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Help us keep community facilities top notch

04 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Now that the new sporting season is under way residents using local sports grounds or community facilities in the district are being reminded to think about other users and use them safely.

There are a number of sports and community venues either privately owned or owned by the Council that are used on a regular basis by many different sporting and community groups.

"We are urging sports grounds or community centre users to become more familiar with the sites they use and to help keep them in good condition for others using them," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

"Many groups and clubs have now returned after their summer breaks so we would like to remind residents that local facilities are for everybody to use and would encourage them to leave the facilities in a condition they would be happy to find them, removing any litter that may have been dropped," added Cllr Neale.

It is also important for users to know the address of the facility they are using rather than knowing them locally as the football pitch, community centre or sports ground as it may be needed in an emergency.

Facilities in the district are encouraged to register their address details with the East of England Ambulance Trust and can do so by emailing marian.burgess@eastcambs.nhs.uk

"If an ambulance or other emergency help is needed the dispatcher will need to know a street name and number, post code or grid reference as they may not have local knowledge of the area. It would be helpful if regular users became familiar with the address of the site they are using as it could be invaluable.

"We want to make sure that the sports and community facilities in the district remain at a high standard for everyone and we hope that residents will be keen to help us achieve this," added Cllr Neale.



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Popcorn at the ready for new family film festival

04 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The first Film Flurry, an exciting new family friendly film festival, is preparing for its silver screen launch providing exciting activities for families with young children this half-term holiday.

There are nine different events to choose from in Suffolk Coastal taking place between Saturday, October 23 to Sunday, October 31 including film screenings, workshops and activities for children and families in more rural parts of the district.

“The Film Flurry festival gives younger viewers the chance to discover the magic of the film viewing experience with special First Flicks screenings. We hope this will capture their imagination and give them the chance to see well loved stories and fairytales brought to life through film,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

“There are also a number of Family Favourite screenings which are ideal for the whole family to enjoy with screenings such as the Gruffalo, Peter and the Wolf and Son of Rambow as well as five short animations for our youngest viewers,” added Cllr Neale.

The film screenings are in various locations across the district and each have a unique twist on the usual cinema experience. These include a special Gruffalo stroll, live orchestral musicians accompanying the screening of Peter and the Wolf and workshops including mask making for younger children and learning the art of stage fighting for those aged 12 and over.

“I am particularly looking forward to the Gruffalo stroll with children and their parents venturing into the woods and using their best detective work to follow clues in search of their very own Gruffalo. There is no cost for the Gruffalo stroll although children will need to have a ticket for the screening,” added Cllr Neale.

Gruffalo strolls are taking place on Saturday, October 23 at Kenton Hills near Leiston from 11am and Saturday, October 30 at Leeks Hill, Melton from 11am. To book residents can call 01394 444720.

“We look forward to our younger viewers, who may be watching a big screen performance for the first time, enjoying seeing some of their favourite stories brought to life and hopefully take the first steps in developing a life-long interest in film and the arts.

“We hope that some of our residents coming along to the Film Flurry will be inspired to carry out their own events celebrating film and we are keen to hear from anyone that would be interested in setting up their own community film club or would like to get involved with Film Flurry next year. The Suffolk Coastal ARTS team are on hand to offer help and advice and can be contacted on 01394 444294 or by emailing arts@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk,” added Cllr Neale.

The Film Flurry is a joint project between Suffolk Coastal and Mid Suffolk ARTS and there are also a number of events taking place in Mid Suffolk. To find out more or to see a list of all the screenings and events residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/arts/filmflurry Information leaflets are also available from local outlets.





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Council successfully keeps tabs and tags on fraudulent couple

06 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

A married couple who thought they had escaped punishment for falsely claiming over £18,000 of Housing and Council Tax benefits by moving to the Isle of Wight have been caught out and sentenced for their offences.

Robert and Georgina Chambers, previously of Fisher Close, Saxmundham, pleaded guilty to 11 offences, eight for Mr Chambers and three for Mrs Chambers, of falsely claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit between 2001 and 2008.

"The couple moved to the Isle of Wight after we had started prosecution. However, we re-started the case in the Isle of Wight Magistrates Court. The Chambers were arrested at their home by Police and remanded in custody in August. Fraudulently claiming benefits is a serious offence and this case shows the lengths we are prepared to go to, to make sure that everyone is claiming fairly," said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

Their false claims totalled £13,567.24 of Housing Benefit overpayment and £3,814.73 of Council Tax benefit because they had failed to report income from Mr Chambers' NHS pension, Mrs Chambers' work for care agencies and one of the bank accounts they received money in to.

Both were sentenced to eight months custody, suspended for two years, and must adhere to a six month curfew between 7pm and 7am which will be electronically monitored. An arrangement had already been made for the couple to repay what they fraudulently claimed.

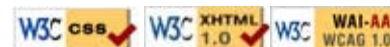
"Thanks to closer working with Government departments it is now easier to find cases where people are being dishonest when giving us information. I would encourage residents to inform us of any change in their circumstances to make sure they are receiving what they are entitled to bearing in mind this could mean that they receive more benefits, not less.

"The benefits system is there to help people that need it and it is frustrating that a small minority choose to abuse it. I hope that residents in Suffolk Coastal will be keen to help us make sure that those in need of benefits get the support they deserve and will support us in being increasingly vigilant and tough on those that think they can cheat the system by committing benefits fraud," added Cllr Slemmings.

To notify the Council of any change in circumstances or to check that they are receiving what they are entitled to residents can contact the benefits team on 01394 444838. More information about benefits is available online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/benefits

The Council's fraud investigation service is delivered under an Audit Partnership with Ipswich Borough Council and has proven highly successful since its introduction in 2004 in bringing to justice those individuals who are found to be committing benefit fraud in the district.

Suspected incidents of benefits fraud can be reported confidentially to the 24 hour Fraud Hotline by calling 01394 444444 or emailing fraud.investigation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk



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Study to offer options for the Spa and local arts

06 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet backed plans last night (Tuesday) for a detailed study that will map out all the possible options for the future of the Spa Pavilion Theatre and how it can help meet the needs of local arts groups and the wider community.

The Council-owned 905 seat theatre has been managed since May 2006 by Openwide Coastal Ltd (OCL) and is seen as a key element of the ongoing plans to regenerate Felixstowe and central to the arts in the district.

“Last year a special report on leisure and arts in the area told us there should be further study into how suitable the Spa was to meet the needs of local arts groups, and we can now give our backing to that initiative,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside.

“With money we have gained from the Government because of our successes, we can now call in arts experts to look at all the possible options for the future of the Spa. This is a worthwhile investment to ensure that we can make an informed decision on the best way forward for this important facility.

“We will commission an independent view on how well the Spa is currently serving our district, with options on how things could be changed and how it can meet our test of still providing value for money for our communities that we are currently applying to all our services,” added Cllr Neale.

The plan is now to appoint a specialist in theatre management who will meet and seek the views of local arts groups, community groups and residents, before drawing up a report that will also look at how other similar venues are operating. Cont/d...

The aim is for a report to be produced offering diverse, realistic and affordable options for the future of the theatre and the provision of arts locally, with Cabinet then deciding which option could then be turned into an action plan for the future.

“Despite the tough economic climate, which has seen paid for attendances falling by 8,000 to 39,105 in 2009/10 compared to 2007/08, the management at the Spa have succeeded in making a profit over the last couple of years.

“This Council has long recognised the importance of the arts in our district for our residents to take part and enjoy but also as a creator of income and jobs. However, the cost of the Spa to this Council last year was £241,353, with £215,000 of that going to OCL, and this study should give us an expert view on whether and how we can get more value for money.

“By using this money from the Government, we are in a position to set out a long-term plan for the Spa and the arts and I look forward to people having their input into the study and to Cabinet receiving its initial options,” added Cllr Neale.

Suffolk Coastal gained £1.5 million from the Government, through its Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (LABGI) because of the district's success in increasing the amount of money collected from business rates.

The investment plan agreed in January last year for the use of the LABGI fund includes money being spent on improving transport and town centres, 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.





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Local woman sentenced after trying to cheat benefits system

08 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

A 40 year old woman from Woodbridge is now feeling the cost of committing benefit fraud after pleading guilty to fraudulently claiming over £17,000 in benefits.

Donna Vince, previously known as Donna Kersey, of Through Duncans, Woodbridge admitted at Ipswich Magistrates' Court to fraudulently claiming Housing and Council Tax benefit over a period of two to three years by claiming she was a single parent when in fact she was living with her partner.

"Ms Vince deliberately failed to let the Council know that she was living with her partner despite being in contact by telephone with the benefits team about her claim 12 times between December 2004 and November 2007," said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

The false claim totalled £17,377.50 including £9,731.09 of Housing Benefit and £1,822.29 of Council Tax Benefit. A false claim of £5,824.12 was also made for Income Support from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Ms Vince was sentenced to four months imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, and 200 hours unpaid work. An arrangement has also been made for her to pay back the benefits she falsely claimed.

"While claiming benefits between 2004 and 2007 she had several opportunities to tell us about her situation changing but deliberately deceived us by not informing us she had been living with her partner since the beginning of 2005.

"The Council's benefits team receives over 850 calls a week and over 150 visitors a week so they are well equipped to deal with any changes to a claim quickly. I would urge residents that have had a change in their circumstances, whether it is moving in with a new partner or starting a new job, to contact a member of the benefits team to update us and make sure that they are receiving what they are entitled to. This could mean receiving more benefits not less.

"Benefits fraud is a serious offence and thanks to continued working with an Audit partnership with Ipswich and Waveney Councils and other Government departments it is becoming easier for the Council to catch up with the selfish few that think they can get away with claiming money that they are not entitled to," added Cllr Slemmings.

Anyone that would like to report suspected cases of benefits fraud can contact the confidential 24hour fraud hotline on 01394 444444 or email fraud.investigation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

To notify the Council of any changes in circumstances residents can contact the benefits team on 01394 444838 or visit the Council's offices at Melton Hill, Woodbridge. There is also useful information about what residents may be entitled to online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/benefits





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Lullaby Concerts give children a magical musical taster

08 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Two special events are being held featuring the City of London Sinfonia to introduce young children to the world of music and performance.

The Lullaby Concerts will be visiting Debenham Community Centre, Gracechurch Street, Debenham on Tuesday, October 26 and The Cut, 8 New Cut, Halesworth on Wednesday, October 27 and with performances at 11am and 2pm.

“Children and their parents will get the chance to listen to enchanting music from the City of London Sinfonia in a relaxed setting with the chance to sing and dance along with the animal themed music,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Tickets cost £4 for adults and £2 for children and can be booked by calling The Cut box office on 0845 6732123 or Debenham Community Centre on 01728 861101. Tickets can be booked online for The Cut at www.newcut.org/whatson.php

Youngsters and their parents can get into the spirit of the concerts by dressing up as their favourite animals ready to take part in the singing, dancing and music making on the day. When needing a break from dancing children and adults can sit back and relax and are encouraged to bring a cushion to sit on.

“The Lullaby Concerts are specifically designed for under fives but I am sure they will be just as enjoyable for grown-ups too. They offer a perfect introduction to different sounds and instruments and are a great place to enjoy music as a family,” added Cllr Neale.

Getting the chance to listen to professional musicians is a treat at any age and will hopefully spark a lifelong interest in all kinds of music for young children and their families. Although the Sinfonia is known for their classical performances the concerts are engaging with people of all ages and can bring the magic of live performance to many different types of music.

“The Lullaby Concerts may give young children their first taste of live music so this is a very special experience for them. It will also give them the chance to discover different instruments and the sounds they can make allowing them to find out more about sound and making music,” added Cllr Neale.

“By working in partnership with other councils we have previously brought the Lullaby Concerts to our own district, and while none of them are within our borders, they are in locations convenient for our residents in the north and west,” added Cllr Neale.

The concerts are a joint project between Arts Council England, Babergh, Forest Heath, St Edmundsbury, Mid Suffolk, Suffolk County, Suffolk Coastal and Philips Avent.

To find out more about the lullaby concert series residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/arts/lullaby or contact the arts and heritage officer on 01394 444294 or email rachel.nightingale@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk





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Venture into the woods for half term Halloween fun

08 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

This half-term holiday children will be stepping in to the forest to have fun and get some spooky hands on experience of life in the wild.

Two forest activity days are taking place in Rendlesham Forest, Tangham on Wednesday, October 27 and Thursday, October 28 from 10am to 3pm, meeting at the Rendlesham Forest Centre.

“Nature and adventure lovers will not want to miss out on the forest activity days, taking part in a range of outdoor activities and learning forest skills that will help them increase their confidence,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Activities taking place include spooky Halloween sculpture, autumn bush craft skills, survival skills including shelter building and forest games.

Young people will need to wear suitable clothing and bring wet weather gear, bearing in mind they could get muddy. They will also need to bring a packed lunch and snacks to last the day.

“Previous forest activity events, including Forestfest held earlier this year, have been very popular and I am sure there will be a great deal of interest for the Halloween themed half term sessions. Young people will have plenty of fun taking part in the outdoor activities, picking up new skills and meeting new people,” added Cllr Neale.

The activity days cost £20 per day and £17.50 for any siblings wanting to attend. Young people need to be aged eight and over. Places can be booked by calling the active communities team on 01394 444652 or by emailing active.communities@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

“Taking part in the forest activities, young people will have the chance to explore more of the varied landscape that is in the district and may be quite different to where they live. Learning new skills and having fun in the forest we hope that they will jump at the chance to enjoy the outdoors and keep active,” added Cllr Neale.

Rendlesham Forest centre is located four miles along the B1084 past Woodbridge on the right hand side. To find out more about the event or Rendlesham Forest residents can visit www.forestry.gov.uk

For more information about half-term activities residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/halfterm

The activity days are being organised jointly by Suffolk Coastal and The Forestry Commission.



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Head outside to see what Woodwose has to offer

11 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Local school children from two primary schools in the district will be getting a sneak peak of the fun to be had at the first Woodwose festival taking place next week.

Today (Monday, October 11) pupils from Middleton Primary and Peasenhall primary will be joined by local artist Juliet Lockhart to make special lanterns ahead of their performance in the Woodwose tree dressing festival taking place at the launch on Saturday, October 16, at Westleton Village Green at 5.45pm.

"All 60 pupils will take part in creating a willow and tissue lantern ready for the tree dressing festival on the launch day. Juliet will be encouraging the children to use their imagination and come up with something unique and individual and I look forward to seeing the end result," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Woodwose, the first outdoor festival celebrating the Suffolk Coast, is taking place from Saturday, October 16 to Saturday, October 30 at locations across the district with the launch event on Saturday, October 16 at Westleton Village Green from 12pm to 10pm.

"There are so many activities planned for the fortnight that I am sure there will be something for everyone whether they are in to arts and crafts, wildlife and nature or great music," added Cllr Neale.

Bookings are now open for all of the events taking place on the launch day and throughout the festival. Many events are free of charge and full information is available at www.woodwose.org

"The Geo-caching event taking place on Thursday, October 28 from 10am to 2pm at Tower Hall, Rushmere St Andrew also looks very interesting and I am sure there will be many young people wanting to get involved and take part in the high-tech treasure hunt to see what goodies they can un-earth along the way.

"I am particularly interested to see the Ceilidh with music played by Buckshee and Syzewell Gap and it looks set to be a great finale for the Woodwose launch event. Along with the many arts and crafts workshops, a samba drumming workshop and tree dressing there is also fire twirling, wood carving, live music, food from the White Horse Inn and a special walk to make sure there is plenty to keep everyone entertained in to the evening," added Cllr Neale.

Tickets can be bought in advance from the White Horse Inn or the Aldeburgh Tourist Information Centre. Adults cost £7, under 14's free, although they will need a ticket.

"This year marks the 40th anniversary of the AONB so it is the perfect time to help people to explore and enjoy the 320 sq km of stunning landscape that is on their doorstep. Many of the Woodwose events centre on this theme and include guided walks organised in partnership with the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Pub Walks Guide and Adnams breweries," added Cllr Neale.

There are also guided walks and workshops planned at Landguard Nature Reserve, as well as

South Felixstowe and two separate heritage walks will take place in Woodbridge, starting at the railway station. A stroll to the romantic ruins of Leiston Abbey will also be taking place, starting at Leiston Long Shop Museum.

As well as events organised by local groups some of the partner organisations that are running events include the National Trust, RSPB, Forestry Commission, English Heritage, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Wonderful Beast. There will also be a range of Health Walks coinciding with Woodwose giving residents the chance to enjoy the beautiful Suffolk Coastal landscape while keeping active and meeting new people.

To find out more about Woodwose or to book any of the events and activities residents and visitors can visit www.woodwose.org or Aldeburgh TIC on 01728 453637 or Felixstowe TIC on 01394 276770. Regular updates will be posted on the twitter page on www.twitter.com/woodwosefest



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Preparing the ground to make Central Felixstowe safe

12 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The next big step forward towards the planned Central Felixstowe coast protection works will get underway this month when experts will be carrying out ground investigations checks.

Suffolk Coastal appointed Mott MacDonald to design the outline Central Felixstowe coast protection scheme. Now that the preferred option has been approved by the Environment Agency, the detailed documentation can be drawn up and finalised prior to seeking tenders for the works.

“This multi-million pound scheme will provide coastal protection for the Central Felixstowe frontage from the War Memorial in the south to Jacob’s Ladder in the north,” said Cllr Andy Smith, Suffolk Coastal’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Coastal Management.

“What has been approved is a scheme that will comprise rock groynes and a restoration of beach levels along the frontage and a rock revetment and walkway around Cobbold’s Point. I would like to thank the Environment Agency for backing this scheme which will significantly reduce the flood and coastal erosion risk for the next 100 years.

“As part of these works Mott MacDonald and Vinci Construction UK Ltd’s Soil Engineering team will be undertaking a ground investigation to ensure the land we want to build on is suitable, so there might be a bit of minor disruption for residents and visitors for ten days or so in the next month,” added Cllr Smith.

The ground investigation will consist of two stages with the first running from Monday, October 18 to Friday, October 22, and the second from Monday, November 1 to Friday, November 5, with work on site between 7am and 7pm.

While the investigations are taking place, the contractors may need to close sections of the promenade and access around Cobbold’s Point on the above dates.

“Once the preliminary design work is complete a public exhibition will be held to present the further development of the scheme, building upon those that have been previously held during the earlier stages of the work.

“We apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused. For further information regarding the ground investigation please contact Paul Patterson, our lead officer on coastal protection issues, on 01502 523600, or email coast.protection@waveney.gov.uk,” added Cllr Smith.



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Students to grill community leaders at question time

12 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The district's two Members of Parliament will join Suffolk Coastal's three political group leaders on a panel this Friday (October 15) as around 80 students from five of the district's sixth forms will grill them on their hot topics.

Therese Coffey, Dan Poulter, and Cllrs Ray Herring, Christine Block and Mike Deacon will be joined by Harry Stewart from Felixstowe who is a Youth Parliament MP, and Nick Boulter, Chairman of the Suffolk Coastal Business Forum for the Question Time event in the Melton Hill Council Chamber at 10am.

"This will be the first time we have done such an event, which is being held as part of Local Democracy Week, and it promises to be an excellent opportunity for some of our local sixth formers to quiz some of the district's key decision-makers," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member responsible for young people.

"It will be interesting to hear what their concerns are and whether the big issues dominating the national headlines are also the ones that are registering with our young people.

"Many of those on the panel are having to make decisions that affect the services, lives or futures of the next generation of voters who are still at school at the moment, and their perspective on the challenges we are facing could be quite illuminating," added Cllr Savage.

Suffolk Coastal's Chief Executive, Stephen Baker, will be chairing the event, and doing his best to ensure that the tough questions are answered. All senior schools were invited to the event, and groups from Felixstowe's Orwell and Deben High schools, Woodbridge school, Kesgrave High school and Otley College will be attending.

As well as the chance to ask questions and debate with the panel, the students will also be given the chance to check if they are on the electoral register and to get their details on it if they are not.



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Council celebrates commitment to customer service

13 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Staff have been proving their dedication to providing excellent standards of service for residents during this year's Customer Services Week.

The customer service teams across the council were last week (October 4 to October 8) celebrating the hard work and excellent efforts staff make to help local residents.

"During an average week the customer services teams at Suffolk Coastal's main reception, Housing and Benefits helpdesk and Planning helpdesk receive 2,713 telephone enquiries and 583 visitors to the offices in Melton Hill. This is very impressive and highlights the skill and excellent level of service needed by our staff to help such an array of queries," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners.

"Throughout the week there were fun quizzes for staff and customers to take part in and opportunities for staff from different service areas to spend some time answering queries from residents. One of the Council's strategic directors took a turn at the reception desk along with a member of the customer service team from Suffolk Coastal Services (SCS) taking part to learn from any similarities or differences to help make our service even better," added Cllr Savage.

Rachael Edwards from the Housing and Benefits team was chosen as the customer services champion for always giving 100 per cent to make sure that customers are happy with the help they receive.

"Asking a resident visiting the reception what they thought of the service they received, they praised the customer service team at Suffolk Coastal for their excellent knowledge base, not only within their service area but also general enquiries that may be a little bit out of the ordinary.

"The customer service teams do a fantastic job and Customer Services Week has been a great way of recognising the hard work that they put in to help our residents. I hope that any residents using the service for the first time will also be impressed," added Cllr Savage.

The customer services team are available during the Council's opening hours of Monday to Thursday, 8.45am to 5.15pm and Friday, 8.45am to 4.45pm by visiting the offices in Melton Hill, Woodbridge or calling or emailing the relevant team.

The main reception can be contacted on 01394 383789, Housing and Benefits on 01394 444838 and Planning on 01394 444403 or 444428. There is also further contact information available online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/contactus



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Family treasure trails help people discover the outdoors

14 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

As part of Woodwose, the first outdoor festival on the Suffolk Coast, a special family challenge event is taking place exploring Felixstowe's Seafront gardens and some of the historic parts of the town.

The Woodwose Treasure Trail will take place on Saturday, October 23 with trails starting between 10am and 1.30pm from Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre (TIC).

"There is so much of our local landscape that gets overlooked and the Felixstowe Woodwose Treasure Trails are the perfect way to discover some of the areas around us while trying to solve the fun clues and pick up treasure along the way," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

The trail will last about three hours combining a spy themed trail, a quiz, a treasure hunt and a limerick tie breaker. Teams will be provided with a challenge booklet, a bag to collect treasure and a map including trail directions and clues. Groups can take their time to complete the trail although answer sheets will need to be returned by 5pm to the TIC.

Groups of up to four can book by calling the TIC on 01394 276770. Tickets will cost £10 if booked in advance and £12 if bought from the TIC on the day.

Prizes are available including a free days beach hut hire in 2011 and a mystery prize for the team with the highest score throughout the day. The winning groups will be announced at 6pm at the Brook Hotel in Felixstowe.

"Treasure Trails are a great way for people to have fun and get to know a little bit more about some of Felixstowe's landmarks such as the Seafront gardens. They are a well-known feature in the town linking the town centre with the seafront and a perfect place for the whole family to get outside and enjoy staying active.

"It is great to see residents enjoying the gardens and I hope that those that are not familiar with the gardens will be intrigued to find out more," added Cllr Neale.

The Seafront gardens restoration project is currently drawing up its final designs ahead of the second round submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in February 2011 and so far includes plans to improve lighting and access to the gardens, restoration of heritage buildings, a visitor centre and a performance area.

For more information about the Felixstowe Woodwose Treasure Trails residents and visitors can visit www.woodwose.org or www.treasuretrails.co.uk/suffolk/woodwose or contact Felixstowe TIC on 01394 276770.

The Felixstowe Woodwose Treasure Trails are being organised by Treasure Trails, a national company organising events across the country. Trails are also available in Aldeburgh, Kesgrave, Thorpeness and Woodbridge.





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Residents asked if they want a Council Leader or a Mayor

15 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Suffolk Coastal has joined councils up and down the country in asking its residents whether they want to have a Leader or a Mayor running their Council from next May.

In May 2001, after public consultation, Suffolk Coastal introduced a new system whereby most decisions were taken by its Leader and a new Cabinet of senior councillors.

"Parliament has now insisted that all councils review the way they are run with a view to either keeping the current system but having the same Leader for four years, or letting the public elect a Mayor also for four years," said Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal.

"The Mayoral system has been adopted in a few cities and London boroughs and has probably most famously seen Boris Johnson and Ken Livingstone elected in London, and it will be interesting to see if people think it would be appropriate for an area like ours.

"Under either the Leader or the Mayoral system, regulatory decisions such as planning and licensing will continue to be made independently by committees of the district's councillors, so that important aspect will not change at all," added Cllr Herring.

People have until December 3 to let the Council know which of the two options they would prefer for the future, which they can do online by visiting www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/haveyoursay/, and their views will be reported to a meeting of the Full Council that will agree the way ahead on December 16.

At present, the Council's Leader and Cabinet form of decision-making means that the key strategic decisions for the district and its local services are made by nine district councillors who takes collective responsibility for those decisions which are subject to review or call-in by other councillors through the scrutiny process.

Some decisions can only be made by the Full Council such as setting the budget and Council Tax each year, making byelaws or approving the plans and strategies within the Council's policy framework.

Under the new proposals, the Leader option is similar to the Council's current arrangements, but it would see the Leader being elected by Full Council for a period of four years rather than every May. The Council as a whole would also be able to remove the Leader.

Once elected, the Leader would be responsible for all executive functions and would decide which of these should be delegated to other Cabinet members, local committees or officers. The Leader decides on the size of the Cabinet and would appoint between two and nine members to form a Cabinet to take decisions.

The Leader would also appoint a deputy leader (who would also be a portfolio holder on the Cabinet) who would also serve a four-year term. Other councillors' roles in regulatory functions such as development control and licensing would remain as at present and the Chairman of the

Council's role would remain unchanged. The Council as a whole would be able to remove the Leader.

Under the elected Mayor option, the electors of the district would vote for a Mayor of Suffolk Coastal who would hold office for a period of four years. Once elected the Mayor would be responsible for all executive functions and would decide which of these functions were going to be delegated to other Cabinet members, local committees or officers.

The Mayor would appoint a Cabinet of between two and nine councillors and the Mayor and Cabinet would take decisions on executive functions. Other councillors' roles in regulatory functions such as development control and licensing would remain as at present and the Chairman of the Council's role would remain unchanged.

Once elected, the Mayor cannot be removed from office by the Council and would serve a full four-year term. Fresh elections would take place at the end of his or her term of office.

People can make their views known online by visiting www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/haveyoursay/ where they can either support option 1, a Leader and Cabinet, option 2 - a directly-elected Mayor and Cabinet, or they can express no preference or don't know.

Alternatively, people can write to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services Suffolk Coastal District Council, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU. The closing date for comments is December 3.



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Young people learn facts about alcohol

15 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

As part of the national Alcohol Awareness Week, young people and their families are being given the opportunity to find out more about alcohol and the potential dangers of alcohol misuse.

Officers from the Community Safety Partnership along with Suffolk Coastal's substance misuse worker will be visiting Leiston High School on Monday, October 18 from 12pm to 4pm and Deben and Orwell High School on Tuesday, October 19 from 12pm to 4pm.

"Young people will have the chance to come along to the mobile police unit to take part in fun quizzes and questionnaires and get information about alcohol, answering any questions they may have about alcohol and how to reduce the risks associated with misuse," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board Member.

As well as information about alcohol the substance misuse officer will be on hand to give advice to anyone that may be concerned about their own, a friend's, or a family member's alcohol consumption.

"The Suffolk Drugs and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) are also helping to support the campaign by providing £500 towards promotional materials. This has allowed us to produce special pencils and travel toothbrush sets reinforcing the message 'Think before you drink' and the helpline number to give out to young people.

"Alcohol can have a serious effect on the body so it is important that young people are aware of both the short and long term health risks they are taking by consuming alcohol. The instances of binge drinking are still growing and with it concerns around anti social behaviour so it is important to take advantage of educating young people so that they are less likely to pick up dangerous drinking habits," added Cllr Savage.

During school hours the mobile unit will be available for any parents or adults that would like to find out a bit more information about the dangers of alcohol. As well as individual advice there are also opportunities for residents to come along to discuss any concerns they may have about alcohol in the community.

"Alcohol misuse can have a serious impact on young people's health and wellbeing so it is important to make sure that they are aware of the consequences of drinking, not only on their health but understanding it could also affect their school or work opportunities in the future," added Cllr Savage.

The substance misuse worker will also be visiting Saxmundham town centre on Wednesday, October 20 from 10am to 2pm to raise awareness about alcohol to local residents and the community.

To find out more information about the alcohol awareness events or about alcohol in the community residents can contact the substance misuse worker on 07768 817607 or email Julia.catterwell@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk





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Ice skating rink glides into resort

18 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

This Christmas residents and visitors can enter into the festive season by trying their hand at the traditional winter pastime of ice skating as a temporary skating rink comes to the resort of Felixstowe.

The Council has organised for a skating rink to be at Ocean Boulevard Amusements & refreshments kiosk between Sea Road & the promenade, Felixstowe, from Monday, December 20 to Friday, December 24, open from 10am to 5pm, closing at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

“The skating rink will be a great addition for the town this Christmas as residents often have to travel long distances to go ice skating. I hope that both experienced skaters and visitors trying it for the first time will be keen to bring their friends and family along to have a go and perhaps even treat them to a hot chocolate to warm up afterwards,” said Cllr Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Tourism.

Discounted tickets are available from the Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre (TIC) either in advance or on the day. These will cost £4 for adults and £2 for children under 16 and family tickets costing £10 for two adults and two children. Tickets bought at the rink will cost £5 for adults and £2.50 for children. Those aged under 12 will need to be accompanied by an adult.

Suitable clothing is recommended, including long sleeves and gloves, in case of any falls. Skate hire is included in the ticket price.

“We have been working hard to bring new and exciting attractions to Felixstowe this year and we are continuing this work throughout the winter months. This summer we helped support the introduction of Segways, the Road Train, Falconry displays, beach safety wristbands, a brass band concert and the return of donkey rides to the seafront and the reopening of the Cliff Top Café.

“Ice skating is a great way to get in to the spirit of Christmas and I hope that many local residents and visitors from further afield will come along to see the ice skaters in action and have a go on the rink themselves.

“The skating rink is located overlooking Felixstowe’s south beach offering great views out over the beach. I would encourage visitors to come and experience the impressive coastline and to make sure they do not miss out on the opportunity to show off their best skating and twirls this winter,” added Cllr Hart.

To book tickets or for more information residents and visitors can contact Felixstowe TIC, 91 Undercliff Road West on 01394 276770 or email ftic@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

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Council prepares for new Sizewell plans

19 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

On the same day that the Government confirmed that Sizewell would be a suitable site for the building of a new nuclear power station, Suffolk Coastal's new task group met for the first time.

The Sizewell Task Group met last night (Monday) and is the latest initiative by the Council to ensure that it is ready to represent the interests of local communities if and when plans for the development are submitted.

"The Energy Secretary Chris Huhne has now reduced the list of suitable sites for future nuclear power stations down to eight, which includes Sizewell. His announcement should not be misunderstood as being the final go-ahead, as there are still many hurdles to jump yet, not least his insistence that any future developments must occur without any public subsidy," said Cllr Andrew Nunn Chairman of the Sizewell Task Group.

"We have long recognised the potential benefits of a new Sizewell, which could mean up to 5,000 construction jobs for six or seven years, and employment at the new power station for up to 900 people.

"However, there are also significant local concerns so we remain committed to demanding that the communities of Suffolk Coastal must have the right to reject any proposal which has an unreasonable impact," added Cllr Nunn.

It is not clear at the moment who will make the decision on any planning application. The previous Government wanted to create an Infrastructure Planning Commission to consider and decide such nationally significant proposals, but the current Government appears to intend that it would be dealt with by the existing Planning Inspectorate, with the final decision being made by Mr Huhne.

"We have made it clear that there are significant local concerns that must be positively addressed such as the fact that Sizewell is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Heritage Coast and close to internationally important sites for wildlife. The choice of the design of any proposed station, and the overall effect on the landscape, must fully take this into account.

"Other issues include the possible effects on coastal erosion on the site, the need to minimise the disruption caused if a new power station is built, and appropriate compensation for the local community, as well as the design and location of housing and facilities for the workforce, transport on and off site, construction noise, and the possible storage of spent nuclear waste.

"This Task Group has a vital role to play in trying to ensure that local concerns are fully addressed when any plans for Sizewell are decided upon, and it will build on the work that we are already undertaking. The Government's apparent intention to have the Energy Secretary making the final decision will at least ensure some democratically accountable involvement but we would continue to urge for it to be made at the local level by those who are going to be affected by the result," added Cllr Nunn

Suffolk Coastal and Suffolk County Council are set to appoint two officers specifically to concentrate on assessing the potential impacts of the development and using whatever legal and technical advice is necessary to ensure that the two councils can attempt to address any adverse impacts of the proposals.

Councillors and officers have already met with Government officials, and there has been regular contact with councils in the west country affected by proposals for a third power station at Hinkley Point to share knowledge and best practice.

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Join trust to preserve our historic buildings

20 Oct 2010

Archived press release.

Volunteers are wanted to join a Building Preservation Trust which is being set up by Suffolk Coastal and Waveney to help protect important historic features in the two districts.

The formal process of setting up a Building Preservation Trust and registering it as a company is now underway so the steering group are looking for volunteers to become Trustees. This process often takes time but the Trust hopes to be up and running by the New Year.

“Suffolk Coastal alone has well over 2,500 listed buildings which form a very important cultural and heritage resource that plays a key part in the attractiveness of our district but the future of some of them are at risk due to lack of maintenance or neglect,” said Cllr Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning.

“To help provide long-term solutions to the difficulties facing these buildings, we want to set up a Building Preservation Trust to cover East Suffolk, and which could seek grant aid and funding to purchase some of these more at risk buildings and so ensure their repair and restoration,” added Cllr Smith.

Some of the most concerning examples can be seen on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/policy/listed/buildingsatrisk/

The Council’s conservation team would like to hear from anyone willing to become a Trustee and support the activities of the new Trust, especially if you have a great interest in historic buildings, or have architectural, legal or accountancy experience.

The district’s heritage includes country houses like the Grade I listed Heveningham Hall through military fortifications such as Framlingham and Orford Castles and many Martello Towers, as well as rectories, townhouses, guildhalls, cottages and milestones.

To find out more about the Trust residents can email conservation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or call 01394 444616.



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Residents help keep historic station project moving

20 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

There really could be light at the end of the tunnel for Trimley station thanks to the valuable information given by local residents and community groups who are trying to permanently save the historic building.

Last month the Council issued a questionnaire to all residents living in Trimley St Mary, as well as to members of the Friends of Trimley station group, local sports and community groups and local estate agents, to gauge their views on facilities available locally and what new use for the building they would support and benefit from.

"We have received a really good number of responses to the questionnaires and have a good range of information to use to draw up a finalised business plan to present to Network Rail, the building's owners, in December," said Cllr Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning.

As a result of the survey an additional 56 people have joined the Friends group showing their enthusiasm and support for saving the building and seeing it used to benefit the community.

"There was a very good response to the questionnaire with a great deal of support for using the building for a community and young persons meeting place and an internet café. I would like to thank local residents for getting involved to help us with the project, their contributions have been really useful in determining what would be well used by residents," added Cllr Smith.

Suffolk ACRE, with support from Trimley Parish Council, are now drawing up a business plan based on the findings of the questionnaire and will present it to Network Rail at the end of the year along with proposals for a Community Interest Company to take on a lease, demonstrating local need and demand for the building.

"Network Rail planned to demolish the station building after deeming it unviable to maintain. With the help of Suffolk Coastal, Felixstowe Futures, Trimley Parish Council and the Friends group there has been positive progress with Network Rail and we look forward to working with them to present a business plan everyone is happy with.

"Trimley station is the last station building left in the county built by the Great Eastern Railway so it is really important that this piece of architectural heritage remains to be used and appreciated by the community. I look forward to seeing a great new use for the building that will reflect the community's needs and the positive partner working carried out to move the project forward," added Cllr Smith.

Residents can view the answers to the questionnaire on the website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/felixstowefutures/projects/trimleystation where there is also further information about the Trimley station project.

To find out more about the Friends group or to get involved, residents can email conservation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

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Don't miss out on Woodwose

25 Oct 2010

Archived press release.

Woodwose, the first outdoor festival on the Suffolk Coast, is now just over half way through its run of fun outdoor activities helping people to enjoy more of the Suffolk landscape, but residents are reminded there is still time to get involved.

There are activities suitable for the whole family ranging from scenic walks to scarecrow building to help celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in Suffolk Coastal.

"The launch day at Westleton Village green was a great start to the fortnight of festivities and it has been wonderful to see so many people enjoying the outdoors and rediscovering the beautiful Suffolk Coastal landscape," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

"Over the first week there have been some really exciting activities taking place. The beach fishing last Saturday at Dunwich was particularly interesting with a number of people giving it a try for the first time and landing their first catches of whiting," added Cllr Neale.

The second week includes the Geo-caching event in Rushmere St Andrew on Thursday, October 28 and is certain to keep young people out of mischief with outdoor treasure hunt adventures.

There are also two special walks visiting Landguard point in Felixstowe on Saturday, October 30 looking at the wildlife found on the beach in the nature reserve followed by beach art and an historical and architectural insight into South Felixstowe including a tour of Martello tower P. The nature reserve and beach art session will start at 11am at Manor Terrace car park and the heritage walk will start at 2pm meeting at Pier Bight car park at the rear of Felixstowe Leisure Centre.

"The Woodwose Map Art family workshop is also an event not to be missed with families getting the chance to create art based on the map of the AONB in the district. Cardboard Disaster will be on hand to offer helpful advice at the two sessions on Friday, October 29, from 10am to 11am and 12.30pm to 1.30pm at Woodbridge library," added Cllr Neale.

All of the events can be booked by calling either Aldeburgh Tourist Information centre (TIC) on 01728 453637 or Felixstowe TIC on 01394 276770. To see the full list of activities and for further information residents can visit www.woodwose.org



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Government backs partnership

25 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils' progressive partnership was backed by the Secretary of State for Local Government Eric Pickles last week, courtesy of a £200 million fund available to councils who seek to save money by sharing services.

Speaking after a meeting with the Secretary of State last Friday (October 22), Cllr Mark Bee, Leader of Waveney District Council confirmed that he had sought assurances regarding the coalition Government's commitment to local services and was pleased that the innovative work of the two Suffolk councils is being recognised.

He said: "With national headlines about the service-sharing initiatives at London councils, Waveney and Suffolk Coastal are extremely proud to be ahead of the game, saving money and streamlining services, while remaining committed to the standards our communities come to expect from us.

"I am therefore delighted that the Government has shown its support for our programme by setting aside a £200 million pot specifically for those councils who seek to restructure their services by merging teams. It is now for our councils to make the case for a share which will help us accelerate our programme.

"There is no easy solution to addressing a 28 percent cut in Government funding but it is clear that the Government supports our pioneering approach and believes that others should follow our path."

Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal District Council added: "This is very good news and real recognition from the Government for our strategy.

"By stripping away duplication, we can continue to make savings and additional funding would help us push on with a programme which began two years ago, but only this month saw us create a slimmed down management team for both councils, saving £400,000 per year, and which will now continue through other teams.

"This financial incentive from the Government is a real boost and will help us press ahead with our efforts to deliver value for money frontline services for the most vulnerable within our communities."



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Helping victims of domestic violence and abuse

25 Oct 2010

Archived press release.

A new forum is being set up in the district specifically to offer more help and support to people experiencing or living with abuse and to ensure victims know who they can turn to for help.

Cathy Press is the district's first domestic violence coordinator and she is inviting people from local health and housing services, Women's Aid, victim care centres, Homestart, Citizens Advice Bureaux, and other relevant organisations to join the forum.

"Thanks to funding from the Safer Suffolk Board and our Community Safety Partnership we have been able to appoint Cathy to lead our campaign on this important problem that was for too long not given the support it needs," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Community Safety.

"The shocking statistics show that nationally domestic abuse affects one in three women, while in Suffolk alone there were nearly 7,000 incidents reported to the police last year.

"Far too many victims, and they are not all women, are afraid to admit what is happening to them even to their friends or family. We want to improve the support on offer to them and to make it easier for them to know how to get help. As we have so many rural areas within our District it is a tough task to identify where this help is needed," added Cllr Savage.

The aims of the forum will be to raise awareness and understanding of what domestic abuse is and where people can seek help and support if they are experiencing or living with abuse. It will encourage agencies to work together in partnership to provide resources and services specifically focusing on domestic abuse.

Many victims of domestic abuse live in isolation with their experience and are afraid to share their feelings or experience with family members or friends. They may not be able to see their friends or have no access to transport due to their partner's control.

"As a result, it can be difficult for victims to know how or where there is support available to them and their feelings of isolation can clearly be much stronger given that feeling of isolation.

"We would like to ensure that every resident of our district is aware of what they can do if they or a friend, family member or colleague is a victim of domestic abuse. Domestic violence is a largely hidden crime, although it has one of the highest rates of repeat offences, and we want to do all we can to make support and resources available across the district to make it easier for victims to come forward," added Cllr Savage.

To coincide with the start of the White Ribbon campaign, an all-day event will be held on Wednesday, November 24 in Suffolk Coastal's Council Chamber at Melton Hill to bring together those interested in joining the new forum and to agree its aims and objectives. Anyone interested can contact Cathy Press on cathy@compass-ion.org or call 07966 592632.

While there is information on the existing support for domestic abuse victims on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/communitysafety/domestic/ anyone needing urgent help

can call 999 or contact the National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247.

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Take care to have responsible bonfire celebration

25 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

As November 5 draws closer, residents are being encouraged to take time to prepare thoroughly and responsibly if they are planning to celebrate Guy Fawkes Night with a bonfire.

Whether residents are planning to attend a large public display or hold their own celebrations in the back garden, there are a number of helpful reminders that residents could consider to make sure everyone has a good time.

“Bonfire Night is a great family event for people to get together and watch displays of fireworks and bonfires but it is important that they remember to do so safely and consider others living near by,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

If having a bonfire at home it is always a good idea to let neighbours know beforehand giving them the chance to make sure windows are closed and any washing left out is taken in before lighting. Neighbours and others living near by are often very understanding if told in advance.

When building the bonfire it is very important to check the positioning of the fire making sure that there are no overhead cables or wires and that the bonfire is kept to a manageable size for the garden it is in and away from any buildings, sheds or fences. It is also a good idea to make sure that only dry materials are used as it is easier to light and creates far less smoke than damp materials.

“It is also important for residents to only burn appropriate materials such as garden waste and untreated wood. Items that release dark smoke when burnt are not only annoying for neighbours but could also cause severe problems for those with breathing difficulties or health problems. Residents could face prosecution for burning dangerous items such as foam, upholstery, paint, plastics or tyres as the smoke and gases they release are often toxic and can pollute the environment.

“In addition to Guy Fawkes celebrations the green fingered among us may be busy trimming hedges and trees and a number of residents will be organising bonfires to dispose of any built up garden waste. There shouldn't really be a need for this thanks to the Council's fortnightly green waste collection service to all homes in the district but we appreciate that there may be some excess at this time of year.

“As well as the doorstep collection service, green or garden waste can also be taken to any of the household waste sites in the district. These are in Foxhall Road, Foxhall, Lovers Lane, Leiston and Carr Road, Felixstowe. The district already recycles over 61 per cent of household and garden waste but we hope this figure can be improved with the help of our residents,” added Cllr Nunn.

Bonfires can also cause concern to wildlife and animals living near by. It is a good idea to make sure that no animals have managed to get into the bonfire or could get too close to it before it is lit. Ideally pets should be kept indoors as they are easily frightened of fireworks or the intense heat from bonfires.

Residents with any further questions or that are unreasonably affected by bonfires can contact the Environmental Protection team on 01394 444624. For more information about the waste collection services organised by the Council, residents can contact SCS on 01394 444000. More information is also available online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/waste

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Central Felixstowe defence plans go on show

26 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The latest proposals for the £10 million scheme to provide long-term defences for the Central Felixstowe seafront will go on show next month, with the public having the chance to find out exactly what is being planned.

The Central Felixstowe project covers the seafront from Jacob's Ladder to the War Memorial and after previous lengthy consultation about the outline proposals, the scheme is set to proceed next year.

"The preferred option for Central Felixstowe includes a series of 18 rock groynes, a rock revetment and walkway from the prom around Cobbold's Point to Jacob's Ladder, and the topping up of the beach levels with sand and shingle," said Cllr Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Coastal Protection.

"These vital coastal defence works would offer protection for nearly 1500 homes, as well as local businesses, recreational gardens and key facilities, in Central Felixstowe for the next 100 years. The Environment Agency has already agreed to fund the work and detailed design has begun.

"This exhibition will give everyone the chance to view our approved outline scheme and offer residents the chance to quiz the project team about the next stages, which include the detailed design and construction phases. These works are vital to the future of Felixstowe and I cannot wait to see them completed, hopefully by late autumn next year," added Cllr Smith.

The exhibition will be held in Felixstowe Town Hall on Wednesday, November 10 from 2pm to 7pm. Suffolk Coastal has appointed Mott MacDonald to undertake the detailed design of the scheme and specialist technicians are carrying out test borings as part of ground investigations works at the site.

For more information about the Central Felixstowe scheme, residents can contact David Wheeler, our lead officer on this project, on 01502 523344, or email coast.protection@waveney.gov.uk or visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/coastalprotection/centralfx/

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Partners uniting to tackle anti-social behaviour

26 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The pioneering Suffolk Coastal District Anti-Social Behaviour team received a visit from Chief Constable Simon Ash last week (Thursday). The team has been working together and tackling problems since June and is leading the way in working as a team.

The multi-agency team was set up to deal with incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and is based at Suffolk Coastal's Melton Hill offices with targets set by the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership's (SCLSP) Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

"Although this is one of the safest districts in the country, we recognise that there are still genuine problems with ASB ruining the quality of life of some of our residents, and that is why this team was created," said Cllr Doreen Savage, LSP Board Member.

"The team currently includes the Council's community safety officers, who deal with ASB and alcohol and substance misuse, as well as a police officer from Woodbridge police, key people from our district council, the youth offending service, Flagship Suffolk Heritage Housing Association, the Suffolk Hate Crime Service. They should be joined in the future by others from the county council and the mental health service.

"There is agreement across the county that the most effective way of successfully tackling ASB is for a joined-up approach to offer the best possible support to the victims and a coordinated response to control the perpetrators," added Cllr Savage.

The local police and its Safer Neighbourhood Teams will continue to deal with most reports of ASB, while the new team concentrates on some of the more complex incidents where often vulnerable victims are suffering repeated and persistent offences.

"This team is already making an impact and over time I am sure we will see incidents being resolved quicker, more efficiently and effectively. Having a pool of expertise to call on means that our Safer Neighbourhood Teams know where to get the best possible advice and assistance," said Chief Constable Simon Ash.

"Prompt and effective action is vital in tackling anti-social behaviour, especially if it involves young people, and it can help nip a problem in the bud before it escalates.

"Working together gives us that ability to make a real difference and as other key partners come on board we will be in a better position to provide all the reassurance and support that the victim deserves while being able to take all the necessary action to resolve and prevent the problem from occurring again," added Chief Constable Ash.

The example set by Suffolk Coastal has been followed by the Waveney team, and similar teams are currently being set up in Babergh, the west of the county and Ipswich. Anyone suffering a problem with ASB should contact their local Safer Neighbourhood Team by calling 01473 613500 or call 999 if the incident is still happening. Further information can also be found on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/communitysafety/anti-social/



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Workshops help businesses keep clean

27 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Local businesses have the chance to brush up on their cleaning and improve food safety and hygiene credentials by attending a special half-day workshop.

The workshops are taking place on Tuesday, November 2 from 10am to 1pm at Suffolk Coastal's offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge and Tuesday, November 23, 10am to 1pm at Waveney District Council, Town Hall, High Street, Lowestoft.

"Surfaces and equipment that may appear clean can still be harbouring dangerous germs that can't be seen unaided with the human eye. If left these surfaces can cause cross contamination and a health risk to customers," said Cllr Marianne Fellowes, Cabinet Member for Community Health.

"Attending one of these workshops will help food businesses ensure that they have effective systems in place to protect their customers and their reputation. For instance, studies have shown that cleaning cloths can actually make things worse if the correct chemicals and methods aren't used. Large food poisoning outbreaks elsewhere in the country have been tracked back to inadequate disinfection.

"The majority of our local food businesses already maintain excellent standards of food safety but feedback from environmental health officers following their inspections and discussions with business managers has highlighted that some businesses may welcome and benefit from gaining specialist knowledge by drawing on our officers' expertise. The course has been specially designed to help all types of food business to make sure that surfaces and equipment are clean, disinfected and safe," added Cllr Fellowes.

The workshops will be beneficial to any manager or member of staff working with food production including hospitality or production kitchen staff, such as restaurants or local producers and food retail businesses such as butchers, sandwich shops and cafés.

Topics that will be covered include the importance of cleaning in food premises, the need for proper preparation before cleaning, what type of products to use and how to use them, cleaning standards and maintaining documentation of good practice. Each workshop will equip attendees with effective techniques to take back to the workplace.

"Cross contamination is one of the most dangerous factors in cases of food poisoning. While one surface may be thoroughly clean another can quickly spread bacteria and germs on to surfaces," added Cllr Fellowes.

The course will cost £20 or £15 if a space is also booked for the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health level two award for food safety in catering at the same time. Spaces can be booked by calling Emma Needs on 01394 444357 or emailing foodsafetyteam@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk There is also information about the course online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/news

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Site investigations prepare Seafront Gardens for new life

29 Oct 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

As part of the ongoing Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid to regenerate the Felixstowe Seafront Gardens, specialist contractors are carrying out site investigations to get a better geotechnical understanding of the area.

Project consultants Lanarca and engineers Hannah Reed have been asked by the Felixstowe Seafront Gardens project board to arrange for the works to be carried out which include a geotechnical survey by Mike Rowell Associates along with water investigations by GEMCO and drainage investigations by Dalrod.

"The Seafront Gardens project is moving along very well but as part of the works it is important to find out a bit more about the structure of the area we are working with so they can be considered in the designs being drawn up for the gardens," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Water samples from ponds, water features, springs and other water sources have already been taken by GEMCO. Dalrod will use CCTV technology to carry out inspections of underground drainage pipes in the gardens during the week commencing Monday, November 1 until Sunday, November 5.

The site investigations are provisionally due to start on Monday, November 15 lasting for one week. They will consist of three boreholes of 150mm diameter being drilled in the pavement along the cliff top running the length of the Seafront Gardens. The boreholes will be fitted with hinged covers so that the ground level water can be monitored and recorded.

"We don't anticipate any disruptions for residents visiting the gardens but I would like to thank them for their cooperation and understanding while the work is taking place," added Cllr Neale.

Project consultants Lanarca, are currently drawing up the revised plans for the gardens after the comments received during the public exhibition in July. Residents will have a further opportunity to see the plans in December before any minor changes are made ahead of the final submission to the HLF in February 2011.

The next public exhibition will be taking place on Friday, December 10 from 11am to 3pm, Saturday, December 11 from 9am to 12pm and Monday, December 13 from 11am to 3pm at the Court Room Gallery, Felixstowe Town Hall. The displays will be manned by officers on the Friday and Saturday so that residents can ask any questions about the plans and comment on the designs that have been made.

As well as the public exhibition there will also be opportunities for residents and visitors to have their say about the plans by emailing seafrontgardens@lanarca.co.uk

To find out more about the Seafront Gardens project and the progress made so far residents and visitors and visit

www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/felixstowefutures/projects/seafrontgardens or email seafrontgardens@lanarca.co.uk

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Chance to find out more about unusual designs

01 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Celebrated author and creative director of Living Architecture, Alain de Botton will be visiting the district to share some of his insights into creative design and contemporary architecture.

Suffolk Coastal have arranged for Alain to speak on Friday, November 12 at Aldeburgh Community Centre from 8pm.

“Suffolk Coastal boasts several buildings that are architecturally very significant and praiseworthy. It is great to see someone of Alain’s calibre recognising the inspiring landscape of the district and sharing his experience of using it to create some very interesting and eye-catching projects,” said Cllr Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning.

Tickets can be booked by emailing conservation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or by calling Aldeburgh Tourist Information Centre on 01728 453637, from November 1. Tickets are free although spaces will need to be booked in advance.

Alain’s involvement in design company Living Architecture has seen two impressive projects constructed in the district, the Balancing Barn in Thorington and Dune House in Thorpeness which are available to rent as holiday homes. This will be a chance for residents to find out the philosophy behind the Living Architecture foundation and the two projects and why Suffolk Coastal was chosen to be their home.

“Alain has been involved in some fascinating projects and it will be interesting to hear how the environment and landscape of Suffolk Coastal have influenced the unique designs that have been created and which have attracted a great deal of national media interest.

“This is a great opportunity for anyone with an interest in design, appealing to those involved in architecture for a living, students thinking about going in to further study or those that are just interested in finding out a bit more about design and unusual buildings,” added Cllr Smith.

Alain will use examples from Suffolk Coastal as well as across the country to explain the philosophy behind his projects and will hopefully provide a great deal of inspiration to those attending the talk. He makes a conscientious effort to promote contemporary design to as many people as possible, sharing his ideas about what makes good design.

To find out more about the public talk or design in the district residents can email conservation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or contact the conservation officer on 01394 444616. More information about Alain and the Living Architecture foundation is available online at www.living-architecture.co.uk



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Felixstowe's toilets a first for the district

01 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

As part of the improvements being made to Felixstowe town centre new toilet facilities are taking shape, leading the way with state of the art equipment that make them accessible to everyone.

The building work started at the site in Crescent Road car park on August 30 and is now well under way with the structure starting to take shape. Building and fitting is due to be completed by Friday, December 17.

“The existing toilets in the Triangle, on Hamilton Road are still open while the new toilets are being built and will be removed once the new toilets are open and in use,” said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Leader of the Council.

The new toilet block will have seven cubicles with toilets including accessible and parent and toddler facilities as well as two cubicles with urinals. The new toilets are being fitted with a Changing Places cubicle that will be equipped with specialist equipment including a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist that can be used by people with profound and multiple learning difficulties. The cubicles have also been designed to be large enough for parents or carers to provide assistance.

“The inclusion of the Changing Places facilities is particularly good news as there are very few places in this part of the country that provide these facilities, the next closest being Ipswich and Norwich. This will be a great bonus for those that want to come to the town but may have been restricted in the past because of the lack of appropriate facilities,” added Cllr Smith.

The existing toilets will be replaced with a versatile space that can be used for many community functions. Landscaped with seating and a canopy to provide shelter from the rain the new area will provide an attractive centre point for the town.

“The new toilets have given us the opportunity to combine the need for the toilet building to be renovated and to address comments about a more attractive centre piece for the town centre,” added Cllr Smith.

The new toilets are part of the Felixstowe Futures regeneration scheme and will complete the current phase of improvements being made to the town centre. Along with the shared space scheme, which is making the main shopping parade more accessible, the new toilets will help make Felixstowe more visitor friendly.

“The next phase of the shared space scheme will see improvements made from Orwell Road to Bent Hill, thanks to funding from the Haven Gateway, joining up the works that have already taken place. Residents have already commented on how good the scheme is looking and once the improvements to the Crescent Road toilets and the Triangle have been finalised and completed it will be even better,” added Cllr Smith.

To find out more about the new toilet facilities being built or any of the Felixstowe Futures projects residents can contact the Felixstowe Futures team on 01394 444576 or email felixstowefutures@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk





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Unprecedented scale of savings needed by Council

03 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet was warned last night (Tuesday) that the Council faces having to make much higher than hoped for savings in the next two years, but that steps are already underway to meet the challenge.

Last month's Comprehensive Spending Review announced by the Government said that there would be average cuts in real terms of 7.25 per cent a year for the next four years in the funding it gives local councils.

"It will be December before we get the actual figures for what our grant will be for 2011/12 but it does appear that the average annual cut will be front-loaded, which means it will be much larger in the first two years," said Cllr Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member for Resources.

"This could mean a reduction in our Government funding of up to 23 per cent by 2012/13, or the equivalent of £1.8 million less money to pay for our local services. Until the final figures are published we will not know whether councils like ours that have led the way in delivering efficiencies and new ways of working will get a better deal than those who have failed to modernise.

"We have to expect that we will now have to make far more savings over the next two years than we had hoped. Thankfully, we were already reviewing every aspect of our services as it is now clear that some if not many services will either have to be delivered differently or not at all if we are to make the necessary savings," added Cllr Whiting.

Suffolk Coastal had been addressing a budget gap of nearly £700,000 next year which would rise to £2.5 million by 2013/14, but this was based on an assumed annual five per cent drop in Government grants.

In recognition of the growing national budget gap, and the Government's commitment to wipe out the deficit, the Council's Leader had called for options to be drawn up that could save 30 per cent of current spending over the next three years.

"Council officers and Cabinet members have done a great deal of work to identify savings, and these efforts will carry on until we know exactly what we need to achieve.

"While we are concentrating on what would previously have been thinking the unthinkable, I would also highlight that this situation does provide opportunities, particularly for the voluntary and community sector.

"The Government has set aside funding to help local groups expand and play their role in the new Big Society, especially if they need support to take over public services. I hope that local groups grab the chance to get their share of that national pot as they will inevitably be more important than ever over the coming few years," added Cllr Whiting.

By March 2011, the Council will have saved over £10 million since 2001 by its commitment to constantly review the ways to provide its services more efficiently and effectively. This is a very impressive achievement given that its income from Council Taxpayers is only £7 million a year

and £8 million from Government Formula Grant.

In the past few years, Suffolk Coastal has pressed ahead with many innovative partnerships to help it deliver more efficient services for its communities, which has seen its full time permanent workforce reduce by over half to fewer than 300.

It was one of the first councils to share a Chief Executive, and it now has a shared senior management team with Waveney, with nearly a third posts fewer than before, and real savings of £400,000 a year across the two Councils.

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Get snapping to celebrate Landguard Partnership

04 Nov 2010



Archived press release.

The Landguard Partnership is celebrating the launch of its new website, www.landguardpartnership.org.uk, with an inspiring photography competition encouraging people to explore the peninsula.

The competition opened for entries on Monday (November 1) and will close at midnight on Saturday, July 30, 2011. The public will then vote for their favourite photographs and winners will be announced on Thursday, September 1, 2011.

“The photography competition is a great way to celebrate the many different aspects of the Landguard Peninsula from the stunning scenery and landscape to the historical buildings and beautiful wildlife,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

There are three age categories for the competition, 16 and under, 17- 25, and over 25. The winning 12 photographs voted for by the public will feature in a Landguard Partnership calendar and each winner will receive an A3 print of their photograph. Of the 12 winning photographs a judge’s choice will be decided on being the most original, representative and captivating image taken at Landguard Peninsula. The judge’s choice winner will receive a day’s location shoot with a local professional photographer to pick up new skills and get some expert advice.

The website has been set up by the Landguard Partnership to help provide useful information for residents and visitors about the Landguard Peninsula and the many different features on offer.

The website offers information about Landguard Fort, Felixstowe Museum, the bird observatory and nature reserve. There is also information about upcoming events, a blog from the Landguard ranger, learning resources and a kids zone for young people to explore and find out more about the peninsula.

“The website is packed full of useful resources and will be regularly updated with the latest news about the peninsula and any events taking place. It will be really helpful for anyone wanting to find out a bit more about what goes on at Landguard peninsula or get involved with one of the projects,” added Cllr Neale.

The website also gives information about opportunities to volunteer at the Landguard peninsula. There are many varied opportunities for people of all ages ranging from assisting the Landguard ranger to becoming the secretary for the Felixstowe Museum. To find out more residents can visit www.landguardpartnership.org.uk/volunteer

“I hope that residents and visitors of all ages will be keen to see what interesting images they can capture at Landguard. There is such a variety of subjects to choose from so I am looking forward to seeing the different images that people decide to photograph.

“Many people have special memories of Landguard so it will be interesting to see their favourite photographs whether it is of the historical fort, wildlife living on the peninsula or a coastal scene.

The competition runs until the end of July next year so there are plenty of opportunities to take seasonal shots of the peninsula," added Cllr Neale.

Entries should be emailed to enquiries@landguardpartnership.org.uk and should be 72 dots per inch (DPI) and between one and three megabytes. Entrants should also include their name, age, address and telephone number when sending in their photographs. To read the full terms and conditions about the competition residents can visit www.landguardpartnership.org.uk/latest_news/landguard_photography_competition

The Landguard partnership is a joint project between Suffolk Coastal, English Heritage, Natural England, Landguard Conservation Trust and Bird Observatory, Landguard Fort Trust, Felixstowe History and Museum Society, Harwich Haven Authority, the Port of Felixstowe, Felixstowe Town Council and Suffolk County Council.



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Help on hand to tackle car crime

08 Nov 2010

Archived press release.

Residents are being reminded this week about the danger of car and bicycle crime this winter with helpful tips to make sure that they do not become victims of theft or vehicle damage.

Members of the Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership and the Police will be visiting Morrisons car park in Felixstowe on Wednesday, November 10 between 10am and 2pm to give helpful advice to residents and visitors.

“Car crime and bicycle theft can often be very distressing for people so it is important to make sure that they are taking precautions so that their vehicles are not appealing to opportunist criminals,” said Cllr Doreen Savage, Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board Member and Cabinet Member for Community Safety.

Suffolk Coastal officers will be on hand to remind residents not to leave anything valuable on display, always close windows and lock vehicles and be aware of any suspicious behaviour near by. They will also be handing out car air fresheners bearing a message to remind people to check their vehicles are secure before leaving them.

They will also be giving advice about bicycle safety and will be carrying out UV bicycle marking for anyone that would like to get their bicycle security marked. The team will also be able to provide information and advice about keeping property and car accessories safe and being able to trace them should they be lost or stolen.

“In the run up to Christmas opportunistic thieves will be on the lookout to take advantage of anyone that may have forgotten to lock their bicycles or left shopping on display in cars, so it is important to stay vigilant about these things especially as the evenings get darker much earlier.

“Although Suffolk Coastal is one of the safest districts in the country it is still important to make sure residents are remembering to take extra care to make sure they do not inadvertently entice criminals. Statistics have shown that in places such as Felixstowe, Nacton and Woodbridge over half of all vehicles were not locked when items were stolen and 70 per cent were not locked when parked on driveways.

“In all of Suffolk Coastal's car parks there are signs reminding people to check they have left their car secure so I hope this will continue to encourage people to get into the habit of making an extra check before leaving their vehicle,” added Cllr Savage.

To find out more about preventing car or bicycle crime residents can contact a member of the community safety team on 01394 444322.

Press release issued on behalf of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership

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Winter access to Seafront Gardens improved

08 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

To help more people enjoy the Seafront Gardens throughout the whole year Suffolk Coastal is helping to make them more accessible during the winter months so that everyone can visit them.

During the winter months, wooden boards are placed in front of some of the entrances to the gardens to stop any sand or shingle washed up in exceptionally high tides or bad weather damaging them and to protect from any flooding.

“Thanks to an arrangement with the garden’s grounds keeping team some of these boards will be removed allowing access to the gardens during the winter months and replaced during high tides or when particularly bad weather is forecast to protect from flooding,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

The boards that are being taken out are from entrances closest to where the Long Shelter stood in the north of the gardens. The new arrangement will be monitored to check that the gardens are not becoming damaged and that people are benefitting from the improved access.

“Although this means an increased work load for the grounds maintenance team it will also mean that access to the gardens in the winter is considerably improved. I hope that many more people will be keen to make the most of the grounds during the winter months,” added Cllr Neale.

After a trial period a short term solution will be adopted ahead of the new plans that are being drawn up by project consultants, Lanarca, as part of the Seafront Gardens regeneration bid. These will hopefully include a workable longer term solution to ensure everyone can access the gardens during the winter months.

“One of the themes being considered and addressed by the project consultants is accessibility and plans will incorporate a permanent solution for helping residents and visitors access the gardens all year round while also ensuring that they are protected from any flood damage or extreme weather.

“I hope that the trial winter access arrangements will give both residents and visitors the chance to make the most of the gardens and visit them more often. There is a great deal to explore in the gardens during each season, so it would be a shame to miss out because of not being able to access the gardens,” added Cllr Neale.

To find out more about the accessibility arrangements residents or visitors can contact the Felixstowe Futures team for more information on 01394 444576. To find out more about the Seafront Gardens bid and to share views, residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/felixstowefutures/projects/seafrontgardens Comments can be emailed to project consultants, Lanarca, at seafrontgardens@lanarca.co.uk



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Felixstowe pool closed for upgrade

09 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The pools and health suite at Felixstowe Leisure Centre will be closed to residents and visitors for the next few weeks while maintenance and improvements works are being carried out.

The wet side of the centre, including the main, toddler and fun pools, and sauna and steam rooms will be closed from Monday, November 15 until Monday, December 27. The dry side including the newly refurbished gym, main hall, work out studio, bowls hall, Funtasia, crèche and café will remain open as usual during the improvement works.

“The pools and sauna and steam rooms will be out of action for about six weeks but the improvements being carried out will give all users better quality facilities once they are completed,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Improvements and maintenance works being carried out include repainting steel work in the pool hall, service and refurbishments of the pool filter systems and boilers, maintenance of tiling and grouting in the pool tank and refurbishment of the sauna and steam room. The wet side changing rooms and locker rooms will also be redecorated and general electrical testing will be carried out.

“Having the pools out of action is frustrating for residents and visitors but I hope this does not deter people from going for a swim. Kinetika members can use the pool facilities at Deben Pool in Woodbridge and Leiston Leisure Centre at no additional cost while the improvements are taking place. Coastal Card holders will also be able to use any of the facilities at a discounted rate.

“The Council and its partners DC Leisure, who manage the district's leisure facilities, take pride in the high quality of the facilities on offer so we are keen to make sure that we take action to ensure that they remain at a high standard.

“Residents of Suffolk Coastal have already shown that they are dedicated to maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle so I hope this might be an opportunity to try out some of our other facilities such as the gym or one of the many exercise classes that are available,” added Cllr Neale.

Workout classes available include body combat, body balance, spinning, kettlebells, 50 plus workouts and circuit training.

To find out more about the improvement works or any of the dry side facilities residents can contact Felixstowe Leisure Centre on 01394 670411 or email enquiries@felixstoweleisurecentre.co.uk

Pool timetables and opening hours for Deben and Leiston are available by visiting www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/leisure or calling either of the centres on 01394 384763 or 01728 830364.

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Helping communities look after their local environment

09 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Suffolk Coastal is offering help to communities in the district to come together to protect and enhance the environment that is so important to them, with a specific focus on energy, water, transport and community resilience.

To help communities find out more, a special event, Greening the Suffolk Coast, is taking place on Saturday, November 27 from 10.30am to 1.30pm at Eyke Village Hall, IP12 2QW.

“The event is for anyone interested in finding out more about making their local community more sustainable. There will be information about how to get communities to be greener, transition towns and the Community Environmental Action Fund,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

The event will be supported by Suffolk Coastal’s new part-time community environmental action advisor, Dan Wheals. Dan can help up to nine local communities tap into funding of up to £1,000 to help new or recently formed community groups to identify what the local need is, engage with the wider community and take part in bulk buying projects.

They will have the opportunity to hear ideas from existing community groups, visit a market place with eco firms and find out more about the help and support that is out there to help community groups go greener.

“There will also be information about creating resilient communities reacting to dwindling fossil fuels and potential flood damage. Communities will be able to get involved with protecting their own future by raising awareness and preparing their community for the environmental challenges that will have to be met in the future.

“Residents are better placed than anyone to know what is special about their area and how it can be made even better. Those who have been to one of our environmental events say that what is important to them is countryside, coastline, food, culture and having a warm home with secure power, internet access and good transport links, so there is a lot for communities to be thinking about” added Cllr Nunn.

The event is free and includes refreshments although places will need to be booked by calling 01394 444218 or emailing dan.wheals@groundwork.org.uk For more information about the Community Environmental Action Fund residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/greenissues/ecoaction

The project has been funded thanks to support from the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Suffolk Coastal District Council in partnership with Groundwork East of England, Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership and the Environment Agency.

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Woodwose festival helps people celebrate the district

09 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The first Woodwose festival celebrating the Suffolk Coast has now finished and is already hoping to return next year, bigger and better.

Between Saturday, October 16 and Saturday, October 30, there was a number of exciting activities for all members of the community to get involved in, exploring the countryside and coast on offer in Suffolk Coastal.

“The festival had a great start with the launch event at Westleton Village Green seeing residents and visitors of all ages taking part in activities including tree dressing, ceilidh dancing, conker championships, live music and arts and crafts,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Over 500 people took part in the festival with over 250 people coming along to the Westleton launch. During the two weeks activities ranged from special AONB pub walks and informative heritage strolls to beach fishing and art workshops using material found on the beach.

“It was great to see such a diverse range of events taking place to celebrate the beautiful landscape and it really highlighted how fortunate the district is in being able to enjoy this part of Suffolk in so many different ways.

“One of the highlights of the festival was seeing an 82 year old resident getting to fulfil a life-long ambition to shoot a bow and arrow during the archery taster session. It was really great to see people trying something completely new and getting to appreciate the picturesque scenery that the district boasts.

“Groups and individuals that got involved with Woodwose have received very positive feedback and all hope to get involved in Woodwose events in the future. The beach fishing event was particularly popular with a number of newcomers giving it a try. They were able to have a go at baiting and casting the line trying to land the perfect catch and hope to be able to attend similar events in the future. We owe all the volunteer walk and event leaders a big thank you for their contribution to the fortnight.

“Suffolk Coastal hopes to make the Woodwose festival an annual event and is encouraging town and parish councils, local voluntary groups, organisations and businesses to get involved to make the festival even bigger and better in 2011,” added Cllr Neale.

Anyone that is interested in being a part of Woodwose in the future can contact the project co-ordinator by emailing nicky.corbett@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk



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Have your say on future of sports development

16 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Suffolk Coastal is asking for residents help to determine what the sporting needs of the community are by carrying out a survey of local sports clubs and teams and adults and young people living in Suffolk Coastal.

The survey opened for comments on Friday, November 12 and will close on Friday, February 11. Surveys can be filled in online or by completing a hard copy and returning to Suffolk Coastal.

“This is a really good opportunity for local people to let us know what they think about the sports services and facilities that are currently on offer and help shape the future of sports services and facilities in the district” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

There are two surveys, the first is an audit of local sports clubs and teams and the second consults with adults and young people that live, work or take part in sport, physical activity and recreation in the district.

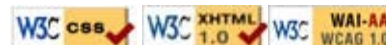
“By asking both those that already participate in sport and local people what they think about the services on offer we can make sure that we have the best ideas about what improvements can be made to encourage more people across the district to get involved in sport or physical activity,” added Cllr Neale.

The surveys can be completed online by visiting www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/haveyoursay/sports Paper copies are also available on request and can be returned to Suffolk Coastal Offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge, IP12 1AU.

“I would encourage anyone that uses any of the sports facilities in the district or is a member of a team or club to fill in the surveys to let us know what could make them even better.

“Residents in Suffolk Coastal have already shown their commitment to keeping active and leading a healthy lifestyle but it is important to make sure we can do what we can to help provide the services they need and are offering support to help local clubs and teams to develop,” added Cllr Neale.

Both of the surveys can be completed by visiting www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/haveyoursay/sports For more information or to request a hard copy residents can email active.communities@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or call 01394 444652 or 444318.





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Local businesses get help to go greener

16 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Small and medium sized enterprises are being given the chance to find out if they could profit from resource efficiency at a free workshop run by Resource Efficiency East.

Prospective or current suppliers to Suffolk Coastal or Waveney District Council can come along to the workshop taking place on Friday, December 10 at Wenhaston Village Hall from 9.30am to 1.30pm.

“The workshops are aimed at current and prospective suppliers to Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Council as well as Ipswich Borough Council and St Edmundsbury Council and will help them to identify ways to improve their finances and environmental credentials,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

“While meeting the challenges of the current economic climate Suffolk Coastal is committed to reducing its carbon emissions and making the most efficient use of resources that we can so it is important to make sure that businesses or enterprises working with us are also committed to improving their efficiency and green credentials,” added Cllr Nunn.

Resource Efficiency East has a great deal of experience helping businesses to save money while becoming greener. Since 2009 over 700 businesses have benefitted from their help and potential cumulative savings of £4.4 million, 20,000 tonnes of CO2 and over 50,000m3 of water usage have been identified by addressing usage of energy, water, materials and the amount of waste being produced.

“When booking a place there is also an opportunity for local businesses to log any specific queries they would like addressed during the workshop. It is a great way for local businesses to find out what support is available to them and share ideas and experiences with others that may be in a similar position,” added Cllr Nunn.

There will also be a public procurement specialist at the event who will be able to give expert advice about selling to local authorities.

To book a place at the workshop local businesses can call Christian Figg on 0800 028 8938 or visit www.greensuffolk.org/supplychainnetwork to register online.

The Supply Network is a partnership between Suffolk Coastal, Waveney District Council, Ipswich Borough Council and St Edmundsbury Council. To find out more about the partnership businesses can visit www.greensuffolk.org/supplychainnetwork



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Partnership helps make quality of life even better

16 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The eighth annual Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic (LSP) forum was held last week (Friday, November 12) at Trinity Park, bringing together a wide range of organisations to explore working better together.

At the forum members from local councils, public sector agencies, local businesses, community and voluntary groups came together to celebrate the work of the LSP and help provide improvements for the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of local residents.

“With the current economic climate there is a renewed emphasis on community involvement in delivering services that help to promote ideas about the big society that are also efficient and meet the needs of our residents,” said Cllr Ray Herring, Chair of the Suffolk Coastal LSP.

A number of workshops were held giving people the chance to discuss ways forward for meeting the LSPs priorities of improving access to services, building strong supportive communities, tackling climate change and protecting the environment, developing a strong and diverse local economy, supporting healthier lives for all residents and supporting young people to access good education, training and to stay safe.

“This year’s forum was the most successful event so far with over 150 people taking part. It was really impressive to see the wide range of groups and organisations getting involved to be proactive about improving residents’ quality of life and shaping the future of Suffolk Coastal,” added Cllr Herring.

The LSP has helped develop a number of projects that are already helping local residents and communities including, funding a Community Environmental Action Advisor to help communities become greener and more resilient, helping older people to keep active and independent through the stepping out in Suffolk health walks, helping older people to stay in warm homes by offering loft clearance schemes and supporting voluntary and community groups to access funding and advice through the Suffolk Coastal Resource Network.

New projects being supported by the LSP include developing community led planning, an employability and skills improvement programme and a safer night out event educating young people about the effects of alcohol on the body.

“Suffolk Coastal already has a very high satisfaction rating with 92.1 percent of residents happy with where they live making it equal seventh best district in England. However, we are keen to make sure that all of our residents have the best opportunities available thanks to LSP partners working closely together.

“The annual LSP forum is always a great opportunity for us to come together to identify areas where it makes sense to work more collaboratively across businesses, voluntary organisations, public services and communities to deliver local services in new ways and I look forward to implementing some of the innovative ideas that were suggested,” added Cllr Herring.

To find out more about the Suffolk Coastal LSP residents can visit www.sclsp.org.uk or email

sclsp@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Press release issued on behalf of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership

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Soundwaves master classes help local talent

16 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Soundwaves are preparing for the next Ultimate Band Contest by organising a series of master classes with a record producer to help local bands hone their skills.

The half day workshops will be taking place on Saturday, December 4, Sunday, December 5 and Sunday, December 12 in morning and afternoon sessions.

“The master classes will be a great opportunity for young musicians to access expert advice and pick up useful information about the music industry. There are so many talented musicians in the district and this could really help them to take their talent to the next level,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Professional producer and sound engineer, Henry Readhead, will be running the sessions at Summerhill Studios in Leiston and will be offering insights into band image, equipment, technique and successful promotion. The bands and artists will also have the chance to perform live in front of an industry professional to get valuable feedback about how they can improve their style and performance.

“Henry has a great deal of experience and has worked with a number of artists including previous Soundwaves Ultimate Band Contest winner Ed Sheeran who has gone on to support artists including Just Jack and Example and is now attracting international attention from record labels and top producers,” added Cllr Neale.

With more and more ways for young people to get their music heard digitally the Soundwaves project gives budding young musicians the chance to get valuable experience of performing live to large audiences. This should help talented young people in the district get the added boost they need to succeed as artists and bands.

The Soundwaves project and master classes are open to any band or artist aged between 11 and 26 with at least one band member from or living in Suffolk Coastal.

The next master class sessions will be hosted by local musicians Will Simpson and James Plant of Brigade in February 2011. They will be able to offer tips and give advice about performing at a top level, plus what it takes to get a record deal.

As well as the master classes, entries for the Ultimate Band Contest 2011 are now open looking for the best artist or group in the district.

There will be three heats over the competition with the top three from each heat progressing on to the final along with the judge's wild card choice of best runner up. The 10 finalists will get a chance to record one of their tracks to go on a compilation CD and take to the stage again to fight for the first place title.

“The Soundwaves project has proven to be a great platform for talented young musicians to gain valuable experience of performing and working in a recording studio and is a great way to have fun with friends,” added Cllr Neale.

Young musicians interested in getting involved with the Soundwaves project or registering for the Ultimate Band contest can email suffolksoundwaves@hotmail.com, visit the facebook page or follow Soundwaves10 on twitter.

Soundwaves is a joint project between Suffolk Coastal and Suffolk County Council.

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Repairs carried out to skatepark surface

18 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Felixstowe skatepark is currently undergoing some repair works to its surface to keep it a top quality place to board, skate and BMX.

Work began on Wednesday, November 17 and the skatepark will be out of action until Friday, November 26 while specialist contractors, Bendcrete, carry out repair work to the skating surface.

“It is an inconvenience to have the skatepark out of action but I hope that regular skatepark users will understand the reasons for the work some of which has been requested by them and look forward to the improvements that are being made,” said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Young People.

Works will include grinding down the surround to the concrete slab, replacing the mastic seals, repair of concrete to grind rails and joints and repairs to joints between the concrete slabs and bitumen surface. Some of the work is remedial and a natural element of usage but the surface grinding is at the request of the users.

“Although the surface was built to the same specification as the skatepark in Woodbridge, no problems like those encountered at Felixstowe have occurred. Some Felixstowe skaters found that the surface edges have become slippery which we think is because the area involved is part of a much larger structure.

“The improvement works should help to make the skatepark even better for young people from experienced riders to those giving it a try for the first time. It is great to see young people using the skatepark and having fun by staying active,” added Cllr Savage.

The works are being funded by a successful application to Suffolk Coastal's Outdoor Play Space Fund (OPSF) from Felixstowe Town Council.



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New homes target for district set to be cut

19 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Following a review by Suffolk Coastal, the number of new homes planned for the district could be reduced to an annual rate of 446, over 60 homes a year less than the old regional targets.

Suffolk Coastal is set to officially ask for views on its new proposed rate as part of a consultation on a revised version of its Core Strategy but has written today (Friday) to all town and parish councils to give them advance notice.

“We have been carrying out a full and thorough review of the number of new homes that our communities could need in the future and our recommendation is that we should find space for 446 homes a year. That is 64 a year fewer than the old regional targets and well below the average 609 homes that have been built annually since 1971,” said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning.

“With all the economic uncertainties and local concerns about where space for new homes can be found, we think that 446 a year is both sensible and achievable, and I look forward to hearing the views of local people about our proposal.

“Our district needs new homes, because of local factors such as there are fewer people on average in each house, so we need more houses for the same population. Also we are all living longer, and our population is increasing. We are now ready to propose a new lower number for how many homes there should be,” added Cllr Smith.

When agreeing its Core Strategy in March, the Council also recognised that it would need to review it if there planning changes announced following the General Election, and that review was given the go-ahead in June. The Core Strategy sets out the way that the district will grow over the next 20 years, spelling out exactly what types of development are or are not acceptable.

The document's original figures for future housing was based on the regional housing targets set under the last Government's Regional Spatial Strategies, which for this district was 510.

The new Government has said that these regional targets will be abolished although, after a recent High Court decision, this will not happen until it has been agreed by Parliament sometime next year. The Government has also told councils that they should comply with current national planning policies and help tackle the national shortage of new homes.

“While we wait for Parliament to modernise national planning policies, we need to have an up to date agreement of how many new homes we need in our district so that we can decide and control future housing and other developments.

“At this stage we are seeking agreement on the total numbers of new homes and the main areas they will be located. There will be further consultation about the exact location of where they could go, and of course any future planning applications would be subject to the normal full local consultation.

“We advised all our residents, in our latest Coastline magazine that has just been delivered, that this consultation was coming. We can now give further details to our town and parish council colleagues so that they can be ready to give their important input to our decisions,” added Cllr Smith.

The Reviewed Core Strategy document will be available at the start of the consultation period which is set to begin on November 29 and run for eight weeks. Full details of how people can see the revised document and make their comments will be published later.



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Volunteers to help see countryside thrive

23 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

There are more opportunities than ever for local residents to make a difference to the local countryside, woodlands and commons by getting involved in one of the Footprints work parties.

There are several rewarding ways for residents to get involved in looking after their local environment and the Footprints scheme gives the opportunity to care for local green spaces by taking part in one of the Footprints work parties. Work parties carry out a range of tasks from tree thinning to making pathways more easily accessible.

“The Footprints scheme is a great way for local residents to show their enthusiasm for protecting the local environment and helping to make sure areas are kept at their best for people to make the most of,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

The work parties are already underway and have been able to make a big difference to areas in Upper Hollesley Common and the Grove in Felixstowe. Parties are also planned for Melton Riverside, Sutton Heath and revisiting Upper Hollesley Common and the Grove in Felixstowe. For a full list of the dates, locations and details of the works residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/footprints/volunteering

“There are already a good number of local residents of all ages that are committed to looking after the district’s green spaces and I hope that their good example might encourage others to think about getting involved to do something positive for their environment,” added Cllr Neale.

All of the work parties are accompanied by Suffolk Coastal’s countryside rangers and are suitable for both seasoned conservationists and those wanting to lend a hand for the first time. Some of the work parties also provide a fire and hot drinks to reward volunteers for their hard work.

“The Footprints scheme is also the perfect opportunity for local community groups and businesses to give back and do something positive for their local community. Not only does it benefit local areas but it is great for local employers to work together to help the local environment,” added Cllr Neale.

To find out more about the Footprints scheme or help setting up a community project residents can contact a member of the countryside team on 01394 444619 or 444508 or email peter.ross@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Footprints work parties:

- Wednesday, December 1, Thursday, December 2 and Wednesday, December 22- Creating woodland glades at the Grove in Felixstowe. Meet at 10am.
- Wednesday, December 8 Hedgerow and scrub maintenance at Melton Riverside. Meet at 10am.
- Sunday, December 5 and Wednesday, December 15 - scrub clearing at Sutton Heath. Meet at 10am.
- Tuesday, December 14 - clearing scrub and pine saplings at Upper Hollesley Common. Meet at 10am.

Directions and meeting locations are available online at





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Communities get planting to celebrate National Tree Week

29 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

This National Tree Week, Suffolk Coastal has even more to celebrate with the Parish Tree Scheme, tree wardens and community groups working hard to make sure more is being done to look after the green environment and countryside in the district.

Running from Saturday, November 27 to Sunday, December 5, National Tree Week will see a number of planting events taking place to help improve the district's natural tree stock and encourage others to get involved to look after their local countryside and environment.

This year's tree stock will shortly be sent out to tree wardens and community groups throughout the district ready for planting. Planting will take place at a number of locations across the district including a continuation at Molletts Farm in Benhall, where young offenders will be planting native young hedging along the edge of the farm adjacent to the A12 totalling over half a kilometre.

Planting of over 450 hedging plants is also taking place at the Butcher's field in Great Glemham starting on Sunday, November 28 from 9.30am and Wickham Market will be carrying out their planting on Saturday, December 4. Further planting events are being carried out in Walberswick, Westleton play area, Framlingham community garden, Winesham residential area and Yoxford allotments.

"Local community groups and tree wardens in Suffolk Coastal have been celebrating National Tree Week by planting new young trees since 1994 and will be donning their Wellies and spades once again to increase the number of trees that we have across the district.

"The landscape quality of our district is of high value so it is important to make sure that it continues to be preserved for the future. I hope that there will be even more people wanting to take part in this year's National Tree Week to help make a difference to where they live," added Cllr Neale.

In many of the towns and parishes there are volunteer tree wardens that are passionate about looking after the local environment and preserving trees in their area. There is always a need for more volunteer tree wardens and interested residents can find out more about the role by speaking to their local parish council, tree warden or visiting www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/trees/treewardens

This year is the 20th anniversary of the tree warden scheme set up by the Tree Council and is being celebrated by a special reception at the House of Lords during National Tree Week.

"It is great to see the number of community spirited people out there that want to be proactive about seeing the countryside really flourish and I am sure that there will be people of all ages wanting to help where they can," added Cllr Neale.

To find out more about National Tree Week or to get involved with any of the planting events

taking place residents can contact the landscape officer on 01394 444420 or email anne.westover@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk Information about tree wardens and the Parish Tree Scheme is available at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/trees

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Nominations open for Walberswick by-election

29 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Nominations are now open for residents wanting to become a parish councillor in Walberswick.

A by-election will take place on Thursday, December 30 between 7am and 10pm at Walberswick Village Hall if more than one candidate puts themselves up to contest the vacancy.

Anyone wanting to be a candidate will need to complete nomination papers available online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/elections or from the elections team at Suffolk Coastal's offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge, IP12 1AU.

Nominations will close at noon on Wednesday, December 1 and all completed papers will need to be returned to the elections team at Suffolk Coastal's offices.

The next full town and parish elections are due to take place in May 2011, so whoever is elected in December will also have to stand for re-election in May.

Residents wanting to register for a new postal vote or make changes to an existing postal vote or proxy vote have until 5pm on Monday, December 13 to contact the election team. Residents can also apply for a new proxy vote before 5pm on Monday, December 20.

Full details about registering for a postal or proxy vote are available by contacting a member of the elections team on 01394 444685. They will also be able to check if residents are registered to vote. To find out more about becoming a parish councillor and what is involved in the role residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/elections/standing/townparish



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RingGo rings all the right bells for Christmas

29 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Parking in Felixstowe and Woodbridge this busy Christmas season is set to be made even easier thanks to Suffolk Coastal teaming up with RingGo.

From Sunday, December 5 to Saturday, December 25 the 20p convenience fee for using the cashless parking service is being removed to help residents and visitors make the most of their time in Felixstowe and Woodbridge.

"The RingGo service has made parking in Felixstowe and Woodbridge much more convenient for residents and visitors, not needing to worry about having the correct change or rushing back to avoid getting a ticket. The special offer will make it even more helpful to those using the service to do some Christmas shopping," said Cllr Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Car Parks.

There are nine car parks in Woodbridge and 13 in Felixstowe using the RingGo cashless parking scheme, making it quicker and easier to pay for car parking across the district.

"During this time of year shoppers spend considerably more time in the shops, so many shoppers can also take advantage of the option to top-up payments while they are out, if the search for that elusive present proves difficult," added Cllr Smith.

The benefits of using RingGo cashless parking include not having to carry around lots of change in coins, being able to extend parking time remotely without returning to the car and not needing to rush back to avoid a parking ticket as a text reminder can be sent 10 minutes before it is due to expire.

Drivers can register in advance by visiting www.myringgo.co.uk or once they have parked by calling 01394 642645 and giving their credit or debit card information, their vehicle registration, the four digit code of the car park they wish to park in and how long they would like to stay for. There is also an iphone app that residents can download to search and pay for their nearest RingGo car park and manage their account remotely.

All information is stored securely by RingGo and once registered users will be able to use any of the 3,000 RingGo car parks in the country.

"The special offer will hopefully encourage residents and visitors to spend more time in the district and is a great way of supporting local businesses during the build up to Christmas," added Cllr Smith.

Drivers will not need to worry about getting a ticket as enforcement officers can easily check to see if cars have paid using RingGo. VAT receipts can be printed from individuals' online RingGo account where residents can also see their payment history and manage their account details.

For more information and to see a list of car parks in Felixstowe and Woodbridge that have the RingGo service and their four digit codes residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/carparks/ringgo





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Information session helps residents access housing advice

30 Nov 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Suffolk Coastal is offering an information session for local residents to make sure that they are receiving the additional help and support that is available to them.

The event is taking place on Tuesday, December 7 from 10am to 12pm at Saxmundham Children's Centre, Seaman Avenue in Saxmundham.

"The information session is a great way for residents to find out about any aspect of the housing service Suffolk Coastal provides in an informal setting that is convenient for them," said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

Members of the housing team will be on hand to give advice about getting help to properly insulate and improve residents' homes, benefit entitlements and homechoice and housing options.

"The process of sorting out a family's housing and benefits entitlement can seem like a daunting task for some residents but the Council's team are available to make it as easy as possible to get all the information and advice residents need," added Cllr Slemmings.

There is no need to make an appointment, residents can drop-in at a convenient time throughout the morning and speak to any member of the team. Refreshments will also be provided.

"Even if residents think they are already getting all they are entitled to it is always a good idea to check that is still the case especially if their circumstances have recently changed.

"Residents with young children may already be regular visitors to the Children's Centre so this is a great opportunity to check that they are receiving all the support they are entitled to. I would encourage them to come along to the information session if they have any questions they have been meaning to ask about their individual circumstances," added Cllr Slemmings.

To find out more about the different services the housing team provides and the support the Council can provide residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/housing or contact a member of the housing team on 01394 444506.





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Local residents test insulation scheme for Council

01 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

A pilot insulation scheme has helped homes in two roads in the district benefit from having a warmer home and improved energy efficiency while helping the Council to test the effectiveness and practicality of the scheme.

Residents living in Russell Road and Manning Road in Felixstowe, chosen because of the good cross section of houses, were offered the opportunity to take advantage of free loft insulation to help Suffolk Coastal see the scheme in action with real people seeing the benefits.

“The scheme has been really successful with 20 homes receiving additional loft insulation at no cost. This has made a really positive difference as all 20 homes had less than 100mm of insulation and three had none at all,” said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

The pilot has been able to benefit residents that would not usually qualify for help insulating their homes under existing schemes but still may not be able to afford the cost of properly insulating their homes.

“The insulation installed should already be having a big impact on homes during the current cold snap, making homes warmer and we expect to see residents making considerable savings on their heating bills. We often remind residents about the facts and figures of how insulating their home could benefit them but it is great to actually see the scheme in action.

“Recent statistics from National Energy Action (NEA) estimate that there are currently 5.4 million households in England considered to be in fuel poverty, struggling to afford to heat their homes, so it is important that residents are aware of the support Suffolk Coastal can provide to help them,” added Cllr Slemmings.

Households are defined as living in fuel poverty if they spend 10 per cent or more of their income on heating their home.

Suffolk Coastal provide information on a number of schemes to help all residents properly insulate their homes and are always on hand to offer advice and give information about the different schemes available. Residents can contact a member of the private sector housing team on 01394 444506.

“NEA’s research has shown that there are always a number of people entitled to additional support that still do not claim it. As the weather gets colder I would encourage anyone that thinks they, or a family member, may be eligible to additional help to get in contact with the housing team to make sure they are not missing out on what is entitled to them,” added Cllr Slemmings.

After the success of the pilot, the scheme is being extended to a further 80 homes in Leiston and Saxmundham next year.

For information about help and support that is available to tackle fuel poverty residents can contact a member of the private sector housing team on 01394 444506 or email ps.housing@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk There is also helpful information about the different schemes

available online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/energyefficiency.

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Everyone can have their say on new homes

03 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

After a detailed review by Suffolk Coastal, the Council is recommending that the number of new homes planned for the district should be reduced to an annual rate of 446, over 60 homes a year less than the old regional targets.

An eight-week consultation period opened on Monday (November 29) giving everyone the chance to make their comments on the figures which are contained in a revised version of Suffolk Coastal's Core Strategy.

"We have thoroughly reviewed the number of new homes that our communities could need in the future and our recommendation is that we should find space for 446 homes a year. That is 64 a year fewer than the old regional targets and well below the average 609 homes that have been built annually since 1971," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning.

"An independent review that we requested has suggested we could actually need 610 a year, but with all the economic uncertainties and local concerns about where space for new homes can be found, we think that 446 a year is both sensible and achievable.

"We are now opening it up to our residents, communities and businesses for their thoughts. Do they agree with our revised total? They have until Sunday, January 23 to let us know and we are leafleting every home to encourage people to take part in shaping the future of their district," added Cllr Smith.

The district needs new homes, because of local factors such as there are fewer people on average in each house so more houses are needed for the same population. People are also living longer, and the population is increasing.

The Core Strategy sets out the way that the district will grow over the next 17 years, spelling out what types of development are or are not acceptable. When agreeing its Core Strategy in March, the Council also recognised that it would need to review it if major planning changes were announced following the General Election, and that review was given the go-ahead in June.

The Core Strategy deals with the future of the District in many ways, from the economy to the environment, and lots more besides. The review has allowed many of those aspects also to be updated, for example the latest situation regarding a probable new nuclear power station at Sizewell.

Also, advantage has been taken of the Government's more locally based approach to introduce a new flexible policy allowing modest housing developments in villages, where there is local support for it and a clearly defined local need.

"Comments on any part of the Core Strategy, including those, will be welcome, so that we can make the best possible plan for the whole future of our district, and its communities," added Cllr

Smith.

The document's original figures for future housing was based on the regional housing targets set under the last Government's Regional Spatial Strategies, which for this district was 510.

The new Government has told all councils that the old regional targets for new homes (Regional Spatial Strategies) will be abolished and that each council should now decide how many new homes and jobs are needed in their area. The Government has also said that councils should comply with current national planning policies and priorities, and that they should help tackle the shortage of new homes.

"However, the High Court this month blocked the Government's attempt to remove regional housing targets. The Government has since confirmed that it will officially abolish them through its new Localism Bill which should become law next year well before our Core Strategy is finally approved.

"In the meantime, it is important that we have an up to date agreement of our local need for new homes so that we can decide and control future housing development. We think that our proposed figure of 446 is the right balance at present between the full potential demand for new homes, economic uncertainties and the valued environment of our District - I look forward to hearing what our communities think," added Cllr Smith.

In total what is being proposed is to plan for 7,590 new homes between now and 2027, but 2,330 are already planned for so space needs to be found for only a further 5,260.

"At this stage we are seeking agreement on the total numbers of new homes and the main areas they will be located. There will be further consultation about the exact location of where they could go, and of course any future planning applications would be subject to the normal full local consultation," added Cllr Smith.

The leaflet being sent by the Council to every home includes a tear-off strip that people can return to give their views on how many new homes there should be.

Copies of the Reviewed Core Strategy Document, together with more detailed fact sheets setting out the background to the Review are available online at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/review/corestrategy or can be seen at the Council Offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge, in local libraries (reference copies), and copies have also been sent to all Town and Parish Councils.

The full 'evidence base' behind the Core Strategy can also be seen on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/review/evidence

People can make their comments online at: www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/haveyoursay by email to development.policy@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or by letter to Development Policy, Suffolk Coastal District Council, Council Offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU. The closing date for all comments is Sunday, January 23, 2010.



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Refuse team come to the rescue

03 Dec 2010



Lucy the Jack Russell with refuse crew Clive Paternoster and Rob Rainer.

[Archived press release.](#)

Quick thinking by one of Suffolk Coastal Services waste collection teams has helped to prevent accidents during the bad weather conditions helping to keep other drivers safe by picking up an unusual passenger.

While carrying out Suffolk Coastal's refuse collection during the snowy and icy conditions on Thursday morning (December 2) one of Suffolk Coastal Services refuse crews driving along the A12 near Wickham Market spotted a Jack Russell running around in the traffic and the snow, in great danger to itself and drivers on the A12 who were trying to avoid hitting it.

"Our refuse team safely stopped their vehicle and picked up the dog, Lucy, keeping her safe from traffic trying to navigate the roads in the bad weather conditions," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

The refuse team kept the dog safe and out of the cold and brought her back to the depot. Luckily they had already received a phone call from the worried owner reporting that his dog had gone missing and asking whether any strays had been reported.

Lucy's grateful owner, Mr Milton Haslam of Ufford, picked her up from the depot and praised the team for their quick thinking.

"Our refuse teams have been continuing a fantastic service across the district during the current cold snap getting to as many homes as possible. The refuse crew's actions highlight the care and consideration our teams have shown during the poor weather conditions, going out of their way to help ensure all of our residents are kept safe," added Cllr Nunn.

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Brown bin collection service resumed

07 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Thanks to its success in catching up with all grey and blue lidded bins that were not emptied because of the recent bad weather, Suffolk Coastal's recycling teams will be emptying all scheduled brown bins from tomorrow (Wednesday).

Suffolk Coastal Services had to suspend the brown bin service last Friday (December 3) after the severe wintery weather in order to concentrate its efforts on its grey household waste bins and its blue-lidded general recycling bins.

"From tomorrow we can officially restart our collection of all garden and food waste that is put out in our brown bins, and I would like to thank the excellent efforts of all the SCS teams over the last few days," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

"Despite the snow and icy roads, our SCS teams managed to get to the vast majority of homes last week, which is no mean feat given what a big and largely rural district this is.

"Thanks to their efforts, every home that should have had their grey or blue lidded bins emptied since Monday, November 29 will now have been visited, and from tomorrow it will officially be service as normal as our teams can get back to also collecting the brown bins," added Cllr Nunn.

Over the last two days the teams have been concentrating on collecting blue and grey lidded bins from those scheduled to have been collected, but also those who missed out last week.

The teams caught up with all the delayed collections today, and some were even able to empty brown bins that had been left out today by people that did not realise that the service had been suspended.

However, those homes that were due a brown bin collection last Friday (December 3) , or yesterday or today, that have not had their brown bin emptied will now have to wait until their next scheduled visit, two weeks after the bin should have been collected.

"Clearly we apologise to anyone who has had their bin collected later than normal or who will now have to wait until their next scheduled brown bin collection, but I am sure people will understand that the roads were too icy and dangerous for our crews to risk driving down. The good news is that our services are now back to normal and people can fully get back into the recycling habit," added Cllr Nunn.

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Final chance to have say on Seafront Gardens designs

07 Dec 2010

Archived press release.

Residents can have their say on the final design plans for the Seafront Gardens restoration project at a public exhibition being held this weekend.

This latest consultation is taking place from Friday, December 10, 11am to 3pm, Saturday, December 12, from 9am to 12pm and Monday, December 13 from 11am to 3pm at Felixstowe Town Hall, Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe. The exhibitions on the Friday and Saturday will be staffed, Monday will be unstaffed and are in preparation for submitting the final round Seafront Gardens bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

“At the consultation held in July over 500 people took part to tell us what they thought of the plans being drawn up for the gardens and their views have helped us finalise the design plans. We would now like residents to have a final say on them before any last tweaks are made and they are submitted to the HLF in February,” said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

“The project team and consultants, Lanarca, have worked hard to respond to the feedback given by local residents. The exhibition this week is an opportunity for residents to see the final designs and how they have been shaped by the feedback received so far,” added Cllr Neale.

As well as commenting on the draft design plans, over 230 people also completed the GreenSTAT survey detailing how they currently use the gardens and this useful information has also been included when drawing up the designs to reflect the needs of the community.

“One of the strengths behind our bid to the HLF is the amount of community support and interest that has been shown. The number of people showing their enthusiasm for the project has been really impressive and I hope that we see as many people at the exhibitions this week as we did in July,” added Cllr Neale.

Anyone that cannot make it along to one of the exhibition dates can still get involved by commenting on the revised designs online at

www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/felixstowefutures/projects/seafrontgardens There is also a final project questionnaire which will be available to download. Questionnaires and any additional comments can also be emailed to seafrontgardens@lanarca.co.uk up until the end of December.



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Tree wardens celebrate 20th anniversary at House of Lords

07 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Tree champions from Suffolk Coastal District Council headed for the House of Lords on Monday, November 29 to mark 20 years of The Tree Council's national Tree Warden Scheme and celebrate its National Tree Week.

A volunteer Tree Warden and the network coordinator from the Council joined other co-ordinators, politicians and senior council officials from across the country for a special reception hosted by Tree Council Trustee, Lord Best OBE on behalf of The Tree Council.

"The Tree Council launched the national Tree Warden Scheme on September 19, 1990. This followed the 1987 Great Storm when many trees were lost in the Suffolk countryside. Today the scheme is a UK-wide force of 8,000 local volunteer tree champions committed to their communities' trees. In Suffolk Coastal we have over 70 dedicated tree wardens helping to protect the district's trees," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Tree Wardens are appointed by parish councils, and work closely with professionals, such as tree and landscape officers, and the community. They can organise activities, fundraising and research and give advice on trees and planting. They can also act as champions for trees in their communities whether rural or urban. This may include protecting veteran trees or propagating and planting young trees to enhance a local hedgerow.

"Being a Tree Warden is the embodiment of the Government's Big Society plans to engage more people in becoming community organisers. As Tree Wardens already fit the bill, they are a thriving example of what the Government wishes to see on a wider scale. I hope that residents from across the district might be encouraged to get involved to help look after their local trees," added Cllr Neale.

The Tree Council also organises National Tree Week which celebrates the start of the tree planting season. The 36th annual National Tree Week ran from November 27 to December 5. In Suffolk Coastal, parishes across the district will be battling the cold weather over the coming weeks and months to plant native hedges and trees through the parish planting scheme and helping to enhance their local environment and landscape.

"The trees and plant life are an important aspect of the district and our volunteer tree wardens go out of their way to help preserve them and keep them at their best for everyone to enjoy. It would be great to see even more people volunteering a little of their time to help make a difference," added Cllr Neale.

For more information about getting involved in community action through the tree warden scheme or other local projects residents can contact the landscape officer on 01394 444420 or the countryside officer on 01394 444619.



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Do not be conned by direct debit fraudster

09 Dec 2010

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal is warning its residents to be wary of any telephone calls from people purporting to be from the District Council and asking for bank account details following the report of another attempted scam.

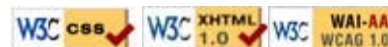
A vigilant member of the public received a call from someone yesterday (Wednesday, December 8) claiming to be from Suffolk Coastal's Council Tax team advising them that they were due a refund and asking her to find one of her bank statements.

"Thankfully, the woman quickly recognised that someone was trying to con her and reported it to our Council Tax team so she did not get caught in this latest scam. We want to publicise this attempted scam in order to warn the public to be vigilant," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners.

"This latest hoax call involved the fraudster asking whether the woman paid her Council Tax by direct debit. When she replied yes, she was told that she was due a refund covering an eight year period but that they needed to confirm her bank account details.

"Like most scams, this appears to be instantly flawed, as if she had a direct debit her bank account and payment details would already be held by us and we do not need her to find a copy of her bank statement. However, I would also reiterate that we would not just ring people up out of the blue and ask for their bank account details. The simple fact is that when something sounds too good to be true that is because it is not true – people need to be vigilant and thwart the fraudsters," added Cllr Savage.

Anyone who receives any such calls should report them directly to the police. If there are any details they can get from the hoax caller, such as tracking their phone number by using 1471, then these could help track down the fraudster.





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Views wanted on the district's reported air quality

09 Dec 2010

Archived press release.

The public are being asked to comment on two reports about the district's air quality that have recently been approved by the Government and which have reported that there are no new problems facing the area.

The Council's 2010 Progress Report provides a detailed update on air quality within the district, while it has also published a Further Assessment for the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) that was originally declared at the Dooley Inn, Ferry Lane, Felixstowe in 2009.

"Our Progress Report confirms that there no new areas of concern within the district and that across the district our air quality remains generally good with just a couple of areas of concern in Felixstowe and Woodbridge," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

"This comprehensive review of our district does identify that there are now 21 sites with biomass equipment and we are currently pursuing the data required to undertake screening assessments to check out their impact. The results will be included in our 2011 Progress Report," added Cllr Nunn.

After the Council declared The Dooley Inn, Ferry Lane, Felixstowe an AQMA, a Further Assessment was required by the Government and this was completed in April 2010 and gained approval from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

"The Further Assessment was a more in-depth study and looked at the additional monitoring data collected and also re-modelled pollutant concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and particulate matter (PM10) at various locations around the port boundary.

"The modelling confirmed the findings of our 2008 Detailed Assessment, with only the annual average target for nitrogen dioxide likely to be exceeded at the Dooley, with all other pollutants being at an acceptable level. However, the level of nitrogen dioxide means that the AQMA will remain in place and we are proceeding with drawing up a draft action plan to try and help reduce the amount of nitrogen dioxide in the air. Once we have finished the draft, we will ask the public for their views on that as well," added Cllr Nunn.

Both reports can be seen at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/envprotection/airquality, or at the Council's offices at Melton Hill, Woodbridge and Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe.

Comments are welcomed from residents on the Progress Report and Further Assessment for Felixstowe. Written comments can be sent to environmental protection at the Council's offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU, or emailed to environmental.protection@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk.

The closing date for comments is March 1, 2011.



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Young people prepared for a safer night out

13 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

A partnership team from across the district have been visiting young people in Felixstowe to lead an interactive information session about the risks of alcohol and ways to have a safer night out.

Year 10 pupils at Deben High School in Felixstowe took part in the sessions last week involving the Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership (CSP), Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Youth and Connexion Services, The Matthew Project, NHS Suffolk, the Police and Extended Schools.

“The sessions are a great way for young people to learn the facts about alcohol consumption and the effects too much of it can have on the body. The sessions were an engaging and interactive way for young people to get information about any aspect of keeping themselves safe and ask questions they may have been unsure about or too embarrassed to ask,” said Cllr Doreen Savage, Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board Member for Young People.

The two days were split into different sessions focusing on alcohol and the effects, risks and how to keep safe, the effects of alcohol on the body and consequences of alcohol and the law. The day used interactive voting, real life experiences, safer night out scenarios and expert information to help educate and inform young people about the risks associated with drinking alcohol.

The awareness campaign was piloted last year in Suffolk and after a successful result has been used to help equip young people in Felixstowe with the information to make informed decisions about drinking alcohol and understanding the consequences.

“I hope that the young people in Felixstowe found the day useful and that they may have learnt something they were not aware of before. Previous attendees have told us that they found it really useful so it has been interesting to see how young people engaged with the sessions that took place in Felixstowe.

“Alcohol can have a serious effect on the body and part of the day focused on offering advice on what to do if a friend overdoes it and the health implications of drinking in excess,” added Cllr Savage.

The sessions not only offered information and advice about alcohol but also the implications it can have on all aspects of young people’s lives. From health to falling behind at school and getting into trouble with the police, alcohol can have a big impact on young people and the sessions have tried to raise awareness about as many of these areas as possible.

“We were pleased to welcome the safer night out team into school as part of Suffolk Coastal’s Community Safety Partnership campaign. The sessions provided an excellent opportunity for students to engage in a variety of workshops and real-life scenarios to give them the knowledge and skills not only to keep themselves safe but that could also help to save someone else’s life.

“Giving knowledge to young people to make informed choices about alcohol and the risks associated with it are essential life skills. Education on the effects of alcohol forms part of the

statutory educational entitlement for all secondary school students and our students benefited from the combined specialist knowledge of the safer night out team,” said Karon Pearson, Subject Leader for PSHEE and Citizenship.

The safer night out campaign has been funded jointly by the Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership and the LSP.

To find out more about alcohol awareness or the safer night out education sessions residents can contact the substance misuse officer on 07768 817607 or email Julia.catterwell@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Press release issued on behalf of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership

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Play boost for young people in Felixstowe

14 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Play areas in Felixstowe are set to be even better helping more young people to have fun safely, making the most of their free time.

New equipment is being installed at Coronation Drive play area in Felixstowe, as well as work to repaint the existing play equipment to give it an updated look.

“The improved play equipment is a great boost and I am sure that local young people will be keen to make use of the new equipment which includes a new roundabout, as well as a multi-play unit that was previously in Langer Park,” said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Young People.

Suffolk Coastal Services (SCS) will be carrying out the works and have also repainted play equipment at Allenby Park in Felixstowe helping to make both the play areas a more inviting place for young people to spend their time.

“SCS will be installing the multi-play equipment tomorrow (December 15) and the roundabout will be installed in the New Year. We hope to have all the equipment installed early in the New Year however this is conditional on good weather and may take longer,” added Cllr Savage.

The improvements to the play areas have been funded by a successful application to Suffolk Coastal’s Outdoor Play Space Fund (OPSF) from Felixstowe Town Council. The OPSF is funded by contributions from building companies and developers when making planning applications to make sure that play facilities keep up with new housing developments.

The OPSF has been able to help a great deal of projects and encourages town and parish councils to bid for funding to improve both play and sports facilities in their part of the district.

“Play is very important for young people and it is great to see that play areas in the district will soon be even better. I hope that young people and their families will be keen to explore the updated play facilities that are on offer in Felixstowe by having fun and enjoying themselves,” added Cllr Savage.

To find out more about the OPSF residents can visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/parishcouncils/playfund or email jennie.catling@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk (Tuesday to Thursday)



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Young musicians get tuned up ready to take to the stage

14 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Local young musicians and bands are being encouraged to get to the rehearsal studio to perfect their tracks ahead of the Soundwaves Ultimate Band Contest 2011.

Heats have been confirmed for Saturday, February 26 at Framlingham College, Saturday, March 19 at Martlesham Community Centre and Saturday, April 2 at Leiston Film Theatre.

"The Soundwaves competition has a reputation of recognising excellent quality musical talent and giving artists the chance to gain valuable experience of performing to large audiences and working in a recording studio," said Cllr Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

The competition is open to any band or artist in the district aged between 13 and 26 with at least one member living in the district. All entries must be unsigned and be able to perform three of their own original tracks during the contest.

"As well as competing in the heats, which for the first time we are taking around the district, bands and artists will be able to take part in master class sessions to get advice from industry professionals. The top three bands from each of the heats and one judge's choice best runner up will progress on to the final and have one of three of their own recorded songs featured on the next Soundwaves album," added Cllr Neale.

There will be more opportunities for the finalists to perfect their songs ahead of the final in September with further master class sessions to ensure that they are at their best to compete for the title of Ultimate Band, 2011.

"Soundwaves has already run a series of master classes at Summerhill studios helping to give young artists tips on band image, equipment, instruments and technique so I am sure there will be a number of entries this year that will be revealing some really impressive performances," added Cllr Neale.

Will Simpson and James Plant of Brigade, will be running a second series of master classes in February to give even more local artists the chance to take part in the Soundwaves project and pick up useful insider tips.

There is a great deal of musical talent in the district and the Soundwaves project is a great way for local bands and artists to get some valuable experience that will help them in the future. Previous winners have gone on from the competition to be recognised by industry professionals and have had success touring with artists such as Example and Just Jack.

"This is now the fourth year the Soundwaves Ultimate Band Contest has been running and the musical talent on show has gone from strength to strength. I am really looking forward to seeing what styles of music and performances artists and bands come up with this year," added Cllr Neale.

To enter the competition or to find out more about the Soundwaves project and master classes bands and artists can email suffolksoundwaves@hotmail.com or contact the Soundwaves project manager on 07903 017838. The closing date for entries is Monday, January 31.

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Chair-based exercises help even more residents stay fit and active

16 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

The range of chair based exercise courses taking place across the district is now even better, helping to keep older people active and regain their confidence after illness or injury.

A new six week course organised jointly by the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Suffolk Sport has been set up for residents living in Kesgrave. The sessions will be taking place on Tuesday, January 25, Tuesday, February 1, 8 and 15 and Tuesday, March 1 and 8 from 11.15am to 12.15pm at Kesgrave Scout Hut. Each session will cost £2.

“Suffolk Coastal’s LSP recently ran a train the trainer course teaching instructors how to lead exercise sessions for older people and it is great to see these instructors taking on new classes. The LSP has been funding chair based exercise groups for over two years now and they have gone from strength to strength with additional courses being set up to help older people in our district,” said Cllr Ray Herring, Chairman of the Suffolk Coastal LSP Board.

The classes are run by an experienced instructor that will help the group to gently exercise to strengthen and tone muscles helping to improve flexibility, stamina and strength. They can also provide advice about how to avoid falls and techniques about how to get up from the floor should they have a fall or an accident.

“Many older people become anxious about having a fall or recovering from a serious illness so it is really important that we can help them to feel more confident in getting about and continuing to stay active,” added Cllr Herring.

The courses may also help older people to maintain their fitness and activity levels by keeping muscles strong. It is a low impact activity so is particularly good for older people or those that have recently had an illness or injury. It may also be beneficial for those with high blood pressure or who are not regularly active or participating in exercise but want a gentle way to get back into it. Weekly classes also give residents the chance to socialise and meet new people sharing similar experiences.

Older people may typically be more likely to sustain an injury after a fall, the most common being wrist and hip fractures. These can be made significantly worse by a lengthy lie on the floor after a fall, so it is important for older people to be able to get themselves up afterwards.

“The new course came about after one of our residents enquired about organising a class nearer to where she lived. Older people can sometimes find it difficult to get out and about so we have tried to organise courses that are local to residents that would benefit from them so that they can access them easily.

“Weekly classes are currently running in Aldeburgh, Framlingham, Friston, Leiston and Woodbridge, with Kesgrave joining in the new year. I would encourage residents to find out more about their local exercise group or get in touch if they think a group should be set up to benefit their local area,” added Cllr Herring.

To find out about local chair based exercise groups residents can contact the health improvement manager on 07984 613808 or visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/healthguide/sitdown There is also more information about what is involved in chair based exercise and a helpful video showing the types of exercises involved.

Press release issued on behalf of Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership

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Council ready for tough financial future

16 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

A wide-ranging package of savings agreed in principle by Cabinet last week, and planned for the next two years, means that Suffolk Coastal is ready to meet the challenges set by the Government this week.

Monday's (December 13) announcement by the Government of what grant it will be giving to councils over the next two years saw an overall reduction in funding for Suffolk Coastal of 14.1 per cent for 2011/12.

"Of course we would rather be getting more money, but the settlement announced for us is almost exactly what we had predicted that it would be, so we are already well prepared," said Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal.

"A wide-ranging package was presented to Cabinet last week that added up to a further £2 million worth of savings across all parts of this Council. There will be an impact on the level of services we offer, and indeed the number of people we employ, but we will continue to do our best to minimise the changes.

"To achieve these savings after having made £10 million of savings in the last few years is a tough challenge. However, we will press ahead urgently with our plans to share as many of our services as possible with our partners at Waveney so that we can both wring out as many efficiencies as possible," added Cllr Herring.

The pioneering efforts of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney in terms of shared services and partnership working appear to be central to the Government's advice to all councils on how they can reduce their spending.

By March 2011, the Council will have saved over £10 million since 2001 by its commitment to constantly review the ways to provide its services more efficiently and effectively. This is a very impressive achievement given that its income from Council Taxpayers is only £7 million a year and was £8 million from Government Formula Grant.

In the past few years, Suffolk Coastal has pressed ahead with many innovative partnerships to help it deliver more efficient services for its communities, which has seen its full time permanent workforce reduce by over half to fewer than 300.

It was one of the first councils to share a Chief Executive, and it now has a shared senior management team with Waveney, with nearly a third posts fewer than before, and real savings of £400,000 a year across the two Councils.

"The scale of the national financial crisis meant we knew we would have to be prepared for tough decisions, and some of them will have to be made a year or two sooner than we hoped.

"Our proposed savings package range across all services and fall into one of seven general categories – management restructure, operational review and restructuring, service review and revised services, ICT savings, additional income, vacancy management, and revised contractual

agreements.

“All of our current services are being reviewed and it is too early to predict exactly what the impact will be on our communities or indeed our staff. The good news for residents is that their Council Tax will almost certainly be frozen next year, and I can assure them we will be doing all we can to maintain and protect our services to them,” added Cllr Herring.



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Get your skates on for festive fun in Felixstowe

16 Dec 2010

Archived press release.

Following the many different resort activities Suffolk Coastal has provided this year, along comes an exciting eco skating rink which will be coming to Felixstowe to bring the year to a festive end.

A synthetic ice rink will be at Ocean Boulevard Amusement along Sea Road in Felixstowe from Monday, December 20 to Friday, December 24, open 10am to 5pm and closing at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

“Ice skating is the perfect way to warm up during the cold weather and is a great way to get into the festive mood,” said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners.

Tickets can be bought in advance from Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre (TIC) for a reduced price of £4 for adults and £2 for children or a family ticket for two adults and two children for £10. Tickets bought on the day at the ice rink will cost £5 for adults and £2.50 for children. Children under the age of 12 will need to be accompanied by an adult.

“The skating rink is in a great location overlooking the picturesque coastline and is only going to be in the resort for a short time so I would encourage residents and visitors to make the most of it while they can.

“Ice skating is an activity that people of all ages enjoy and is a great way of keeping active while enjoying the Christmas festivities. Some residents may not have had the chance to give it a go before and this is the perfect opportunity to try their hand at emulating some of their favourite skating stars and to try something new,” added Cllr Savage.

Suitable clothing is recommended including long sleeves, covered legs and gloves, in case of any falls. Skate hire is included in the ticket price.

“We have been working hard over the past year to ensure that exciting events and activities are brought to the resort of Felixstowe and I hope that residents and visitors will enjoy getting into the festive spirit by trying out the ice rink,” added Cllr Savage.

Throughout the year the Council has supported the return of donkey rides to the seafront, the introduction of Segways, the road train, beach safety wristbands, the reopening of the Cliff Top Café, falconry displays and a brass band performance. Felixstowe was also awarded Recommended Status by the Marine Conservation Society's Good Beach Guide.

To find out more about the ice skating rink or to buy tickets in advance residents can contact Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre on 01394 276770, email ftic@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or visit them at 91 Undercliff Road West, Felixstowe IP11 2AF.



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Collections as usual in Suffolk Coastal over Christmas

20 Dec 2010

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal's residents are being given help to make it an extra green Christmas this year as their recycling and refuse collection teams will be working every week day throughout the holiday period.

Weather permitting, there will be no changes over the holiday period to when residents should be putting out their wheelie bins for collection, as Suffolk Coastal Service's (SCS) refuse and recycling teams are working every week day, including the bank holidays on Monday, December 27, Tuesday December 28 and Monday, January 3.

"Thanks to the commitment of our SCS partners, and the fact that Christmas falls on a weekend this year, we are in the wonderful position of being able to offer our recycling and refuse service as normal on every day over the festive season," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

"Thanks to the efforts of our residents, and the non-stop work of our SCS collection teams, the six months from April this year saw over a record 61 per cent of household waste being recycled.

"This is one of the highest rates in the country and I hope that our residents will keep up their good work throughout the Christmas period. It just takes a little effort to separate your rubbish into what can and cannot be recycled, and it is great to see our investments to make it easier for our communities to recycle are paying off in such a big way," added Cllr Nunn.

People are reminded that any unwanted food, cooked or uncooked, can go in their brown bin, while seasonal items such as wrapping paper, cards, and cans, can join foil, plastics and cardboard in the blue-lidded bin. Glass bottles and jars can be taken to the nearest glass recycling bank.

The SCS offices at Ufford depot will be open from 8.45am to 5.15pm (3pm on Christmas Eve) on every week day except the bank holidays of December 27 and 28 and January 3. SCS can be contacted for refuse and recycling enquiries on 01394 444000 during office hours or email scsltd@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk.

Real Christmas trees with trunks and branches up to one and a half inches in diameter can be disposed of in the brown bin. Please cut the tree so that it fits into the bin with the lid down. Any excess waste can also be taken to any of the household waste recycling centres at Foxhall, Felixstowe and Leiston.



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Start the new year with a step in a healthy direction

22 Dec 2010

[Archived press release.](#)

Residents wanting to start the New Year with a healthy kick are being invited to join a new series of Stepping out in Suffolk health walks taking place in Woodbridge and Aldeburgh.

The walks in Woodbridge will be taking place from Framfield Health Centre on Fridays starting in January. The first walk will be on Friday, January 14 going through to Friday, March 25. Walkers are asked to meet at 10.15am for a 10.30am start at the health centre with each walk lasting up to an hour. Walks in Aldeburgh will start at the Fort Green bus stop at 11am on Friday, January 28, Wednesday, February 23 and Wednesday, March 30.

“The health walks scheme has proven very popular with residents across the district with many more people now keeping active on a regular basis and feeling the benefits of a healthy lifestyle,” said Cllr Ray Herring, Chairman of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

Taking part in health walks is a great way of getting back into fitness or maintaining good levels of activity. Each walk is lead by a qualified walk leader who will be able to offer support and encouragement to the group. There may also be opportunities for walkers to get involved in leading their own walks should they wish to attend one of the training sessions and set up a walk closer to where they live or work.

“Taking part in one of the health walks is a great way of meeting new people with similar goals. At the new walks in Woodbridge walkers are invited to stay for after walk refreshments at the Notcutts café to relax and chat,” added Cllr Herring.

The walks are suitable for all ages and can help to improve overall levels of fitness. Walking regularly for at least thirty minutes a day, five days a week can help to reduce blood pressure and cholesterol levels, reduce the risk of developing heart disease and can help people suffering from anxiety or depression.

“Walking is a particularly good form of exercise to take part in as almost everyone can do it and you do not need any special equipment. It is also good for those recovering from an illness or injury as it is reasonably low impact and you can build up the intensity of the workout according to individual fitness and ability levels,” added Cllr Herring.

To find out more about the new walks in Woodbridge and Aldeburgh or any of the health walks taking place across the district residents can contact the health walks team on 01394 444501 or email walks@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk A full list of walks is also available at www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/steppingout

Walkers are asked to park at the top of the car park away from the Notcutts entrance. Toilets are provided at the health centre and at the Notcutts café.

During bad weather some walks may be cancelled or postponed. To find out if a walk is still taking place residents can contact a member of the health walks team on 01394 444501.

Health walks are a joint project between Suffolk Coastal LSP, Stepping out in Suffolk, Healthy Ambitions Suffolk, Active Wellbeing and Mid Suffolk LSP.

Press release issued on behalf of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership

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We will fight for Felixstowe sea defence cash

23 Dec 2010

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The news that the Environment Agency has withdrawn its approval to fund the £10m scheme to put in new coastal defences in Central Felixstowe has been greeted with dismay by Suffolk Coastal.

The Council's Deputy Leader expressed great disappointment at the news but vowed that the Council and Suffolk Coastal MP Therese Coffey will fight to ensure that the works are carried out as soon as possible.

"We have been working in partnership with the Environment Agency to get this much-needed scheme in place to help protect homes and businesses in central Felixstowe, and it was all ready to start next year," said Cllr Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Coastal Protection.

"Now we have been informed by the EA that it has withdrawn its written funding approval, made in June of £10.3m, and it appears that there will be no chance of any EA support over the next four years.

"This Council perhaps more than any other recognises the need to prioritise spending but we will be strongly urging those at the most senior level of the EA to review this disastrous decision, and I am grateful for the immediate support offered by Therese Coffey MP. Last minute delays in funding are not new for Felixstowe as we had similar problems before the South Felixstowe works could be begun, and we will do all we can to ensure that the central scheme is also underway as soon as possible," added Cllr Smith.

The Central Felixstowe project covers the seafront from Jacob's Ladder to the War Memorial. The £10 million scheme would include a series of 18 rock groynes, a rock revetment and walkway from the prom around Cobbold's Point to Jacob's Ladder, and the topping up of the beach levels with sand and shingle.

The scheme would safeguard nearly 1,500 homes, local businesses, tourist beaches, recreational gardens and key facilities from erosion and flooding over the next 100 years, and was drawn up after lengthy consultation. The approved outline scheme was on show at a public exhibition at Felixstowe Town Hall only last month.

"There will be genuine anger and concern in Felixstowe about this decision, with questions doubtless being raised as to why this resort town is again being hit first when it comes to controlling spending on coastal defences," said Therese Coffey, Suffolk Coastal MP.

"Residents can be assured that I and the district council will be tireless in our efforts to persuade the EA to reconsider its decision and to explain how it has managed to prioritise its spending in a way which has left the heart of Felixstowe without much-needed protection from erosion and flooding.

"I am advised that there are parts of the Central Felixstowe sea defences that have zero life left in them. I would strongly urge the EA to review the facts regarding this scheme as I find it hard

to believe that its urgent and pressing need for funding would not be recognised,” added Ms Coffey.

Deterioration in the groyne system which has protected Central Felixstowe since the beginning of the last century has led to regular maintenance works but it is clear that a long-term solution is required, rather than trying to patch up the existing groynes. The seawall itself is at risk of collapse at certain locations, and has needed support from rock armour.

The £10m cost of the scheme meant that external funding was always necessary. The recent £2m cut in the grant that Suffolk Coastal receives from the Government for local services will make it extremely difficult for the Council to even carry out any further maintenance work to protect the existing Central Felixstowe defences in future.

The detailed design works were due to be completed by consultants Mott MacDonald and specialist technicians had carried out test borings as part of ground investigations works at the site.