empty property rate relief automatically so affected businesses do not have to apply or do anything.

Anyone whose premises has a rateable value of less than £10,000 can get their business rates cut by up to half under the SBRR scheme. To previously qualify, the premises had to be on the register on April 1, but for April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010 it will qualify for it any time during the year. This will help any ratepayers of new properties, or those properties that have been officially recognised as being split up, merged or reorganised by the Valuation Office Agency.

To find out more call Suffolk Coastal's business rates team on 01394 444546 or 444544 or email [businessrates@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:businessrates@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/businessrates/reliefs/smallbusiness](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/businessrates/reliefs/smallbusiness) or fax 01394 444247.

The team is also ready to help any company having problems paying its rates. Special arrangements can be made and they may be able to identify help from one of the rate relief schemes.

## **Attracting even more tourists**

Suffolk Coastal's holiday guide for 2009 was launched in January at Felixstowe Town Hall, and featured the resort's historic Seafront Gardens which is bidding for lottery funding for renovation works.

The launch was attended by Council Chairman Cllr Jim Bidwell and some of the people behind the places to stay and things to see and do featured in the holiday guide.

“We picked an ideal place to look forward to what could be a boom year for local tourism. There are ambitious plans in place which could see a multi-million pound refurbishment of the Seafront Gardens, while Felixstowe is at the centre of proposals that would regenerate the resort and its town centre,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Tourism.

Fifty thousand copies of the 2009 holiday guide have been printed and are being distributed far and wide. It is also on [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/tourism](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/tourism)

## **New team to regenerate Felixstowe and Trimleys**

A special project team is being set up by Suffolk Coastal to help co-ordinate the regeneration of the Felixstowe and Trimleys peninsula and attract the necessary multi-million pound investments.

“We are using windfall cash from the Government to reinvest in putting in place the foundations to build a bright future for Felixstowe, the Trimleys and the rest of the peninsula,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for the Economy.

“Ambitious proposals have been produced and we want to give them the best possible chance of being turned into reality. We have shown our commitment by allocating nearly £900,000 towards supporting the key projects, with every expectation that could unlock millions of pounds of investment, and this new team’s task will be to help achieve that goal,” added Cllr Hart.

The commitment to Felixstowe was part of a £1.5 million package across the district, see page 6. The creation of the six-strong Felixstowe and Trimleys Peninsula Futures Project Team follows the 2007 master-plan drawn up by David Lock Associates.

“For the regeneration goal to be successful, there has to be full support and involvement from the whole range of partners that have a stake in the area.

“This commitment from Suffolk Coastal is a massive step forward in giving the project the necessary coordination and drive,” said Stephen Bracewell, Chairman of the Felixstowe Futures Steering Group.

Among the initiatives included in the master-plan that the team will have to address are the funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the refurbishment of Seafront Gardens, the enhancement of the Triangle, beach shelters and cafes, the development of a coastal path, as well as bring together work on several other major schemes such as the proposed new single secondary school to serve the town at Orwell School, development of sports and leisure facilities across the town, the final vision of the Local Development Framework for the area, the Central Felixstowe sea defence scheme and strategic flood planning, the South Seafront development, and car parking.

## **Why making Suffolk Three must be considered**

If existing district and county councils are going to be abolished then Suffolk Coastal insists that a three-way split of Suffolk with Felixstowe and Kesgrave as part of a new East Suffolk unitary council must be an option looked at seriously.

“Local realities cannot be ignored and Felixstowe and Kesgrave should not become part of an enlarged Ipswich. It would be as wrong for our two towns as it was to suggest that Lowestoft should be part of Norfolk,” said Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal.

“If unitary government is to be introduced, then the Boundary Committee for England seemed to recognise that the county needs to be broken up. What I hope it will now recognise is that three unitaries in Suffolk would be the best way forward if there has to be change,” added Cllr Herring.

Suffolk Coastal has argued that a larger Ipswich could be created, perhaps including Shotley and Hadleigh, alongside its proposed East Suffolk and West Suffolk councils.

“Both East Suffolk and West Suffolk have their own particular communities and it is right that both should be separate so they can tackle their issues and provide local solutions to local needs. I think we could provide better services, even better value and be close enough to our communities to involve them in shaping the services they want,” added Cllr Herring.

Linking Lowestoft and Felixstowe into East Suffolk would see one council responsible for all coastal and estuary management. The new council would also have key regional centres of excellence, with BT/Adastral Park, two major ports, the ‘power corridor’ of low carbon energy providers, as well as Sutton Hoo and Snape Maltings.

The council would also be uniquely placed to serve and protect the needs of its many market towns, picture-book villages and its large Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The latest recommendations by the BCE were due to be published on March 19 with people having until May 14 to give their views on them. To find out how you can have your say, visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/future](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/future) or call 01394 444435.

## **Reactions to the latest delay**

Cllr Nick Ridley said: “Babergh District Council is extremely frustrated by this further delay as it extends the period of uncertainty for at least another five months and in reality for much longer than that, which is not helpful to anyone.”

The Leaders of Forest Heath, Waveney and St Edmundsbury councils, Cllr Mark Bee, Cllr Geoffrey Jaggard, Cllr John Griffiths said: “We must now ensure that this extended period is not filled with yet further uncertainty, but with a determination that the people of Suffolk will be heard by both the Boundary Committee and the Secretary of State.”

The Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council, Cllr Tim Passmore said: “Councils like us want to ring the changes and this delay simply frustrates our ability to plan ahead.”

Cllr Liz Harsant Leader of Ipswich Borough Council said “I am bitterly disappointed at the Secretary of State’s decision”.

Suffolk Coastal MP, John Gummer said “This is a really serious blow for Suffolk. I think the BCE has discovered widespread dissatisfaction in Suffolk with its preliminary recommendations and wants time to sort things out.”

## **Got old furniture?**

If you have old furniture that still has some life left in it but do not know anyone who wants it try a charity shop or advertise it, for example on [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)

You could also try the Framlingham Furniture Project at 10a Riverside, Framlingham or call 01728 621210, or the Ipswich Furniture Project at Hogarth Road, Ipswich or call 01473 404004.

If it cannot be reused then you can dispose of it free at Household Waste Recycling Centres at Felixstowe, Foxhall and Leiston or call the Suffolk Coastal Services bulky refuse service on 01394 444000 for details of the charges that will apply.

## **Walking for a healthier life**

Want an enjoyable way to get fitter? Anyone can go on a Stepping Out in Suffolk health walk, but they could be especially beneficial to those recovering from an illness or those who need to improve their fitness levels. Suffolk Coastal's walks are led by at least two trained volunteers and everybody is allowed to go at their own pace.

“As well as improving fitness, our health walks give people the opportunity to explore all parts of our district, socialise, and get some fresh air. They vary in length and are graded for difficulty, and there are even special buggy walks for parents with small children,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member for Community Health.

Volunteers are also wanted and will receive training. Suffolk Coastal's new health walk co-ordinator Stephanie Cullen was herself a health walk leader. For more information call 01394 444501, email [walks@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:walks@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/steppingout](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/steppingout)

## **Is yours the village of the year?**

Entries are wanted for the 2009 Village of the Year competition, which this year is aimed at villages with less than 500 people.

With judging based on more than just an attractive external appearance, only villages demonstrating an active and involved parish council, infectious levels of enthusiasm and an awareness of environmental issues stand a chance of winning the title.

Special activities and features that are unique to the village are also bound to impress.

“The winner of the Suffolk Coastal round will go on to compete against the best of Suffolk, and if they win again, they could be battling against villages across the country and following Levington’s example of winning the national title,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside. The Suffolk Coastal winner gets £200 and an engraved silver cup, which last year was won by Orford.

Application forms are on [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/parishcouncils/villageoftheyear](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/parishcouncils/villageoftheyear) or from Jo Mael on 01394 444326 or email [jo.mael@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:jo.mael@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

## **Timber clear up**

Over 400 tonnes of timber was recently cleared up from the shores of East Suffolk by specialist teams reclaiming some of the cargo washed up from the ship Sinegorsk which was on course to Egypt.

The teams, the cost of which will be met by the insurers, had to work especially carefully in our district because most of the beaches were Sites of Special Scientific Interest with many protected shingle ridges.

Because the timber was of a low quality and had been in the sea for over a week, it was of little practical use, would probably discolour and rot, with warnings issued that it was not safe for building anything.

## **The future of Landguard peninsula is in good hands**

A new visitors' centre and renovated viewing area, offering stunning views of the Orwell estuary, are the goals in the next five years of a partnership managing Landguard peninsula.

Ten organisations have signed an agreement to manage Landguard together, as part of the Felixstowe and Trimleys Peninsula Futures initiative to regenerate the resort.

“The creation of the Landguard partnership is an important step as it is set to ensure that Landguard continues to develop as both a major tourist attraction and a place of significance for local people,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside.

Over half of the Landguard peninsula is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, home to rare plants and a haven for birds with much of it managed as a Local Nature Reserve for people to enjoy.

Landguard peninsula was occupied by the military from the 16th century up until the 1950s, and its fort and earthworks attract people interested in naval and military history. The partnership links Suffolk Coastal, English Heritage, Suffolk County Council, Felixstowe History & Museum Society, Felixstowe Town Council, Harwich Haven Authority, Landguard Fort Trust, Port of Felixstowe, Natural England and Landguard Conservation Trust.

## **Curtains up on festival of drama**

The 59th Annual Felixstowe Drama Festival takes to the stage at the Spa Pavilion at the end of May with an excellent programme of plays that cater for all tastes. This annual celebration of the best of amateur dramatics will offer seven different productions with the best one picking up the prestigious prize judged by Mike Kaiser.

The full programme is:

- Saturday, May 23 – Roots (play) by Arnold Wesker, staged by the Rushmere Players.
- Sunday, May 24 – Someone Who'll Watch Over Me (drama) by Fran McGuinness, staged by the Tryst Theatre
- Monday, May 25- The Roses of Eyam (play) by Don Taylor, staged by the Deben Players
- Tuesday, May 26 – Absurd Person Singular (play) by Alan Ayckbourn, staged by the Parkside Players
- Thursday, May 28 – The Woman Who Cooked her Husband (comedy) by Debbie Isitt, staged by Making Waves
- Friday, May 29 – Audience With Murder (thriller) by Roger leach & Colin Wakefield, staged by the Cardiff Players
- Saturday, May 30 - Teechers (comedy) by John Godber, staged by In Yer Space.

All performances will start at 7.30pm at The Spa Pavilion Theatre, Felixstowe, and tickets for each show are £9 or go to every night for only £47 or £30 for students. Tickets go on sale on March 30 – call the box office on 01394 282126.

This year's adjudicator Mike Kaiser spent over 30 years teaching English and Drama and has been very active in amateur theatre, winning many awards for acting, writing and directing.

He founded the successful BROADS company in his home town of Broseley and directed their play which won the All-England Theatre Festival, and is an experienced drama festival adjudicator.

## **We are fans of elite athletes**

DC Leisure and Suffolk Coastal are supporting the best of the district's sporting talent with their new FANS (Free Access for National Sportspeople in Suffolk Coastal) initiative.

“Top athletes in our district can use our four top quality sporting facilities for free at off-peak times for their personal training and development, to help them strive for sporting excellence,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside.

To be eligible for FANS, you have to be resident in our district for most of the year, be a member of a British team or squad, and currently be listed in the top of your sport at any national age group.

Six rising stars have already joined FANS, and among those using the facilities at Felixstowe Leisure Centre, Brackenbury Sports Centre, Deben Swimming Pool and Leiston Leisure Centre are Clio Aubugeau-Williams, a 16 year old single sculler, Timothy Carter, a 16 year old sailor, and Emilie Fisher, a 27 year old cyclist. FANS application forms are at any of the sport centres.

## **Playtime boost for Felixstowe**

Children in Felixstowe have been enjoying brand new play equipment at Eastward Ho and Cavendish Park play areas thanks to a partnership between Suffolk Coastal and Felixstowe Town Council.

“The new equipment, which includes a climbing frame, spinning wok and a dolphin seesaw, offers fun, safe and stimulating play and has been funded by the Town Council successfully applying for £19,000 from Suffolk Coastal’s Open Play Space Fund (OPSF), backed with a further £16,000 from this Council,” said Councillor Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Young People.

The OPSF was set up by Suffolk Coastal in 2001 to help the district’s recreation and sporting facilities keep up with the growth of new housing developments. Builders are required to give money to the fund when they gain planning permission.

More than £500,000 from the OPSF has gone to over 80 projects across the district but there is still nearly £350,000 available for play facilities, and over £400,000 available for sports facilities.

For more information call Jennie Catling on Wednesdays and Thursdays on 01394 444321 or email [community&economic@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:community&economic@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/parishcouncils/playfund](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/parishcouncils/playfund) and [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/devcontrol/playspace](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/devcontrol/playspace)

## **What’s on this summer**

Aldeburgh Music  
Easter Festival  
April 10-12

Felixstowe Easter Fair  
April 10 to 13

Forestfest,  
Rendlesham Forest,  
April 19 -10am to 4pm.

Felixstowe Historic  
Vehicle Rally  
May 3

Woodbridge Horse Show  
May 4

Suffolk Ride Motorcycle  
Show, Felixstowe  
May 10

Woodbridge Round the  
Town 10K and junior races  
May 17

Felixstowe Spring Fair  
May 22-25

Felixstowe Drama Festival  
May 23-31

Suffolk Show  
May 27 & 28

Suffolk Folk Festival  
May 30 & 31

Arts Framlingham  
Summer Festival  
June 26 to July 5

Suffolk Game and Country  
Fair, Glemham Hall  
June 20 & 21

Felixstowe Fuchsia Festival  
July 4 & 5

Woodbridge Regatta  
July 12

East of England Tennis  
Tournament, Felixstowe  
July 6 to 13

Latitude Festival  
16 to 19 July

For more information and to keep in touch with what's on in our district visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/calendar/whatson/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/calendar/whatson/) or pick up a what's on booklet from one of our tourist information centres.

## **Soundwaves celebration**

Saturday, April 4 is the night to celebrate the launch of the latest compilation album from Soundwaves, bringing some of the best young talent in the district in to the musical spotlight. Ten bands have won the right to appear on the CD after winning through two heats, and Woodbridge's Seckford Theatre will host all of them playing live on stage from 7pm. Tickets are £5 or £4 for concessions – call the box office on 01394 615015.

- A brand new website has been launched to harness music's most powerful outlet – live performances. [Fillyourstage.com](http://Fillyourstage.com) aims to be the most detailed website of its type yet, giving bands and their potential audiences the chance to come together virtually before making a date at a live venue.

- The first stage is to get as many bands and venues registered as possible, and to then get them to list their upcoming gigs, tours and events

## **Talent in a spin at Woodbridge Skatepark opening**

As part of festivities to celebrate the opening of Woodbridge skatepark, which is next to Deben Swimming Pool, skateboarders and BMXers showed off their talents in a competition, open to all ages and abilities.

At the event, Councillor Stephen Burroughes of Suffolk Coastal, Mayor of Woodbridge Cllr Les Binns, and Malcolm Knapp from the Just 42 youth group spoke about the skatepark's beginnings and their hopes for the future.

Members of the 3Bs (boarders, BMXers and bladers) group, young people who use the skatepark and are helping the Council to run it, then cut the ribbon to officially open the facility.

“This celebratory event gave people an opportunity to appreciate what has been achieved here, as well as giving talented boarders and BMXers the chance to wow the crowd and the judges,” said Councillor Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Young People.

Funding for the skatepark has come from a range of sources including Suffolk Coastal, Woodbridge Town Council, Sport England, SET, Awards for All, Woodbridge Community Council, the Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership, and Market Towns Initiative, the County's Regeneration Fund, Community Champions, Ganzoni Trust, Woodbridge School and local fundraising.

## **Partnership helping young people to avoid homelessness**

Suffolk Coastal's housing options team and County's children's and young person's services and Connexions have been working in local schools to help prevent homelessness and letting young people know what help is on offer.

“Homelessness is a serious concern, and young people who have recently left school are among those most at risk of having no place to live, so this partnership is informing and supporting young people to help prevent the worst happening,” said Councillor Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

The partnership set up One Stop, a housing advice service for young people, based at Felixstowe's Level 2 and working with social services workers, benefits advisors, and Connexions, the initiative has helped improve young people's welfare as a whole.

“The team plans to work with schools in Leiston, Saxmundham and Woodbridge and to show the DVD made by Felixstowe schools to other young people in the district,” added Cllr Slemmings.

To contact Suffolk Coastal's housing options team call 01394 444264 or email [homelessness@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:homelessness@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness)

Young people should visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness/youngpeople16and17](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing/homelessness/youngpeople16and17) for help tailored to meet their needs.