

COASTLINE

The Newsletter of Suffolk Coastal District Council

Issue 43, Spring 2010

On Board for more efficient services

History was made in February at Lowestoft when the first ever Joint Partnership Board of councillors from Suffolk Coastal and Waveney, met in public in a further step towards joint working and improving the lives of their communities.

“We can now concentrate on developing our progressive partnership that always held the key to delivering better more efficient services in the east of the county. This first Partnership Board indicates our determination to not merely pay lip service to the ideas of joint working but to genuinely make it happen and make a difference,” said the Leaders of the two councils and joint Chairs of the Board, Councillors Ray Herring and Mark Bee.

“With a shared Chief Executive and shared resources in planning and audit, some of the building blocks are already in place; however the overriding message from this first Board was that we should press on and seek real efficiencies wherever possible, as soon as possible.

“The first step is to bring our management structures together. Our senior managers already meet together on a regular basis, but we need to formalise arrangements and ensure that both councils are led strongly with the partnership in mind,” added Cllrs Herring and Bee.

As well as setting out the rules for the new arrangement, the Board considered a proposal to share IT functionality to deliver financial efficiencies and make it easier to offer shared and improved services to the communities served by both councils.

Cashless parking in Felixstowe

Following a successful pilot in Woodbridge town centre, the cashless parking service RingGo now covers Suffolk Coastal car parks in Felixstowe so people can pay for their parking via their mobile phone.

“Drivers can still pay with coins, but this service makes parking hassle free with no need to worry about rushing back to top up pay and display tickets, as users can quickly and easily do it over the phone without returning to their car,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Cabinet Member responsible for Car Parks.

Drivers can register by calling 01394 642645 and providing their car registration, card details, the four digit location code of the car park and how long they would like to stay.

LDF update

A special meeting of the Full Council at 6pm on Thursday, March 18 at Trinity Park Showground will discuss the Core Strategy which sets out how the district should grow and be protected over the next 20 years.

Older views wanted

Kesgrave Councillors - town, district and county - are keen to hear views from older people in the town on services. Come to Kesgrave Community Centre on Thursday, June 10 at 10am to have your say.

Just the ticket!

National Express East Anglia and Suffolk Coastal have teamed up so people can buy a range of peak and off-peak train tickets from the Aldeburgh Tourist Information Centre from March 23.

Keep Suffolk up to speed

Suffolk Coastal has urged local businesses and residents to register their support for improved broadband speeds by completing a questionnaire at www.erebusonline.org.uk

“Broadband speeds in the county are generally much slower than many other parts of the country, especially in our rural areas. In some parts of our district there is no broadband access at all. To prove that there is a considerable demand for improved broadband services we need as many people as possible to register their concerns,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

In a district with over 4,000 small and medium sized enterprises, many of which are in rural locations, it is vital that they are able to access fast and reliable broadband connections to maintain a competitive edge.

Ready to vote?

A General Election will be held on a Thursday between now and June 3 once the Prime Minister decides when it will be. Suffolk Coastal's elections team are gearing up in readiness, but are you sure you are registered to vote?

It is not too late to check and get your name on the register of electors. You can contact our elections team on 01394 444329/444706 or email elections@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk and we can send you a partially completed form ready for your signature.

If you are not able to go to your local polling station on the day in person, you can apply to vote by post or by proxy (someone voting on your behalf) by contacting our elections team or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/your district/elections](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/your-district/elections) for more information.

Cash for community health projects

Any voluntary groups working to improve health in their local communities can bid to Healthy Ambitions Suffolk for grants of up to £15,000 to run events, buy equipment, or provide new services. There is £200,000 set aside this year for projects with fresh approaches and new ideas for addressing health issues within our communities. For more information contact the Suffolk Foundation, visit www.suffolkfoundation.org.uk/grant/app_form.html or call Sue Wright on 01473 734127.

Advice served up

An alcohol information and advice roadshow visited Woodbridge's Farlingaye High School in January as part of a Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership initiative to raise awareness about the dangers of drinking.

Planting new trees for the future

Early spring as the soil warms up is still a good time to plant trees to enhance our local environment. Trees bring great benefit, offering greenery, shade, shelter, and wood fuel, while soaking up water, and helping to mitigate the impact of climate change.

They also provide homes for wildlife from insects to birds and small mammals. Sadly during the long cold winter many trees and shrubs, particularly evergreens such as cedar, pine, and thuya, have succumbed from the weight of snow.

While trees can be threatened by many things including the weather, new developments and because they are too close to buildings, many new trees are being planted, often funded by developers as part of a planning requirement. Planning schemes are also carried out by the Council working in partnership with the County, local Parish and Town Councils.

Recently planted in Woodbridge were lime, Turkish hazel, false acacia, box elder, field maple and plane. These can be seen at Woodbridge Station, Hamblin Road car parks, New Street School redevelopment and the new Notcutts site. Suffolk Coastal has also worked with the County's highways team on schemes in Felixstowe to include sycamore and pine as well as new plants that will cope with the dry coastal environment - for example grasses, lavenders, yucca, cistus and hebes.

In a garden or a hedgerow, village green or community area, it is usually best to plant smaller trees, particularly native species, which have more chance of taking root and a quicker growth rate in the first 10 years. They are also cheaper and easier to plant!

When using native species such as oak, field maple, or hawthorn we encourage people to use locally propagated plants as this helps protect the population of, for example, the Suffolk oak in the landscape. Native trees and hedges are supplied through the Council's Parish Tree Scheme to Parish Councils, tree wardens and volunteers wishing to enhance their local environment.

For added beauty in the garden and to provide flower, fruit and seed for birds, use trees such as rowan, crab apple, cherry, hornbeam, birch, alder and fruit trees. Take care to plant your tree in the right place and manage it carefully so it causes no problems to your home or to your neighbours.

If you want advice about landscape matters or trees, contact either Anne Westover, Martin Minta or Peter Ross of Suffolk Coastal's countryside team on 01394 444420.

Restoring Sutton Heath's heathland

As part of a 10 years Natural England funded heathland restoration project, tree thinning took place recently at Sutton Heath to help restore the area.

Specialists Green Man Horse Loggers carried out the work, using heavy horses to extract the timber to minimise the damage to flora and fauna.

“Sutton Heath is part of the Suffolk Sandlings European Special Protection Area and ad Site of Special Scientific Interest so we must maintain it for future generations,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

“If the area was left unmanaged it would continue to lose its important habitats. By being proactive we hope to reverse this trend and so provide benefits for both people and wildlife,” added Cllr Neale.

When completed there will be more areas of open heath, a restored shelter belt of pine trees running from north to south, and an area of traditional chestnut coppice with some mature oak trees.

Want to be healthier?

A free health trainer service is on offer in Felixstowe to help you be more active, eat healthier, lose weight, stop smoking, reduce alcohol, or manage stress. Call Anna Keane on 07590 913 853 or Buzz Seager on 07545 012 087.

Pressing on with efficiencies despite Government fudge

The Government's February announcement that no changes will be made to local councils in Suffolk until a special countywide meeting agrees the way forward has been attacked as causing even more uncertainty.

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney will concentrate on delivering more efficient services and even better value in the future, and had called on the Government to reject the Boundary Committee for England's (BCE) final fatally flawed recommendations.

“We congratulate the Government for not implementing the BCE's final report. The stark reality is that the financial figures were wildly out of date, that it would exclude rather than involve local people, that it did not recognise the different needs of our varied communities, and that it did not reflect what the people of Suffolk actually want,” said Councillors Ray Herring and Mark Bee, Leaders of Suffolk Coastal and Waveney.

“We can and will meet Suffolk's challenges – Suffolk Coastal and Waveney are developing a ‘super-district’ model to reflect the shared ambitions of our communities, and we will press ahead with our work to ensure our communities receive a high quality of service, and value for money, in a way that they can be fully involved with.

“Our future has been uncertain since 2007 and this latest Government fudge will cause even more delays and distractions. While it is welcome that our communities may at long last have the chance to have their voice heard at this County Constitutional Convention, we do not know if we will be allowed to consult with everyone either before or after it about the conclusions that could emerge, or if the new Government will support any changes.

“One thing that must not avoid close scrutiny is the actions of the BCE, who must itself now be reviewed. The way its review was conducted was farcical and showed a complete disregard for local councils, communities and democracy. We have all been losers because of the half-hearted and half-baked way the BCE has acted,” added Councillors Bee and Herring.

Local communities must have a voice on Sizewell

The Council has again called on the Government to ensure that local communities have a chance to make their voice heard on the possible building of a new Sizewell nuclear power station.

“The Government is still not recognising the importance of ensuring that local knowledge and concerns are taken fully on board if plans for Sizewell are ever submitted. We remain committed to demanding that the communities of Suffolk Coastal must have the right to reject any proposal which has an unreasonable local impact,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

“The Government announced in November that it thought Sizewell would be a suitable site for its nuclear expansion programme. I hope it will now listen to our calls that there must be a real local say, with the scope for a refusal should local issues not be successfully resolved, whatever the national need for more electricity,” added Cllr Nunn.

Suffolk Coastal is calling for there to be a positive lasting legacy should a new power station be approved. Among the possible projects appropriate for the area around Sizewell are improvements to local roads, coastal defences, housing and community facilities.

Concerns were also raised about major costs for the Council to carry out the in-depth work on behalf of the local community which any application will inevitably require.

“We will have no choice but to seek funding from the applicant EDF, as we are not prepared to put this burden onto our local Council Taxpayers. It is something we are reluctant to do but we believe we can draw up an agreement that will ensure our independence while giving us the resources to do what we have to do,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning.

Comment on SMP

The planned consultation on the Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan was postponed but now runs from March 15 - June 18.

See the proposals at Felixstowe Town Hall from 2-7.30pm on Thursday, March 25 or visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/105014.aspx

Don't wait, it could be cancer

One in three people are likely to develop cancer in their lifetime, and early reporting of cancer symptoms is vital for successful treatment as early diagnosis makes it much more likely an individual will survive.

However, a regional survey found while there was a high recognition of a lump being a symptom of cancer, less than one in three identified other cancer symptoms such as bleeding, a mole or difficulty swallowing.

Budget for better services and better value

Suffolk Coastal has agreed a budget that will mean only an eight pence increase in the weekly cost of its services to an average Band D home while bringing its total of efficiencies made since 2001 to over £10 million.

The Full Council voted in February to set a Band D Council Tax of £149.40, up by 2.9 per cent or £4.14 a year from 2009/10. A total of £7.4 million will be raised from the district's Council Taxpayers to fund the Council's annual budget of £15.68 million.

“This budget will help us deliver what we know our residents want and expect from this Council – better services and even better value. We have been reviewing every part of our work to see where we can make it more efficient and relevant to what is needed by our communities,” said Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal.

“It has been a tough year as we have had to set sound financial foundations in order to tackle a budget gap between our current spending levels and service costs of £3.5 million over the next three years,” added Cllr Herring.

This will be the 7th year in a row the Council has kept its Council Tax increase to below five per cent a year.

“We will continue to concentrate our efforts on working in partnership to deliver improvements to the quality of life in our district. In just a few weeks we will have seen:

- the final parts of the district being linked to our improved recycling service,
- hard-pressed towns and villages assisted directly with projects to boost their local economies,
- night-time and weekend transport on offer for young people in our rural areas,
- help for our local communities to go greener
- free or subsidised home insulation works, with specific help for our elderly residents to make sure they do not miss out,
- town centre car parking charges frozen until 2012, with no changes in 16 of our 28 car parks.

“We have been, and we will have to continue, reviewing all of our services to wring out every last possible efficiency from them but this is being done in a carefully planned way to minimise and control the impact. Where we have had to increase our charges, we have done so as fairly as possible,” added Cllr Herring.

The Council's total budget has risen by £457,000 since last year, despite planned efficiency savings and additional income of £1.85 million. While the Council is investing £402,000 in improved services, inflation alone will cost it a further £464,000 and its fixed costs will increase by £884,000.

Where your Council Tax goes

76.2% County Council	2.9% Town & Parishes
10.8% Police	10.1% Suffolk Coastal

The average Band D bill in the district is £1,478.93 which is made up of:

£1,126.53 for Suffolk County Council

£160.74 for Suffolk Police Authority

£149.40 for Suffolk Coastal District Council and

£42.26 for town and parish councils.

This will be the 14th year that Suffolk Coastal has set a single figure increase in its Council Tax.

How we compare

	Band D Council Tax	Government grant per Band D home
Babergh	£139.01	£186.70
Forest Heath	£137.43*	£324.90
Ipswich	£312.84	£282.30
Mid Suffolk	£151.91	£167.30
St Edmundsbury	£175.23	£180
Suffolk Coastal	£149.40	£165
Waveney	£147.51	£290.50

* To be confirmed

EDSF makes local difference

Suffolk Coastal is using hard cash, which it won from the Government because of its successes, to help sustain the local economy and support business projects in its market towns through its Economic Development Support Fund (EDSF).

“Wickham Market Parish Council has received over £7,500 to help improve the town as a tourist and retail destination by improving business signs so that visitors will be drawn to visit the town centre and the surrounding shops,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

Saxmundham Businesses were awarded £6,990, and in total over £40,000 has been paid to town or parish councils, businesses and population centres for specific projects promoting economic growth and vitality.

Applications are welcome from all parts of the district except Felixstowe and Woodbridge which have separate support schemes. To find out more visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/helpingpeople/communitygrants/supportfund or call 01394 444625 or email sonia.lambert@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Planning for a better district

Suffolk Coastal's planning team is at the forefront of helping to preserve and improve the district's quality of life. It includes the development control team which deals with new planning applications for everything from a loft extension to multi-million pound nationally important developments, its enforcement team who check that no works are being done without official planning permission, its conservation team that works to preserve the best and most historic parts of the district, and its policy planning team which helps draw up the policies on how the district will grow and be protected in the future.

Councillor Ivan Jowers, Chairman of the Development Control committees, here outlines their work and answers some of the regularly raised questions about planning.

Our development team are probably one of the Council's services that local residents have most contact with. The team receives over 2,000 planning applications a year and each one is considered on its merits and how it relates to our planning policies. As the Audit Commission said the last time it reviewed our service, we are 'now serving local people well' and are 'helping to maintain the character of the area whilst at the same time promoting new housing and employment opportunities'.

The Government also recognises our quality by regularly giving us larger than average grants in recognition of our achievements - for example we recently received over £700,000 from the Government.

How does the Council decide whether to approve a planning application?

Most applications are for plans that will help improve the quality of life of the person whose home it relates to, or of the wider community as it may mean new jobs or facilities or homes. We have clear policies about what is suitable for the different parts of our district, which along with national rules, are the main factors used to decide the applications we receive.

A decision on a planning application cannot be made just on the basis of public opinion. Planning decisions must be made solely on planning grounds which if necessary can be justified in a Court of Law. We have to be able to provide evidence to support our decisions not just opinions.

There are specific reasons why we can refuse planning permission - these are mainly:-

- That they are contrary to our local planning policies

- Over-development of the site
- Prejudicial to the replanning of the area
- Objection on highway safety grounds.
- Lack of car parking/servicing facilities.
- Damage to residential amenity
- Damage to visual amenity/poor design
- Unsatisfactory layout.

The reasons for a decision have to be spelt out and justified. We cannot refuse something just because it might affect someone's view or the value of their home, or it might cause more traffic. We have to be consistent and fair. If we refuse a planning application, the applicant can appeal to the Government's planning inspectorate to have our decision overturned. If we do not have proper consistent reasons for our refusal, it will be easier for our decision to be overturned and the application given the go-ahead - possibly without any conditions or controls.

I would stress that our main aim is always to deliver the best for the local community and the district as a whole. There are some applications that rather than refusing, we will give a conditional approval to, imposing special conditions which will overcome the unsatisfactory aspects of the proposal – for example, controlling the hours that a business can be open to overcome late-night nuisance to local residents.

What about the recommendations of town and parish councils?

We consider everything said to us, whether it be from our town and parish councils or those people living next to a proposed development. But while our town and parish colleagues can only make a recommendation about a planning application, this Council has a legal responsibility to make a consistent and justifiable decision. We have power but we also have responsibilities, and are committed to doing our best to defend the interests of all our communities.

Why not make a decision based just on how it affects that street?

We have to see the bigger picture and not just be swayed by the views of a few residents or vocal and well-organised pressure groups. We must make consistent decisions - decisions that comply with local and national planning policies that both promote and control potential developments. If we do not, then we risk setting a precedent that unscrupulous developers could seize on to exploit across our district, with probably disastrous results for our residents. That is why we deliberately have different planning policies for different parts of our district because we recognise what might be appropriate or acceptable in one place will not be somewhere else.

Adastral Close going green

Staff from Orwell Housing Association, along with land and countryside students from Otley College, have been working in Adastral Close to help improve the green spaces around homes closest to the Port of Felixstowe.

As part of the planning consent and legal agreement allowing the dock expansion, Hutchinson Ports agreed to pay Suffolk Coastal for landscape enhancements at Adastral Close which have been drawn up with Adastral Close Residents Association.

Native species that are being planted include pine, holm oak, poplar, whitebeam, rowan, birch, sycamore, broom, hawthorn, sea buckthorn, buddleia, spindle, burnet rose and tamarix.

Planning for Playtime

Suffolk Coastal's Outdoor Play Space Fund (OPSF) was set up by the Council to ensure that recreation facilities keep pace with new housing development for the benefit of local communities.

Contributions to the fund are made by developers and builders when planning permission for new housing is issued and since 2001, the OPSF has contributed over £800,000 to over 130 projects in the district.

If you would like more information about the OPSF contact Jennie Catling on 01394 444321 (Tues, Wed & Thurs) or email jennie.catling@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Celebrating the quality of our district

Residents give this district one of the highest rankings for quality of life in the country and the Council's planning team is committed to help preserve and improve the built environment.

“To recognise and celebrate the highest standards of design that are helping to contribute to the district's environment, the Council is launching the Quality of Place Awards,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning.

Nominations are wanted for these three categories:

Building conservation

Repair or restoration works to buildings of local historic interest undertaken with particular care for the quality of their conservation.

Design

New buildings or extensions which exhibit originality, contribute to local distinctiveness and incorporate sustainable features.

Landscape and Nature

Landscape or nature conservation projects, which contribute to local distinctiveness, and benefit the local environment, wildlife or habitat.

Any projects or schemes completed within the last three years are eligible for nomination to a panel of professional and lay judges.

Winners will receive a Quality of Place plaque for their building or site. To nominate a project, whether you designed it, live in it or just live nearby email conservation@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk for a form or download it from www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/qualityofplace

Planning help – who to contact

To contact the Planning Helpdesk call 01394 444403 or 444428 email d.c.admin@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/devcontrol/

Visit

www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/devcontrol/enforcement/ / or call 01394 444636 if you want to report a possible breach of planning control.

For information about listed building, contact the Planning Helpdesk (details above) or visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/devcontrol/listed/

All homes in Suffolk Coastal now getting an improved recycling service

The last of Suffolk Coastal's 58,000 homes are being linked in March to the district's improved recycling service which has helped see the proportion of household waste diverted from landfill rise to over 50 per cent.

Every resident can now recycle from their home plastics bottles and containers, steel and aluminium cans and tins, paper, cardboard, foil and metal jar lids and bottle tops in their new blue-lidded wheelie bin.

“Rolling out this service since June 2006 gave us time to explain all the details to our residents. In contrast to other councils, we have had a remarkably smooth switch-over, with the only real complaints from residents being why they had to wait to get the service,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

“I cannot congratulate Suffolk Coastal Services enough for getting every home onto the new service within budget and one year earlier than originally planned. Our recycling rates are now just under 52 per cent, well above the national average, and we expect to hit 55 per cent during the next year,” added Cllr Nunn.

In 45 months, the SCS teams successfully delivered 116,000 new grey and blue lidded bins. The cost of the new service, including replacing all the collection vehicles, has been met by a combination of increased efficiencies, additional income from a small rise in car parking charges, and £308,000 from the County Council.

“It took a considerable investment by this Council to provide this new service to all homes, but we recognised that our residents wanted an improved recycling service. By making it easier for them to recycle, even more have got into the recycling habit,” added Cllr Nunn.

The message that it will cost the earth if we do not all cut down on the amount going to landfill, because of the increasing financial costs and the impact on the environment, raised everyone's awareness of the need to reduce their waste.

Suffolk Coastal's residents now have a blue-lidded bin for recyclables and a brown bin for garden and cooked and uncooked food waste which are both collected one week, with a grey-lidded bin for general household waste.

“Being able to offer people the chance to dispose of their food waste on a weekly basis, so that if they want it can be taken in their brown bin one week and their rubbish bin the next, has instantly prevented many of the problems that appear to have plagued other councils,” added Cllr Nunn.

What and where can you recycle?

You can take your paper, glass bottles, jars, steel and aluminium cans, textiles and unwanted books to one of over 270 recycling sites across the district. Using your local recycling facilities helps those local community groups that receive community recycling grants.

Paper-based cartons used to hold food and drink products, such as Tetra Paks, can be recycled by washing them, squashing them and taking them to special collection points at Framlingham Sports Club, Badingham Road; Orford, Quay Street car park; Wickham Market Village Hall; Woodbridge - the recycling site in the car park behind Woodbridge Community Centre, Station Road and Yoxford Village Hall.

Glass, cans and tins, aerosol cans, paper, green waste, cardboard and Yellow Pages, plastic packaging, plastic bags, Tetra Pak and other paper-based food and drink cartons, textiles, wood, scrap metal, bicycles, fridges, freezers, electrical and electronic equipment, light bulbs, fluorescent tubes, cooking oil, engine oil, car batteries, household batteries, and mobile phones can all be recycled at the County Council's household waste recycling centres. These are at Felixstowe - Carr Road, Foxhall – Foxhall Road and Leiston – Lovers Lane. They are open every day except December 25 and 26 and January 1.

Please use the correct recycling banks for the correct materials, do not leave boxes, bags etc at the recycling sites even if the banks are full.

Leiston to set a green example

Residents of King George's Avenue, Leiston, can set a green example for the rest of the district when they take part in a two-week experiment in March to minimise their waste.

With funding from the Government, the Suffolk Waste Partnership has set up the Seven Suffolk Streets project in each district to see what more can be done to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

“As well as residents, Leiston Primary School and businesses along King George's Avenue are also included in the project, which we hope will provide useful tips on how we can improve our services and encourage people to reduce their waste,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

“Our residents are now recycling or composting nearly 52 per cent of all their waste as they know it will cost the earth if we do not reduce the amount of rubbish going to landfill as the financial and environmental impacts are frightening.

“The challenge is how we can reduce that remaining 48 per cent of waste a year. What can we all do to either recycle, reuse or minimise it? This project and Leiston's green pioneers will hopefully offer us answers we can all follow,” added Cllr Nunn.

For information about local events and opportunities to reduce waste visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/sevensuffolkstreets or call Suffolk Coastal's recycling team on 01394 444000 or email scsltd@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/waste/recycling/

Where does your recycling go?

All blue-lidded bin items go to a sorting facility in Suffolk and are put on conveyor belts where people check the material to make sure there is nothing there that should not be. Large cardboard is taken off at this point for recycling.

The conveyor belt passes through rotating drums, which is one reason why plastic bags are not allowed in the bins. The cans and plastic bottles fall through the holes into a different compartment, while newspaper carries on to be baled.

The remaining material carries on with magnets used to separate the metal cans from plastic bottles and containers which are sorted into different types of plastic. After sorting and stacking, the materials are transported to where they are made into new products.

There are British processing plants for metal cans and some paper and cardboard, but most of the material, including plastics, goes to China and Hong Kong using containers that have brought in imported goods via Felixstowe Docks.

Paper and cardboard is turned into newspaper, packaging, office paper, kitchen towels and toilet tissue. Some of it becomes loft insulation, paints and road surfaces or even used for construction of airport runways and racetracks.

Metal cans begin new lives as bicycles, fridges, washing machines, aeroplanes, cars, or they get turned back into tins and cans.

Plastics can be recycled into street and garden furniture, compost bins and wheelie bins, flooring, fabric, clothing, stuffing, tubs, pots and bags.

High Sheriff visits Felixstowe schools

High Sheriff of Suffolk James Buckle visited Deben and Orwell High Schools to see how Suffolk Constabulary engages with young people.

The High Sheriff was accompanied by Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Lorraine Spall who works as part of Felixstowe and District Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) and is a police link between the schools, their students and the wider community.

“We were delighted to welcome the High Sheriff to meet some of our students, and learn more about Lorraine’s work here. She has an incredibly important role in the school community.

“The support and guidance she provides for students is invaluable, and certainly her regular presence and work within the community has had a very positive impact,” said Rob Cawley, Headteacher at Deben High School.

Focused on preventing crime

Felixstowe’s CCTV system has been hailed a success, thanks to the dedication and commitment of police volunteers donating their time to keeping the community safe.

CCTV was installed in the town in December 2008, providing a live link to the police station and a recording facility monitored by 17 Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) who direct police resources to potential problems as they arise.

With funding initially from the Home Office, and additional funding from its partnership organisations, the project is managed by Felixstowe CCTV Partnership, which includes members of the police, town and district councils and the Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

“The police aim to protect local people to the best of their ability, but we cannot watch all places at all times. The PSVs who monitor the CCTV add an important extra element to our policing, allowing us to stay one step ahead with notification of incidents in progress, and giving us substantial evidence for charging,” said Inspector Steve Gallant of the Felixstowe and District Safer Neighbourhood Team.

“We are very thankful to the police volunteers who donate their time to the initiative. It is really positive to see that the CCTV cameras are making a difference to the safety and quality of life within Felixstowe town and the seafront,” said Councillor Doreen Savage, Partnership Chairman.

Kill your speed - children join campaign

Children from Charsfield, Dennington, Saxmundham, and Wenhaston primary schools have been hard at work with poems, stories, comic strips, paintings or collages to promote the message of road safety in their communities.

The Kill Your Speed - Not Me campaign is targeted at all schools in the Saxmundham and Framlingham area where speeding is a perceived local problem.

Each winning design will be used, where possible, as part of the Saxmundham and Framlingham Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) new campaign.

SNT officers have been undertaking speed checks assisted by pupils from Saxmundham and Dennington who have been appointed Junior Road Safety Officers within their schools. They provide speeding motorists with leaflets on the potential dangers of their actions.

“Speeding is an issue that is raised time and again at both Community Forums and street meets so this campaign has been a great way for our team to cover all local schools where road safety is an issue. It gives the children an opportunity to be involved in the campaign themselves which is far more effective and enjoyable for them instead of listening to a safety lecture,” said Saxmundham and Framlingham SNT Sgt Daye Goddard.

Keeping you informed and involved in tackling crime

Working together for a safer district Suffolk police is keeping communities updated on how local issues are being tackled with a quarterly newsletter for each of the 30 Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs).

SNTs work with the public and other agencies, including Suffolk Coastal, to create safer and secure neighbourhoods where residents, police and partners all work together to identify, understand and tackle the issues that matter the most.

Through the partnerships, communities get a real say in deciding the priorities for the area in which they live, and this allows the police to provide long-term, local solutions to local problems.

The newsletters are available at local police stations and handed out by officers. Each SNT newsletter can also be downloaded, by logging on to www.safersuffolk.org.uk and entering your postcode.

Concerted effort thwarted thieves

One example of how the police can actively prevent crime was shown at last year’s Latitude Festival when the actions of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) helped decimate the number of thefts.

More than 100 thefts were reported at the 2008 festival, but there were fewer than 10 in 2009 after PCSOs were involved in advising people how to keep their valuables safe and secure.

The police also worked closely with the organisers and security personnel and targeted law breakers on route to the site, all of which led to the prevention of offences and ten arrests.

Tackling hate crime

Specialist help is on hand to anyone who has suffered from a hate crime, which is any criminal offence motivated by hostility or prejudice based upon the victim's disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender or age.

The four-strong Hate Crime team, three from the County Council and one from the police, offer help and support and is keen to hear from people who have been a victim of anti-social behaviour as well as more serious offences.

Victims or witnesses of Hate Crime can report direct to Suffolk Police or to Suffolk Hate Crime Service on 01473 668966 or report@suffolkhatecrime.org.uk

You can find out more about the service at Lowestoft College on Monday, April 26 from 5.30 - 7pm.

Approval for air quality improvement plans

The Government recently approved Suffolk Coastal's 2009 Updating and Screening Assessment Report, which looks at air quality for the entire district, together with the draft Air Quality Action Plan for the busy road junction of Lime Kiln Quay Road, Thoroughfare and St. John's Street in Woodbridge.

Following declaration of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at the Woodbridge junction, extensive public consultation resulted in 79 potential measures to reduce emissions from road traffic and improve air quality.

“Each measure was fully investigated in relation to air quality impact, cost and feasibility, culminating in a list of 20 measures recommended for implementation,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

“The Action Plan details the 20 measures, how they will be monitored and an assessment of the benefits that should occur as a result. The Government said the draft plan has every chance of being successful in reducing emissions and improving air quality to within guideline levels.

“However, this is still a draft and we now want to hear from the public before it is finalised. Local residents and stakeholders helped us produce a robust plan of action and we are hoping for another overwhelming response from them this time,” added Cllr Nunn.

A new traffic signalling system recently installed at the junction should have a significant effect on queues and therefore air quality levels. No new sites in the district have been identified as being of concern, and work is underway to produce a Further Assessment report and draft Action Plan for the only other AQMA at Ferry Lane in Felixstowe.

The draft Action Plan for the Woodbridge junction and the Updating and Screening Assessment report, can be seen on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/envprotection/airquality or at the Council's Melton Hill and Felixstowe's Undercliff Road West offices.

Comments on the plan and report can be sent by May 28, 2010 to environmental protection, Suffolk Coastal District Council,

Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU, or emailed to environmental.protection@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk, or via the online response sheet on the website.

Get on board to improve air quality

Travellers to Woodbridge can play their part in improving local air quality by using a bus for their journeys with details and timetables for buses and other public transport all on www.suffolkonboard.com

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

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

“The volume of traffic on roads and their emissions clearly affect local air quality and on a larger scale are a factor in climate change. It is estimated that transport makes up nearly 40 per cent of all the district's estimated carbon dioxide emissions, so I would encourage everyone to play their part in helping protect our environment by considering possible alternatives to jumping in their car on their own,” added Cllr Nunn.

Can you pass the green driver test?

You can cut your fuel bills and help cut back on air pollution by a range of simple measures which include getting your car regularly serviced to keep your engine efficient and using the correct oil.

Other tips include:

- check tyre pressures regularly and before long journeys.
- lose weight – don't carry anything in your car you don't need.
- streamline - roof racks increase fuel consumption so take it off if you don't need it.
- cut out or combine short trips - fuel consumption is worse when the engine's cold.
- easy does it – drive smoothly, accelerate gently, avoid unnecessary braking and decelerate smoothly.
- Rolling - keep the car moving if you can as stopping and starting uses more fuel.
- Change gear as soon as possible without labouring the engine.
- cut down on the air-con at low speeds.
- turn it off - any electrical load increases fuel consumption, so turn off your heated rear windscreen, demister blowers and headlights, when you don't need them.
- stick to the speed limits! Driving at 70mph uses up to 9% more fuel than at 60mph and up to 15% more than at 50mph. Cruising at 80mph can use up to 25% more fuel than at 70mph.
- if you do get caught in a queue turn the engine off if it looks like you could be waiting for more than three minutes.

Public have reason to be very grateful as Tesco found guilty

Tesco Stores Limited was found guilty in February at the Ipswich Magistrates Court of eight serious offences relating to its store in Anson Road, Martlesham after Suffolk Coastal's food safety team reported a catalogue of problems there in 2007.

Because of poor cleansing and inadequate procedures, parts of the store had become dirty and mice were active in many areas, with the public reporting seeing them running around the shop floor.

“This is quite a shocking case where basic procedures appear to have been ignored and inadequate measures taken to put right what had clearly become quite a significant and very public problem with mice,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member for Community Health.

“The guilty verdicts only strengthen my disappointment that the management at the store failed to take the appropriate timely action. I can only hope that this will act as a warning to others that they must keep up their standards,” added Cllr Green.

The Council’s food safety team’s investigated after a complaint that a live rodent has been seen on the shop floor at Tesco Extra and discovered food debris on the shop floor and behind the counter of the delicatessen, as well as droppings in the hot deli area and in the warehouse.

“Our team was really concerned that cleaning was not being carried out properly in the store, leaving a number of attractive possible food sources for the mice. Further investigations traced the problem back to the waste compactor which was not pest proofed, a pretty basic error of judgement.

“There were at least two breeding nests actually in the store, one between the clothing and fresh produce aisle, and the other in the barbeque aisle, and five different members of the public reported seeing live rodents in the store. Numerous visits were made by our officers to closely monitor the situation and ensure that there was not a serious enough risk to demand closure,” added Cllr Green.

Tesco was found guilty of eight offences and was fined £17,000 in total and required to pay £57,000 towards the costs of Suffolk Coastal.

In court, District Judge David Cooper said that the Council’s environmental health officers had done a magnificent and

terrific job. “It was a big job for them, and required quite a degree of courage and had to be considered very carefully. The public have reason to be very grateful for the work they did.”

PHILIS is even better online

Suffolk Coastal’s purpose built Port Health Inter-active Live Information System (PHILIS) has gone online to help improve the service offered to those using the Port of Felixstowe.

The addition of the website www.philis.co.uk means importers and exporters can keep up to date electronically, and has allowed Suffolk Coastal’s port health team to work more swiftly and efficiently.

PHILIS online has been live since January 1, and its user-friendly and comprehensive online system is proving to be an incredibly useful tool for both port health staff and shipping agents alike.

PHILIS online includes features that save companies valuable time when submitting documents for multiple consignments of goods as they no longer have to laboriously complete paper forms separately as they still have to at other ports.

Its correspondence facility removes the need for faxes to be printed, cutting down on the amount of paper and toner used. As our team receive over 55,000 faxes a year, some containing documents of 40 pages or more, this is a considerable contribution to reducing their carbon footprint and increasing green credentials.

The system could already help other port health teams and has attracted potential buyers, even before its Spring second phase.

Alde and Ore are learning together

The end of March will see the second Alde and Ore Futures community conference which will bring together all the work so far of the groups looking towards the future of the area.

Following the first conference in September, five working groups made up of people representing the communities in the area from Thorpeness down to Bawdsey and inland as far as Benhall and Blaxhall have been looking at the key issues affecting them.

Each group is chaired by a member of the local community and has been busy identifying ideas on how to tackle the issues regarding landowners, communities, environment, recreation and access and culture.

The March conference will agree what lessons can be learnt from the groups and agree what should happen next and who should take the lead on particular priorities.

There will be further public consultation during the summer with information also on www.suffolkcoastfutures.org.uk

The work around the Alde and Ore is being lead by the Suffolk Coast Futures partnership and will influence its future work and of its partners, which include Suffolk Coastal, Suffolk County Council, the Environment Agency, Natural England, Go-East, Suffolk Coast and Heaths Unit and Waveney DC.

Time for spring clean?

Volunteers are wanted to join this year's Spring Clean campaign which last year saw 1,500 people from 76 groups across the district joining in to collect 3,500 sacks of litter.

Suffolk Coastal along with other Suffolk councils have joined in with Radio Suffolk's Don't Be A Tosser campaign against litter which this year is targeting graffiti with the hope of stopping this anti-social behaviour and clearing up this eyesore.

If you spot some graffiti and know or see who is responsible report it to your Safer Neighbourhood Team or call Suffolk Coastal Services (SCS) on 01394 444000.

SCS can also supply sacks, litter pickers, gloves and other help if you want to organise a Spring Clean in your area, and collect your sacks afterwards.

Is it time to call in the Professionals?

Pest control means handling either poisons or sometimes natural predators. The type of pests that householders have to deal with, such as rats, mice, fleas, wasps, bed bugs, cockroaches, moths and beetles, are usually best dealt with by the correct use of an appropriate and legal pesticide.

“While other methods, for example mousetraps or the cat, may have some local success, they very rarely cure the problem and get rid of all the pests,” warns Suffolk Coastal Services (SCS) pest controller, Gemma Reddick.

While there is a charge for SCS's pest control service, but you get a professional assessment and treatment of your problem, and the confidence that all the materials used are handled and applied correctly. SCS is jointly owned by Suffolk Coastal District Council and Norse.

“When Suffolk Coastal's residents or businesses phone SCS about their pest control problems they speak to our locally based and experienced staff, who can give them advice as well as arranging for a pest control officer to come out within just a few days, if appropriate,” said senior environmental health officer

Michael Porter. The SCS pest control service can be contacted on 01394 444000.

Cash no longer accepted

Anyone wanting to pay their Council Tax in cash should use their local post office as Suffolk Coastal's Melton Hill offices will no longer accept cash payments from April 1.

The Council's cash office closed in 2008 but a few people still come in with cash. Letters have been sent to advise them of the other ways they can pay in future.

If it is a Council Tax payment, they can ask for a card so they can pay with cash at any post office or shop with a Payzone, while from home they can either pay over the phone by calling 0845 880 1312 or via the internet, or they can use direct debit.

These are all much easier and more efficient ways of paying. Residents can have their Council Tax bills delivered electronically. For more information visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/counciltax/online while for other payments visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/contactus/payments/

Brian cleans up in Woodbridge

This year's winner of the Potter Community Cup was Brian Andrews of Suffolk Coastal Services for his contribution to the community as the pedestrian street cleansing operative in Woodbridge.

Woodbridge Town Council Mayor, Councillor Les Binns, presented the award to Brian who has worked for Suffolk Coastal since 1998 and beat six other candidates.

“Brian is a familiar and cheery face to people in Woodbridge town centre and it is excellent that his customer-focussed efforts in keeping the town clean and tidy have been recognised,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

May Day Fun

The May Bank Holiday, Monday, May 3, will offer lots of fun in Felixstowe with the official opening of the Martello Coast Path which links Landguard Point to Felixstowe Ferry and which is now accessible for all to enjoy.

From 12 noon there will be live music, street entertainers, and children's activities, and themed walks covering different sections of the route, as well as art and local history exhibitions.

Shuttle buses will run the length of the route all afternoon free of charge for those people wishing to attend the event.

The day kicks off at 9.30am as the build up begins to the annual Felixstowe Rotary Club Fun Run on a one mile circular course around the Spa Pavilion which attracts hundreds of fun runners. Entry forms can be obtained from Diamond Mills, the Evening Star office in Felixstowe, or by phoning 01394 285972.

Help on hand for free loft insulation

Help is on hand for those older or more vulnerable people who are unable to take advantage of free loft insulation that is on offer to those aged 70 and over or are on state benefits.

Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership is funding a scheme to help clear older and more vulnerable peoples' lofts so free loft insulation can be installed. Suffolk Coastal will arrange the insulation and the contractors to carry it out, as well as arranging someone reliable to help with the sorting and clearing.

“I would encourage anyone who may be eligible to contact us to make sure they do not miss out on the help on offer. By properly insulating their home, residents will see the benefits immediately by saving money on their energy bills,” said Councillor Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

To find out if you are eligible for free loft and cavity wall insulation call the Warm Front team on 0800 072 9004 and if you need help clearing your loft call 01394 444506 or email jayne.howlett@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Even if you are not eligible to get free insulation it is on offer now from only £149 – call 0800 232 1677 or visit www.easterncri.org for more details.

Responsible dog owners clearing up

Members of the Felixstowe Dog Training Club have started clearing up dog mess left by irresponsible owners in the resort's public areas with dog waste bags supplied by Suffolk Coastal Services. Others that would like to carry out similar campaigns can call 01394 444024 or email michael.porter@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

If your dog fouls in a public area you could be served with an £80 fixed penalty fine or if convicted get a fine of up to £1,000, even if your dog has ‘strayed’ out on its own.

If you are affected by dog fouling, please call 01394 444000 if you can give any useful information such as the name and address or description of the culprit, and their dog, along with when it happened.

Top 10 Battle for Ultimate Prize

Ten of the district’s best young bands will be in the spotlight at the final of this year’s Soundwaves Ultimate Bands contest at Felixstowe’s Spa Pavilion on Saturday, April 10, 7-11pm.

On stage will be Clay, Fick as Fieves, Silk and Steel, Robert Castellani, Stratosfire, Crab Meat Moon, To The Dogs, Timothy Leat, Deadbeat and Walkway, who all feature on the new Sounds of the East Coast III CD. There is also a special headline attraction on a night which will show that Suffolk Coastal really is tops for young talent.

“The competition showcases young people living in Suffolk Coastal aged between 11 and 26 playing their own original songs. Thanks to the Soundwaves contest they have gained valuable experience that will help them progress,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.

Tickets are £5 on the door, or £3 for concessions or with the special voucher on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/arts/soundwaves/

Soundwaves Ultimate Bands Contest is jointly funded by Suffolk Coastal, Suffolk County Council, the Youth Opportunity Fund and supported by Access To Music.

Going somewhere now

Children and young people can now get to evening and weekend events as the Going Somewhere youth transport service is offering much needed transport.

Any youth club or organisation can arrange transport so young people can get to their after-school activities, or weekend and holiday clubs, by registering with Coastal Accessible Transport Service (CATS).

“This will help young people aged 5 to 19 all over the district take part in activities they would not have been able to access and so improve the quality of their leisure time,” said Councillor

Doreen Savage, Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Board Member for Young People.

From April individuals or small groups can book transport in advance for a small flat fee as and when volunteer drivers and vehicles are available. For more information, or to become a volunteer, phone CATS on 01728 830516 or email lynn.butler@catspaws.co.uk or andrew.down@suffolk.gov.uk

The service is a Suffolk Coastal LSP project supported by Suffolk County Council's Transport and Youth Service, Extended Services, Level 2, Rochford House, CYDS and Suffolk Coastal.

Get on the MEND

MEND is a fun nine-week healthy living programme run by Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust and NHS Suffolk for children aged seven to 13 whose weight is above the healthy range for their age and height.

The free programme teaches children about a healthy lifestyle at fun and relaxed after-school sessions twice a week.

If you would like a MEND session one in your area or to get on the list for Kesgrave (after Easter) call Linda on 01473 704030 or visit www.mendprogramme.org

Chlamydia help online

A new website www.amiclear.com aims to encourage young people to get checked out for Chlamydia, which one in 12 of sexually active under 25s in Suffolk may already have. NHS Suffolk has a free and confidential testing service on offer - call 01473 275228 for details.

On track with Coastal AC

Following taster sessions organised by Suffolk Coastal a new athletics club, Coastal AC, has been formed to give youngsters the chance to develop their athletics skills.

The club meet fortnightly at Farlingaye High School in Woodbridge between 4.30pm-6pm on Mondays, with the next sessions on March 22 and 29, and April 12 and 26 which will be outside once the weather is better.

For more information contact Daniel King on 01394 444318 or email daniel.king@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

“This new athletics club is great news for keen youngsters wanting to keep active, take advantage of the coaching and facilities on offer and get the chance to try sports they may not have tried before,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Countryside and Leisure.