

COASTLINE

The Newsletter of Suffolk Coastal District Council

Issue 35 Spring 2008

Waberswick sends out an SOS and Felixstowe's plea is answered

While people in Walberswick have been taking to the beaches to argue their case for money to be spent improving their sea defences, Felixstowe has finally got the go-ahead for works in the south of the resort.

The Environment Agency in February gave the green light for the £10 million coastal defence works at Felixstowe South that had been drawn up with Suffolk Coastal.

“This is excellent news. Not only does it mean that 1,600 homes and businesses, including the Port, in South Felixstowe will at long last have proper sea defences in place, but it also removes a major hurdle out of the way of the regeneration project for the South Seafront, and will be a massive boost to the Felixstowe Future partnership,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Coastal Management.

A series of 21 T-shaped groynes are being installed, with a dredger expected to anchor off-shore in early April to begin pumping the sand and shingle for the new beach.

Meanwhile, the campaign to ensure that the flood defences at Walberswick and the Blyth Estuary continues, with the public and local councils calling for more national funds and a 1,500 signature petition delivered to the Government.

Help us conserve the best of Aldeburgh and Woodbridge

Suffolk Coastal's policy, design and conservation team want your help to appraise the Woodbridge and Aldeburgh Conservation Areas in order to evaluate and record the special interest of the Areas.

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. They are a unique form of conservation because they will not only protect buildings, including those that are unlisted buildings, but also open spaces, trees and special features that make an area locally distinctive. There are 33 conservation areas in the Suffolk Coastal District.

“The team would like to receive ideas and comments on what the local community regards as the issues facing these Conservation Areas. We are also interested to find out local views on what features are more or less important within the Area and how change may be directed in the future,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning.

For more information, contact Robert Scrimgeour, senior design and conservation officer on 01394 444616 or email robert.scrimgeour@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Benefits support air ambulance

Suffolk Coastal's benefits team recognise a good cause when they see one, and for the last three years they have raised almost £200 annually from a Christmas raffle to support the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA).

The EAAA annual costs are nearly £3 million a year to provide their two helicopters which are the second busiest in the

country. They fly an average of four missions a day and by taking patients to hospital within the 'golden hour' it greatly increases chances of a full recovery.

Resolving problems locally

A new local way for people to resolve any problems or complaints they have about their councillors will soon be on offer allowing people to take them up with the local Standards Committee of Suffolk Coastal District Council, rather than writing to the Manchester-based Standards Board for England.

Watch out for full details of the new arrangements. For more information contact Hilary Slater, Suffolk Coastal's monitoring officer, by email - hilary.slater@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Benefits success

A 68 year-old local resident is nearly a £100 a week better off thanks to a leaflet he received from Suffolk Coastal that has helped him claim the pension to which he was entitled.

Suffolk Coastal District Council

Melton Hill

Woodbridge IP12 1AU

www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Fax 01394 385100

Minicom 01394 444211

E-mail scdc@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Emergencies outside office hours 07771 816535

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Planning Advice | 01394 444403 |
| | 01394 444423 |
| Council Tax | 01394 444855 |
| Housing Benefits | 01394 444838 |
| Business Rates | 01394 444544 |
| Port Health | 01394 614933 |
| General Enquiries | 01394 383789 |

Office Hours

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Monday to Thursday | 8.45am - 5.15pm |
| Fridays | 8.45am - 4.45pm |

Cash Office

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Monday to Thursday | 9.00am - 4.30pm |
| Fridays | 9.00am - 4.00pm |

Refuse and Recycling 01394 444000

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

Tourist Information Centres

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| Aldeburgh | 01728 453637 |
| Felixstowe | 01394 276770 |
| Woodbridge | 01394 382240 |

Leisure Centres (managed by DC Leisure)

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Felixstowe | 01394 670411 |
| Brackenbury | 01394 270278 |
| Leiston | 01728 830364 |
| Deben Pool | 01394 384763 |

Sharing efficiency and delivering value for money

Suffolk Coastal's drive to establish partnerships to increase its and other councils' efficiencies has gone up another gear after it agreed to an innovative initiative that will see its Chief Executive hold the same role at Waveney District Council.

Stephen Baker will from April divide his time equally between Suffolk Coastal and Waveney in a move that will place an increased emphasis on joint working and sharing of experience, resources and knowledge.

“This important and innovative agreement is just the latest example of our commitment to joint working which has helped us in Suffolk Coastal deliver better services and even better value for money to our Council Taxpayers,” said Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal.

“Stephen has been at the heart of the changes that have helped us deliver £7 million of efficiencies in the last few years, seen our services being regularly rated among the top 25 per cent in the country, and this district and council score the highest public satisfaction ratings in Suffolk.

“This is another sign that we are continuing to modernise the way this Council works, and I would reassure our residents that this change will not jeopardise our performance as we have in place a Councillor and Officer structure that is used to managing change and delivering success. We aim to fully exploit for the good of our Council Taxpayers the opportunities of working closer with Waveney to deliver even more efficiencies,” added Cllr Herring.

It has been emphasised that each Council will remain independent and that this is not an official merger but a pooling

of resources, talents and knowledge between two areas with many common features.

Both Suffolk councils face coastal protection challenges, share transport links, have tourism and ports as key economic drivers, and have large rural and environmentally-important areas.

Rotary Club honours ‘Mrs Felixstowe’

In January, David Harland, President of the Rotary Club of Felixstowe Landguard, presented Councillor Doreen Savage with a Paul Harris Fellowship in recognition of her services to Felixstowe.

The Fellowship is the highest Rotary award given in recognition of exceptional contributions to the Rotary motto Service Above Self.

“Her commitment to young people extends to school governorship and chairmanship of Felixstowe Sea Cadets. Rotary also has a strong commitment to youth and to community, and it is because of Cllr Savage’s work in these areas that the Club wished to recognise her achievements,” said the Rotary Club.

Cllr Savage is a Cabinet Member and Board Member of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership. With both she leads on young people.

Funding encore

Suffolk Coastal joined the chorus of protests who successfully overturned the proposal by the Arts Council England East (ACE East) to stop supporting the Eastern Angles theatre group which plays a key role in bringing theatre to rural areas.

Improving air quality

The Government has officially approved Suffolk Coastal's efforts to improve the air quality around the busy road junction of Lime Kiln Quay, Thoroughfare and St John's Street in Woodbridge.

Visit

www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/envprotection/airquality
for more information

Saxmundham is quality

Saxmundham Town Council has been awarded Quality Town Status which means it could take on more powers and responsibilities. It received the award from the Suffolk Association of Local Councils who paid tribute to the town and its Town Council.

Green Thumb Sports Awards 2008

The sporting spotlight shone on Suffolk Coastal's outstanding talents at the GreenThumb Sports Awards held at the Seckford Theatre, Woodbridge in February.

- Kim Stevens won the Wolsey Volkswagen Volunteer of the Year.
- Causton Junior School won the Suffolk Schools Sports Partnership 'School of the Year'.
- Ian Cotton won the Suffolk Sport 'Coach of the Year'.
- Deben Swimming Club won the King Pin 'Club of the Year'.
- Oliver Hedgley won the Mannings Amusement Park 'Disabled Sports Personality of the Year'.
- Keith Dixon won the Waverley and Brook Hotels 'Lifetime Achievement'.

- Mary Edmundson won the DC Leisure ‘Young Sports Personality of the Year’.
- Keith Atkinson won the Morson Group ‘Sports Personality of the Year’.

Schools’ music festival celebrates 21st year

For six days at the start of March, Snape Maltings Concert Hall was the magnet for 1,500 school students from schools across Suffolk, including eight from this district, who were taking part in the 21st annual Celebration of Schools’ Music.

Featuring everything from jazz and rock bands, choirs and orchestras to ensembles and cross-arts pieces, the week of performances demonstrated the wide range of work currently being produced within local schools.

It is a chance for the students to be treated like professional musicians, with full use of Snape’s unique facilities, with an afternoon dress rehearsal before an evening performance in front of up to 800 people.

What’s on?

Eastern Angles present Cuckoo Teapot:

Hacheston Village Hall

Saturday, March 29

Woodbridge Community Hall

Thursday, April 2

Orford Town Hall

Wednesday, May 7

Kirton Church Hall

Friday, May 9

Saxmundham's St George's weekend

April 18-20 - various events throughout the town to celebrate St. George's Day. Includes a charity market 10am to 2pm Saturday, exhibition of dolls houses, toy soldiers and trains on Sunday, with the civic parade at 2.45pm. Further details from the Town Clerk on 01728 604595.

Felixstowe French Market May 3-5

Felixstowe Historic Vehicle Rally May 4

Woodbridge Horse Show May 5

Felixstowe Drama Festival May 24-31

Suffolk Show
May 28 & 29

Woodbridge Regatta
June 8

Arts Framlingham Summer Festival
June 20 to July 6

East of England Tennis Tournament, Felixstowe July 6-13

Latitude Festival
July 17-20

For more information visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/whatson or call one of our TICs – see page 2 for details.

Record breaking year fro sport and play funds

Nearly £250,000 was given by Suffolk Coastal from its outdoor play space fund (OPSF) last year to help 23 different projects across the district, and the fund will shortly break the half-million pound barrier since its launch five years ago.

The OPSF was set up by the Council to ensure that recreation facilities kept pace with new housing developments and requires builders to make a contribution to the fund when they gain planning permissions.

Since 2003 the Council has helped 75 schemes across our district offer improved play and sport facilities with a staggering total of £478,423.

Suffolk Coastal is keen to encourage recreational projects that involve people in their communities and each year asks towns and parishes to identify their local needs for inclusion in the annual Outdoor Play Space Parish Strategy (OPSPS). This strategy then ensures that funds available from the OPSF are used in the best possible way.

For more information about the OPSF or the OPSPS, contact Suffolk Coastal's outdoor playspace development officer, Jennie Catling, on Wednesdays and Thursdays on 01394 444321 or email community&economic@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Big news for three local projects fro young people

Three exciting projects that will give new opportunities for fun to local children and teenagers have won over £200,000 funding from the BIG Lottery Fund after a successful application by Suffolk Coastal.

The Council submitted its £209,312 bid on behalf of a double-decker bus to tour rural areas in the north of the district, a cycle

trail created through Rendlesham Forest, and a modern play area at Langer Park, Felixstowe after consulting with organisations involving local children and young people.

The three projects are expected to benefit around 4,000 children and teenagers across the district, most of who are thought to have the greatest lack of play opportunities available in their areas.

“Our success in attracting this funding is largely because of our recently approved Play Strategy.” said Councillor Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Young People.

“It is more important than ever that the value of play, in all its forms, is recognised for what it can add to children’s welfare and development and also the benefits it can bring to society as a whole,” added Cllr Savage.

The chance to learn the art

Workshops aimed at Suffolk Coastal’s arts community will provide help and advice on putting on events and training.

“These workshops are intended to help strengthen the district’s arts community, giving them the skills to improve their performances, or put on a show that the public wants to see,” said Councillor Mary Neale, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Countryside.

- Page to Stage is on Saturday, April 26 when RADA trained Tim Welton will help anyone who wants to develop performance and directing skills.
- Saturday, May 10 is Clowning 101 – exploring the basics of comedy when Matt Chapman and Suzanne Bakker, both involved in physical theatre and clown, will help examine the fundamentals of comic play including timing, status, relationship, momentum and play.

- Eileen Aldous, a production designer will run Creativity through Costume on Saturday, June 28 and show how designers source and create costumes for both professional and amateur productions.

To find out contact Nicky Corbett on 01394 444538 or email nicky.corbett@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or visit, and book online, www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/arts/training/

Help us plan more housing

Suffolk Coastal has been asking for views on where new homes could be built in the areas east of Ipswich, and in Felixstowe, Walton and the Trimley villages, as the latest stage of its Local Development Framework (LDF).

The LDF will act as the blueprint for how the district will grow over the coming 15 or 20 years, and will set out for everyone exactly where, and where not, future developments will be acceptable.

“This is a very important document for the district and an important step towards finalising the Core Strategy which will set the context for the rest of the LDF. We have already involved the public and thanks to their contributions we are now looking to identify possible broad locations for housing growth,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning.

“In round figures, we think that there should be around 1,000 homes built in the east of Ipswich area and a further 1,600 at Felixstowe, Walton and the Trimley villages. What we now want to hear is people’s ideas on where, in broad terms, those areas it would be appropriate for those homes to go.

“The stark facts are that we need to plan for more homes, and that the best place is in a group close to where there is already

the jobs, schools, shops, roads and other infrastructure that are needed for quality of life, or the group itself is big enough to support new facilities. We have identified the best two areas, now we want help to start finding the best locations in those two areas,” added Cllr Smith.

Anyone with comments is asked to send their views in by April 11. The easiest and most convenient way is to use the online form on the Council’s website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/review/corestrategy/furtherissues/

People who want to respond by post can either download and complete a Core Strategy Comment Form, or send their comments to the LDF team, Suffolk Coastal District Council, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU. They can also email development.policy@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

The Council will spend some time considering the responses to this eight week consultation and will later this year reveal its preferred general locations for housing developments, when there will again be an opportunity for the public to get involved. Potential individual sites will not be considered until later in the process when they will be considered under a separate document, Site Specific Allocations and Policies.

Local say on Sizewell C?

Suffolk Coastal has told the Government that local impacts should be fully considered as part of any future planning processes that deal with new nuclear power stations.

“We strongly believe that local communities should have their say - with the right to reject plans for a Sizewell C if, after detailed local consideration, that is seen to be the correct decision for this district,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

Among the key local issues already identified are:

- Its design because Sizewell is in an environmentally important area
- That output be restricted so it can use existing transmission lines
- Possible effects on coastal erosion
- Assurances that disruption from construction is kept to a minimum
- That generous compensation is available for the community
- Housing and facilities for the workforce should be available afterwards
- Storage of spent nuclear waste
- Transport issues

Improving our website

Suffolk Coastal has called in the experts to help make sure that its website is as accessible as possible to all parts of its community and the initial signs are that it is well on its way to gaining independent accreditation for its efforts.

In November last year, the Shaw Trust Web Accreditation Team carried out a detailed audit on the Council's website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk and the initial reports say it has a good level of accessibility.

“The Shaw Trust are recognised experts and indeed are used by the Audit Commission, the local government watchdogs, among others. We went to them because we are committed to accessibility and wanted to find out exactly how our site performs, rather than just relying on automated checks,” said Councillor Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners.

The Shaw Trust use automated tools to check out the site is working, plus a team of testers with a range of disabilities using the different access technologies on offer to help people with disabilities use websites.

1APP fits all

A standard planning application form (1APP) for England has been launched which means from April 6 the old ones will no longer be valid. The new 1APP can be downloaded from www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/devcontrol/1app/forms/default.htm

Bawdsey approval

The Government has decided that plans for three sets of homes to be built to help fund vital coastal protection works at East Lane, Bawdsey can go ahead as there were no grounds for it to interfere in the decision.

Villages' homes boost

Swilland, Ufford and Wenhaston are set to see 18 more much-needed affordable homes built thanks to a successful partnership of Suffolk Coastal, parish councils and Hastoe Housing Association.

Government puts Suffolk under the microscope

On December 5, the Government announced that the proposals for unitary councils in Ipswich and Norwich did not meet its strict criteria, but that it was keen to assess whether there were alternative unitary arrangements covering the town and city, and potentially the wider county areas of Suffolk and Norfolk, that will meet the specified criteria.

The Boundary Committee has therefore been asked by the Government to advise, by December 31, whether there are alternative unitary proposals that will deliver

- affordability
- value for money
- stronger leadership
- neighbourhood engagement
- and a broad cross section of public support.

The Boundary Committee has also been asked to respond to the proposal for a unitary council that would cross the existing Suffolk/Norfolk border containing Great Yarmouth and Waveney councils, and whether that could deliver real benefits for local people.

What happens now?

The Government has requested that the Boundary Committee look at local government structures and advise whether, for each county area, there could be alternative unitary authority solutions which may involve changes to local authority boundaries.

The Committee began its structural reviews of Suffolk and Norfolk on March 3. It has been asked to report back to the Government by December 31. The Boundary Committee is a statutory Committee of the Electoral Commission, an independent body established by an Act of Parliament.

Max Caller, Chair of the Boundary Committee for England, said: “We are keen that all local authorities and local stakeholders are engaged in these reviews. We will also be actively involving local people in the reviews and look forward to hearing their views on the proposals put forward.”

In England there are still many two-tier areas where two different councils provide local government services: a county council and a district council. One obvious attraction of a unitary council is that people would receive all their services from one council, with one less tier of local government. However, it may not be as easy for a larger authority to include and involve all its different and geographically widespread communities in its decisions. Over the coming months the arguments will develop on both sides.

How can we have our say?

The Boundary Committee has promised that its review will include public consultation to allow local people to have their say on the draft proposals, which should be published on July 7. Watch out for details – we hope to include them in the next edition of Coastline. You can also visit the Boundary Committee website www.boundarycommittee.org.uk/our-work/structuralreviews.cfm or visit the special section on our website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/future

What does Suffolk Coastal think?

The Council's initial view is that it does not see any evidence that people locally want to have their local services run by a larger, possibly Suffolk-wide unitary council. Last year there was strong opposition from the communities and their representatives in those areas neighbouring or close to Ipswich that are now threatened with being merged with Ipswich.

Although there is an exceptionally high level of satisfaction among residents about the way services are currently provided by this Council, Suffolk Coastal cannot argue the case for no change or status quo. (It is possible that there will be no change, if the Boundary Committee cannot identify an alternative, or if the Government turns down the final proposals.)

Suffolk Coastal has to put forward a preferred unitary option, or ‘concept’ to the Boundary Committee for it to consider. The Council has until April 11 to come up with a concept and all councillors from all parties will have an opportunity to contribute views and ideas to that process.

The Council will keep you as informed as possible about what is being proposed and how you can make your voice heard. We would urge everyone to take the opportunity to let the Boundary Committee know what you think.

For more information, please contact the structural review team, specifying the county concerned: The Boundary Committee for England, Structural Review Team (Norfolk / Suffolk / Devon), Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW, or telephone 0207 271 0512.

Suffolk Coastal is committed to encouraging the growth of local businesses and jobs.

Here we feature news about some of the ways the district’s economy is growing and regenerating with help from your local Council.

Woodbridge store set to expand

Suffolk Coastal has given a conditional go-ahead to £1.8 million plans for Budgens to expand its Woodbridge store and help the overall vitality and viability of the town centre.

Budgens wants to expand so that it can improve the quantity of goods in its store and offer a much better shopping experience.

“I welcome the aim of Budgens to expand, and while their investment will doubtless increase their customers, it should also help Woodbridge maintain and improve its attractiveness as a place for shoppers,” said Councillor Ivan Jowers, Chairman of the South Area Development Control Sub-Committee.

“This Council cannot force businesses to invest or to provide the services or facilities we might all want to see, but we can encourage and support the viability of our towns. I hope this latest proposal will be as big a boost as our decision to grant approval to another development which has now attracted the high street names of Costa Coffee and Laura Ashley to Woodbridge,” added Cllr Jowers.

Get set for Innovation Martlesham

A new innovation park at Martlesham Heath took a giant step forward with January’s news that an operator had been appointed to establish and run the new facility over the next three years.

Located on the prestigious Adastral Park at Martlesham Heath, ‘Innovation Martlesham’ is set to become a global centre of excellence for research and development. Supported by funding from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA), the new innovation park will contribute towards creating the largest concentration of ICT related research and development companies in the UK. It will also play an important part in BT’s plans for the redevelopment global centre of excellence for research and development. of Adastral Park within the company’s vision for the future of the site.

George Kieffer, deputy chair of EEDA, said: “It is incredibly exciting that the innovation park is about to become a reality. It will be a global centre of excellence, as it rapidly develops a national and international profile for the research and development of specialised high-tech communications technology.

“The benefits to those who choose to develop and grow their company within the park will be enormous. Not least, it will be located in the heart of Adastral Park, the UK’s largest research

and development site for telecoms. Its planned collaborations with UK universities will further enhance knowledge transfer between the young and growing enterprises, which take up tenancies, and the world's leading ICT academics and multinational companies, like BT.”

‘Innovation Martlesham’ is being developed by a partnership comprising EEDA, BT, Sagentia/Carter Jonas, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council. It will offer flexible incubation space for high-tech ICT related knowledge based enterprises.

With an open campus feel, it will have a strong higher education research presence to encourage knowledge transfer and innovation.

Plans for a brighter future for Felixstowe become clearer

A range of projects that would help regenerate Felixstowe’s town centre and seafront have been given the broad backing of Suffolk Coastal’s Cabinet which has already agreed to support the initiatives with over £300,000.

Suffolk Coastal’s recent success in attracting additional economic investment resulted in a £385,000 grant from the Government, the bulk of which will now be used to kick-start Felixstowe’s regeneration.

“The Felixstowe Future group has used David Lock Associates to draw up and consult on proposals that would help breathe new life into the seafront and town centre. This ambitious but important regeneration programme can only occur if all the relevant private and public sector partners get involved,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Tourism.

“Our commitment should be an important step forward in the campaign to attract the major funding needed from bodies like the Haven Gateway Partnership, the East of England Development Agency and the European Union.

“We are funding someone to manage the potentially multi-million pound Felixstowe Future regeneration programme, with the rest of the money being set aside as seed corn funding to attract external investment for the projects. It will not happen overnight but the foundations are now in place for an exciting future for the resort and town centre,” added Cllr Hart.

Bids for Government funding have already been made via the Haven Gateway Partnership for improved cycle routes, while a Lottery bid is being considered for the a new-look Spa and Cliff Gardens, and talks are being held with possible overseas partners that would mean a European funding bid could be made.

In all there are 27 different projects proposed which range from using a consistent design and style for seating, lighting and bins in the area, through to major projects such as developing a water sports centre, redeveloping the Station area and the former Cavendish Hotel. All the details are on the Felixstowe Future website www.felixstowefuture.com/

Holiday Guide launched at Sutton Hoo

The official launch of the Suffolk Coastal Holiday Guide was held in January at Sutton Hoo, whose legendary helmet is featured on its front cover and is helping to spearhead the campaign to attract more tourists.

“We cannot underestimate the importance of tourism to our local economy, with nearly one in ten of local jobs being tourism-linked, and the latest figures showing that £219.6m was spent by tourists in 2006. This Guide, now in its 34th year, has

an important role to play in acting as a signpost across the world to what our district has to offer and keep its place as the top visitor destination in the county,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Tourism.

The launch was attended by the Council’s Chairman, Cllr Cliff Cocker. Copies can be picked up from the Council’s three TICs, or by post, from tourism centres across the country and via www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/tourism

Cabinet streamlined to be even more efficient

An unexpected vacancy has allowed Suffolk Coastal’s Leader to reshuffle his streamlined Cabinet team to help the Council become even more efficient.

In January, Kevin Keable stood down from his Community Wellbeing role but he will remain a councillor for Walberswick and Wenhaston.

“Councillor Keable resigned from the Cabinet because he no longer could dedicate the time necessary to fully do justice to his role. Kevin joined the Cabinet last May, and I would like to thank him for his sterling efforts since then,” said Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of the Council.

“We have now had a Cabinet for six years which has overseen a period of great change and many significant achievements, not least the fact that we have saved nearly £7 million during that time.

“I think we can use the strengths and experience of our existing Cabinet team even better, so rather than filling the vacancy I am shuffling some of the responsibilities. I am confident this will help this Council provide better services and even better value for money,” added Cllr Herring.

The new Cabinet, with their responsibilities, are shown below.

In addition, Cllrs Bob Snell and Peter Bellfield provide support to the Cabinet Members for Planning and Resources respectively.

- Cllr Ray Herring – Leader, responsible for Council policy and strategy, external issues, Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Comprehensive Area Assessment, Joint Area Review, shared services, Local Area Agreement, communications and parish liaison.
- Cllr Colin Hart – Economic Development, responsible for economic development and policy, regional economy, economic partnerships/Suffolk Development Agency/Haven Gateway Partnership, European issues, tourism and Information Technology/Information Communications Technology.
- Cllr Doreen Savage – Customers and Partners, responsible for customer service, consultation, partnership development, Local Strategic Partnership, social inclusion, Member development, accessibility, local community transport, concessionary fares, and young people.
- Cllr Andy Smith - Deputy Leader and Planning, responsible for Local Plan, development and building control, conservation and design, coastal management, car parks, and transport infrastructure.
- Cllr Mary Neale – Leisure and Countryside, responsible for rural issues, leisure - indoor and outdoor, sport, theatre and arts, countryside management, rights of way, community grants, older people, and human resources.
- Cllr Chris Slemmings – Housing, responsible for housing enabling, private sector housing and travellers,

homelessness, housing advice, housing benefits and fraud investigations.

- Cllr Sherrie Green – Community Health, responsible for food and safety, community safety, Port health, health promotion/NHS, licensing and emergency planning.
- Cllr Andrew Nunn – Green Environment, responsible for environment protection, pollution control, waste management, Local Agenda 21 and the Green agenda.
- Cllr Robert Whiting – Resources, responsible for democratic services, revenue and capital budgets, Council Tax and Business Rates, accounting, audit and risk management, asset management and estates, Felixstowe South Seafront project, and land charges.

New poster challenges perceptions

A campaign tackling anti-social behaviour has launched a ‘what are you looking at?’ poster as its latest step in involving young people and encouraging all parts of the community to break down stereotypes.

The poster features two men – one in a hooded top, the other in a police officer’s uniform - but on closer examination it is the same person, just wearing different clothing.

“How often do you hear about older residents being intimidated by groups of young people wearing ‘hoodies’? Often the young people aren’t doing anything wrong, they are just standing there talking to their friends, but the impact of a group wearing this type of clothing can create a very real fear,” said Detective Sergeant Daye Goddard, of Suffolk Police.

“Young people need to realise that this can be intimidating and older people need to understand that not everyone wearing a hooded top and standing in the street is being anti-social. To categorise young people – or indeed any other group – by virtue

of what they are wearing and pre-judging based on appearance is wrong,” added DS Goddard, who is leading the campaign with support from the Suffolk Coastal Community Safety Partnership.

Controlling anti-social public drinking

The Police are set for new powers to control anti-social drinking in parts of Wickham Market, Saxmundham and Kelsale-cum Carlton after concerns about the impact of alcohol-fuelled behaviour.

“The town and parish councils of these areas have recognised the need to give the police the authority to take action against those who are drinking in public and acting anti-socially,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member for Community Health.

“The proposal is to make parts of these communities designated zones so the police can deal with anyone misbehaving or acting in an anti-social manner while drinking alcohol and seize any in their possession.

“Similar restrictions have been introduced in Felixstowe, Leiston, Woodbridge, Framlingham, Kesgrave, Martlesham and Rushmere St Andrew and have helped the police improve the quality of life for those who live there,” added Cllr Green.

It is also planned to change the existing designated areas in Felixstowe, particularly along the seafront, with the proposed alterations coming after consultation with Felixstowe Town Council and the Police.

Family fun day at Yoxford

A special Yoxford Family Fun Day on Thursday, March 27 is being organised by the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic

Partnership (LSP) at Yoxford's primary school and village hall from 10am to 3pm.

“This will be third year that the LSP has held special events aimed at helping local people get more out of life and it is the first time we are visiting Yoxford,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Suffolk Coastal LSP Board member.

“We will have a mixture of fun activities and useful information on offer on the day, with local groups involved and promoting themselves,”

“Organisations like Suffolk Coastal, the County Council, the police and the health services will have stands on the day giving people information about services and the help that is on offer, and there will also be lots of fun activities many aimed at young people.

“The goal of the day is to help people get more out of their life by finding out how they can improve their health and well-being, whether it is at a local club or by becoming a volunteer, or adopting a healthier way of living,” added Cllr Green.

We are the best in Suffolk and Norfolk

The latest annual assessment of how local district and county councils are managing their finances has rated Suffolk Coastal as the best in Suffolk and Norfolk.

Every year, the Audit Commission publishes its use of resources assessments which not only puts a critical microscope to every council's financial, asset and risk management but also takes account of the way it is linked to each organisation's priorities and how it supports overall value for money.

“The report covering 2007 gives us an overall score of 3, which rates us as performing well, a score shared by some of our

neighbours, but when you break down the figures further you discover that we had the best rating in both Suffolk and Norfolk,” said Councillor Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member for Resources.

“The basic score is made up of five themes; financial reporting, management and standing, along with internal control and value for money. We scored three on all but one of the themes, and were the only one to achieve a top mark of four on any of them – which was for our financial standing,” added Cllr Whiting.

Town centre car parks largely untouched

Because of the Council’s severe financial pressures a thorough review of all Suffolk Coastal’s car parking charges has been carried out to deliver £259,000 additional income.

“In April there will be no price change for users of the vast majority of our town centre car parks. I want to underline that shoppers will see no increase in charges, as we recognise the importance of supporting the vitality and viability of our district’s shops and will freeze those tariffs at their 2006 levels,” said Councillor Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning.

“The Government’s continuing failure to properly fund our local services means that we had to review all aspects of our services.

“Our review of car parks identified some inconsistencies that we are now ironing out. For example, some of the rates in our tourist or seaside car parks were very low so we are increasing them to levels which will still offer good value for money. The maximum charge for a full day in most of the seaside car parks will still only be £3, which we think is very good value.

“Our overall aim is to maximise the effectiveness of our car parks in supporting the district’s commercial, tourist, residential and environmental life,” added Cllr Smith.

Council goes local to cash in on savings

After April 4, any resident wanting to pay cash to Suffolk Coastal will no longer have to visit its Woodbridge offices and will instead be able to make their payment at a post office.

“We are constantly reviewing how we can make our services more efficient as we have to find ways of reducing costs to help balance our books. Our customers have shown that they too are moving with the times, using convenient automated ways of paying their bills with a steadily dwindling number paying by cash,” said Councillor Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member for Resources.

“Few people pay by cash at our office - a small fraction of the volume which used to be dealt with. The vast majority of people prefer to go online, pick up a phone, or use a direct debit or standing order.

As a result, we will no longer after April 4 take any cash payments at our Melton Hill offices, which could ultimately save as much as £50,000 a year,” added Cllr Whiting.

Anyone without a bank account who wants to pay at their local post office or Payzone should contact the Council Tax team on 01394 444855 or email council.tax@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

In another interesting efficiency initiative, Suffolk Coastal recently reaped dividends from working with three other councils to find the best value banking service. From April it will be switching to the Co-operative Bank in a move which will save around £80,000 for the four councils.

- Want to go online with your Council Tax account? Visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/counciltax/online where you can also sign up to have your bill delivered direct to your computer inbox. By using this service you can help cut the Council's post bill.
- Payments can also be made by dialling 0845 880 1312 or online on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/contactus/payments/ For more information email epayments@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or call 01394 444541.
- People wanting to buy car parking season tickets, refuse sacks or doggy bags are recommended to buy them from one of the district's free Tourist Information Centres which are in Woodbridge, Felixstowe and Aldeburgh. These are of course open longer than the Milton Hill offices.

Budget for growth, efficiency and value for money

Suffolk Coastal has agreed a budget which pegs the Council Tax increase to only 10 pence a week on the average Band D house.

The new budget will see the net expenditure of the Council increase in 2008/09 by 3.5 per cent to £14.93 million a year, after £1.6m worth of savings and additional income have been generated.

“Delivering value for money services, but not at the expense of quality, is an integral part of the Council's vision for the district, which aims to make Suffolk Coastal a place where the community continues to receive quality, efficient services from the Council in a rapidly changing environment,” said Councillor Ray Herring, Leader of the Council.

“Our budget for 2008/09 continues this Council’s drive to delivering better services and even better value for money. We have worked hard to overcome an expected £850,000 gap between our income and our anticipated expenditure, and succeeded in keeping our Council Tax rise to 3.9 per cent.

“We are also able to fund investment and improvements in our priority services so we can, for example, expand our improved recycling service to another 13,000 homes, improve community safety, promote the regeneration of Felixstowe, and work for better quality of life across the district with the Local Strategic Partnership,” added Cllr Herring.

This will be the 12th year in a row that Suffolk Coastal will keep to single digit Council Tax rises.

The Council’s expenditure includes external factors outside its control such as pay and price increases leading to £647,000 additional costs, and a further rise of £116,000 in the cost of the new national free bus pass for over 60s and disabled people. The Government’s grant to the Council will rise by only 2.86 per cent or an extra £221,000.

Where your Council Tax goes

The average Band D bill in the district is **£1,398.40**, which is made up of:

£1,073.88 for Suffolk County Council,
£149.67 for Suffolk Police Authority,
£141.21 for Suffolk Coastal District Council, and
£33.64 for town and parish councils.

The average Band D bill will increase by £1.09 a week, of which Suffolk Coastal’s share is 10 pence.

How we compare

| Band D | Government grant | Council Tax per Band D home |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Babergh | £131.16 | £183 |
| Forest Heath | £128.95 | £334 |
| Ipswich | £292.17 | £287 |
| Mid Suffolk | £142.50 | £174 |
| St Edmundsbury | £171.99 | £182 |
| Suffolk Coastal | £141.21 | £163 |
| Waveney | £138.87 | £279 |

An ICT solution to become more efficient

Suffolk Coastal's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services have been brought back in-house in a move that will save the Council nearly £300,000 in the next 12 months and allow it to offer even better services.

ICT was originally outsourced in 1991 and was most recently provided by Atos Origin, which has been praised for its work by Suffolk Coastal.

“Our contract was due to expire this year with no option for an extension. We have come up with a solution that will deliver savings and a more efficient service,” said Councillor Colin Hart, Cabinet Member responsible for ICT.

“We originally made the decision on the basis that it would be a short-term answer while we investigated the possibilities of joint-working with other councils. The pending but unwanted review of all Suffolk councils has made this an even wiser decision.

“It means that we will save £86,000 by the end of March, with expected savings of £298,000 in 2008/09, and again in 2009/10. This really is excellent news for our residents, as it means we can reinvest £170,000 to provide a better service more tailored

to our current needs, while helping to keep down our bills to our Council Taxpayers. This is a clear example of Suffolk Coastal once again providing better value for money and even better services,” added Cllr Hart.

We’re going greener

Nearly 70 Council workers attended a special environmental awareness day in January which looked at how they can recycle more and cut down energy use at work and at home, while also beginning the Council’s work on drawing up a green transport plan.

District leading the way

The district was to the fore among the winners at the first annual Suffolk – Creating the Greenest County awards for environmental excellence.

Wenhaston’s efforts to involve its community in going green saw it win the community energy projects award, while East Green, Kelsale picked up the building award and the Log House Company Ltd of Parham won the best product award in the business section. Hasketon’s White House Farm and the Sinfield Nature Conservation Trust were highly commended for conserving habitats.

To find out more about the Greenest County campaign visit www.greensuffolk.org

Help keep our district clean and green

A survey of residents last year gave this district top marks in Suffolk for cleanliness, and placed us third out of 56 districts across the country, but we want your help to make us even cleaner and greener.

Why not organise or join in a Spring Clean of your area? If you would like to carry out a litter pick, Suffolk Coastal Services (SCS) can provide sacks and gloves and a collection service after your activity.

To register your event, contact SCS on 01394 444000. Last year, nearly 2,000 volunteers cleared the equivalent of more than 2,600 sacks of litter in the district.

Tapping into water savings

As part of its ongoing commitment to become a greener and more efficient Council, Suffolk Coastal has reviewed water use at its main buildings.

“We called in Anglian Water Services to carry out a water efficiency assessment at six of our largest sites, to give us their expert view on how we were doing and how we could do better,” said Councillor Sally Ogden, Chairman of the Green Issues Task Group.

“I would recommend other businesses to take a close look at their use of water as it is clear from our experience that simple steps can be taken that can both help save the environment and generate cash savings,” added Cllr Ogden.

The improvements proposed include installing water saving devices in the cisterns and self-closing taps on wash basins.

The measures proposed will cost less than £4,000 but will generate savings of over £2,000 a year, and reduce water consumption by up to 31 per cent.

Try the Freecycle way to reuse your unwanted goods

The Ipswich Freecycle group is open to people in South and East Suffolk who want to ‘recycle’ an item rather than throw it

away. Freecycle groups match people who have things they want to get rid of with people who can use them.

The goal of Freecycle is to keep usable items out of landfills. As its website states, ‘by using what we already have on this earth, we reduce consumerism, manufacture fewer goods, and lessen the impact on the earth. Another benefit of using Freecycle is that it encourages us to get rid of junk that we no longer need and promote community involvement in the process.’

There are already more than 5,000 people who have joined the local Freecycle site – visit http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Ipswich_Freecycle/ to find out more.

Improved recycling keeps rolling out

This April will see another 6,000 homes getting the improved recycling service that means they can recycle paper, cans, foil, cardboard and plastic containers in their new blue-lidded bin every fortnight.

Suffolk Coastal hopes to add over 13,000 more homes to the new service this year, in addition to the 18,000 homes who are already enjoying being able to recycle so much more on their own doorsteps.

“Our residents have been recycling a record 45 per cent of their household waste during the last year, and those with the improved service have been hitting 54 per cent. I cannot stress how important it is that we all make the effort to get into the recycling habit because it will cost us the earth if we do not,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Green Environment.

“The rising costs of landfill taxes and other charges mean that we could be faced with an extra £9 million bill for disposing of

the household waste we are collecting, so if we can all recycle more that potential bill will be drastically reduced.

“We are rolling out the improved service as quickly as we can, but financial restraints mean it will be 2010 before every home is reached. I can only urge people to make as much use of the services they have as possible, and to remember that all their waste food, cooked or uncooked, can go in their brown wheeled bins,” added Cllr Nunn.

For further information about recycling services, please visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/recycling or telephone 01394 444050.

Try composting at home

Why not help the environment this Spring and get into the home composting habit? You can compost a wide range of organic waste easily at home, including all grass cuttings and garden clippings, most weeds (but not Japanese Knotweed or other pernicious weeds), uncooked fruit and vegetable peelings, eggshells, straw and hay, and shredded paper.

By doing this you can provide your garden with a free source of organic compost with the benefit that you know exactly what has gone into it, and you are reducing the demand for peat based compost products extracted from important wildlife habitats.

There are still special offers on compost bins, with a 220 litre bin for £8 and a 330 litre bin for £10 (prices valid until March 31st 2008). To order a home compost bin, you can visit the composting pages on www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk or telephone 0845 077 0757.

And if this has planted a seed in your mind, why not become a Master Composter and help your local community? Visit

www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk or phone 01473 264795 for more details.

Disposing of old paint

Do not take paint to the household waste recycling centres as they will not accept any containers with paint or any other substance that is still in liquid form.

In the case of emulsion paint only, please leave any left-over paint that you will not use at a later date, in the container with the lid left off and some sand added to it, until it goes completely dry. When it is completely dry and is no longer in liquid form, it can be disposed of in the normal rubbish black sack or grey-lidded bin.

Help make our service even better

Put your refuse and recycling out by 7.30 am on collection day – or no earlier than 4.30pm the previous day. Any earlier will attract animals that will scatter your rubbish and cause litter.

- Put your refuse and recycling where your home meets the public highway but don't leave your refuse and recycling where it will cause an obstruction
- Leave room for our collection vehicles to get through!
- Remember that you can also dispose of your rubbish and recycling at the Waste Centres at Carr Road, Felixstowe; Foxhall Road, Foxhall; or Lovers Lane, Leiston.
- You can take glass bottles and jars to your local bottle banks.
- Make sure you wrap any sharp objects, and put a label on the bag. It could help prevent someone getting injured.

If you have the new wheeled bin recycling and refuse collection service:

- Ensure all your waste and recycling is entirely contained within the appropriate bin. Do not leave bags of waste beside the bins as waste outside the wheeled bin will not be collected.
- Don't overfill your bin – if the lid won't close it could prevent the mechanical emptying of the bin into the refuse freighter. If you require additional bins in which to dispose of your waste these may be provided at a moderate annual charge from SCS on 01394 444000.
- Return your bin back to where you normally keep it as soon as you can after collection to prevent misuse or theft and to minimise the visual effect of bins on the streets.

SCTV launches a more accessible website

The district's own website for young people www.sctv.org.uk has just reinvented itself to become more accessible and up to date with all that matters to local young people.

“We now have a site which looks better than ever and is more accessible than before. Suffolk Coastal Teen Voices (SCTV) is all about getting better access to services for young people and giving them a say in how services are provided, so we felt a bit hypocritical to have a website that young people at schools, youth clubs or at home were unable to use,” said Alex Stewart of SCTV.

“SCTV would like to give its thanks to Kerry and her team from onesuffolk who designed the website – it now looks great. The next task is to get all the information that we think young people will want and find useful onto the site,” added Alex.

SCTV want their site to be about the community working with them, so it wants youth groups, organisations, schools and councils to send in their news, information and events to be promoted on the site.

“We really want to make the site a hub for the community, a place where young people can see what’s happening in their area and a place where youth-related organisations can promote their information to their target audience for free. Just email enquiries@sctv.org.uk ,” added Alex.

SCTV has been helped by the district’s youth co-ordinator, who is funded by the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

“Congratulations are due once again to SCTV for identifying a potential problem and so quickly putting it right. Their new site looks even better than the old one and I am sure will attract even more young people who want to find out information and get involved in SCTV,” said Cllr Doreen Savage of the Suffolk Coastal LSP.

Free training for teenagers

Skills 4 Tomorrow is a Suffolk Acre run programme offering 16 to 18 year olds the chance to gain free vocational training, including NVQs and Key Skills, if they work for a small or medium sized company in the east of Suffolk.

With backing from the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, European Social Funding and the Learning and Skills Council, a host of free information, guidance and tailored support is also on offer, giving businesses the chance for their workforce to become more skilled, and teenagers to get free training.

Suffolk ACRE are appealing to relevant businesses with a younger workforce within the Haven Gateway, Waveney and

High Suffolk areas to find out more by contacting Glynis White on 01473 242500.

PASTEL training

A new series of transition training workshops for young adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is being launched in March, with one set for Saturday, March 29 and every fortnight afterwards.

Run by PASTEL these fun workshops are Lottery-funded, run by parents and carers with professional tutors, and are at 10.30am to 3.30pm, at the Riverside Centre, Stratford St Andrew.

To find out more visit www.pastel.org.uk or call Don Tricker on 01728 604944.