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Nominations close for Suffolk Coastal elections



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04 Apr 2007

Archived press release.

A grand total of 136 candidates will fight the Suffolk Coastal District Council elections with only one candidate elected without a contest, as Les Binns was the only person nominated for the Woodbridge Kyson ward.

Forty-two of the current councillors are seeking re-election on Thursday, May 3, although five of these are standing in different wards. Thirteen have chosen to stand down, including Cllr John Perry, who is retiring after four years on the Council and who was the Cabinet Member for the economy and tourism.

Other senior councillors not standing for re-election include Cllr Maggy Wilson, Cabinet Support for Arts and Older People, Cllr Norman Bugg, Chairman of the Licensing and Health Committee, and Cllr John Hammond, Chairman of the Environment and Housing Committee. A full list of retiring councillors is at the end of this press release.

The current make up of the Council is 42 Conservatives, 11 Liberal Democrats, and two Labour. The polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm on May 3, and each voter on the register will receive their own polling card informing them where they should go to vote.

There are 55 Conservative candidates, 39 Liberal Democrat, 28 Labour, 10 Green, three independent, one UKIP, and one British National Party.

It is still possible for people to apply for a postal vote if for any reason they would prefer to vote at home. The closing date for applications is Wednesday, April 18. Full information can be found on the Council's website –www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/elections2007/ or call the elections team on 01394 444329.

Details of nominations and elections to the district's town and parish councils will follow later - keep an eye on the Council's website. [Follow this link](#) for a full list of the nominations for Suffolk Coastal District Council.

The full list of retiring Members with a total of 92 years service on the Council between them is: Maggy Wilson (Aldeburgh), Neil Jackson (Earl Soham), Ann Rodwell (Felixstowe North), Malcolm Minns (Felixstowe South-East), Dot Paddick (Felixstowe West), Kenneth Musgrave (Framlingham), Norman Bugg (Kesgrave East), John Hammond (Kesgrave East), Rebecca Foster (Martlesham), John Perry (Melton and Ufford), Mary Dixon (Trimleys with Kirton), John Leggett (Witnesham), and Nigel Barratt (Woodbridge Seckford). Councillors Wilson, Minns and Dixon were all first elected in 1995 and served three consecutive terms, while Cllr Paddick served 1987-91 and 1999 onwards.



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British Heart Foundation set to benefit from Charity Day activities



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10 Apr 2007

Archived press release.

Car washing, shoe shining, egg 'n' spoon race and a quiz night were just some of the fund-raising activities that members of Suffolk Coastal's Sports and Social Club organised for their Charity Day on Friday, March 30 to raise money for the British Heart Foundation.

Staff were encouraged to part with their money by an Easter chick selling Easter eggs, to buy cakes from the ever-popular cake sale, take part in a grand raffle, and test their skills in speed pool and target golf.

"Once again the Sports & Social Club has worked very hard to organise this annual fund-raising extravaganza. I would like to thank all those who gave up their time, or dug deep into their pockets for this worthwhile cause," said Stephen Baker, Suffolk Coastal's Chief Executive.

"Since 1994 staff have raised over £26,000 for charitable organisations. I would like to congratulate all the staff involved in what was another superb effort, their commitment to these charities is outstanding.

"This year's event has raised £500 and still counting," added Mr Baker.



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Help Suffolk Coastal keep its standards



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10 Apr 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal is seeking an independent person to join its Standards Committee that helps to ensure that councillors and officers of the District Council, and the district's Town and Parish Councils, continue to meet the high standards expected of them.

The Standards Committee includes four District Councillors, two representatives of the Town and Parish Councils, and two independent people. The committee is chaired by one of the independent members.

"We are inviting applications from people with local links to bring an independent view to the work of this important committee. We should like to find someone who has a genuine interest in promoting and improving high standards of conduct in public life. Ideally they should have an awareness of the local area and community issues, be familiar with ethical dilemmas, have questioning skills, be assertive, and be independent of any political party and local government," said Hilary Slater, Monitoring Officer for Suffolk Coastal District.

Independent members of the Standards Committee should be aged 18 or over, and able to undertake around six to eight meetings per annum (mostly in the evening).

Anyone who is a member or officer of the Council, or any other relevant public authority, or is a close friend or relative of any councillor or Council officer, will not be considered. There is no formal payment for being on the Committee although the Council will pay allowances to cover travel and subsistence expenses.

Anyone who would like to find out more about becoming a member of the Standards Committee can obtain an information pack and application form by writing to Alan Biddle at Suffolk Coastal District Council, Melton Hill, Woodbridge, IP12 1AU or telephoning (01394) 444325. Completed forms are needed back by Friday, April 20 at the latest. More information is also available on the Council's website – visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/jobs



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Suffolk Coastal's planning for success



[Listen to the text on this page](#)

10 Apr 2007

Archived press release.

The ongoing success story of Suffolk Coastal's planning service has been further recognised with the news that it is one of 56 more councils that have been officially recognised as meeting or exceeding national targets.

Suffolk Coastal was one of the 94 per cent of councils who in 2002 were not dealing with planning applications quickly enough according to the Government, but the latest figures show that the service is now performing excellently.

Statistics for the last 12 months show that 78 per cent of major planning applications are determined within 13 weeks, compared to a national target of 60 per cent and an average of 70 per cent. Suffolk Coastal is also exceeding the target for minor applications by 14 per cent by scoring 79 per cent, and its other applications figure of 89 per cent is also nine per cent above target.

"This latest announcement confirms the excellent progress we have made over the last couple of years and has been the result of a great team effort from staff and the development control committees," said Philip Ridley, Head of Planning.

"The Council made it one of its top priorities to improve the speed in which our decisions were made and thanks to investment in the service and support from the Government we have been able to deliver a real success story.

"All the evidence also shows that while we are making decisions quicker, there has been no drop in the quality of those decisions, as measured by our continuing high success rate in any appeals, which means we are continuing to successfully protect the quality of life of this district," added Mr Ridley.

An in-depth review of planning services was carried out last month by the Audit Commission as a best value inspection, and the Council is hoping for further good news from this report.

It has also been recognised that Suffolk Coastal deals with 20 per cent more applications than the average council, while its internationally recognised countryside makes it officially 20 per cent more complex. At the same time, comparisons with other councils have shown that Suffolk Coastal's planning service is provided cheaper than the average of other councils.



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Two million pounds paid to Council the easy way



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18 Apr 2007

Archived press release.

More residents than ever are tapping into the easy ways to pay their bills around the clock to Suffolk Coastal with last week seeing the £2 million mark being broken since the services were first launched last May.

People can now pay bills from the Council either by using their telephone or their computer at any time of the day, and 15,000 payments have been received through the new systems.

“People now have the chance to pay their Council Tax, Business Rates, car park excess charge notices, housing benefit invoices, or other Council invoices at a time when it suits them, just by picking up a phone or visiting our website,” said Alan McFarlane, Suffolk Coastal’s Head of Finance.

“It is all remarkably simple to use and you do not even have to have internet access as we have introduced an automated telephone system which you only need a push button phone to operate. The two things you need to have with you are your invoice or excess charge notice, and your debit or credit card – armed with those people can pay us any time any day.

“We recognised that not everyone has access to the internet which is why we have worked hard to introduce a new improved payment service which is available to as many people as possible throughout our largely rural district, in line with our Customer Access Strategy,” added Mr McFarlane.

An automated telephone payment can be made by dialling 0845 880 1312 and calls are charged at local rates. The online payment service can be found on <http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/contactus/payments/> where there is also full information on all the other ways of making payments to the Council.

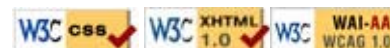
The Council currently accepts Delta, Mastercard, Solo, Switch, Maestro, Visa and Visa Electron. Any payments made by debit card are free, but the Council does charge an additional fee of two per cent of the total transaction value on all payments made by credit card, except for car parking tickets and housing benefits overpayments.

“For those people who make regular payments to us and do not have a debit card, I would recommend them switching to direct debit which remains the cheapest way to pay. It just requires a simple form to be filled out, which can either be downloaded from our website or can be obtained from our offices,” added Mr McFarlane.

Any member of the public wanting more information about the new improved payment services can email epayments@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or call 01394 444541 during office hours (Monday to Thursday – 8.45am to 5.15pm, Friday 8.45am – 4.45pm).

Another recent improvement means Council Taxpayers can now visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/counciltax/online and with their own pin number view their own personal account details over the web, and also electronically receive their Council Tax bills in future.

The Council hopes that this will also prove popular as there could be some significant postal and print savings for this Council if people sign up to having their bills delivered direct to their computer inbox, rather than their letterbox.



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A timely reminder to get into the recycling habit



[Listen to the text on this page](#)

02 May 2007

Archived press release.

Next week from Sunday, May 6 is national compost awareness week and Suffolk Coastal is reminding its residents that their brown recycling bin is for far much more than just garden waste.

As well as garden cuttings, residents can also use their brown bins for all food waste, whether cooked or uncooked, as well as cardboard, and shredded paper, which is all taken away and turned into compost.

"Thanks to the efforts of our residents, we have seen the district's recycling rates as high as 40 per cent during the last year but none of us can afford to hold back on these efforts as the environmental and financial costs of putting rubbish in landfill tips are getting worse," said Jeremy Schofield, a Suffolk Coastal Strategic Director.

"Many people are tidying up their gardens at this time of year, and they should really use either their brown wheelie bins, or their own compost bins, to dispose of their green waste in the most environmentally-friendly way.

"We are making it easier for everyone to recycle and hopefully during national compost awareness week people will get into the habit of taking that extra second before throwing something away to think whether they can put it in their brown bin and have it turned into compost. Taking that extra step will benefit us all," added Mr Schofield.

The Government levies a landfill tax on all rubbish and last month this rose by £3 to £24 a tonne, with a further £8 rise coming in next year. Suffolk Coastal has regularly warned that if recycling rates do not increase, then the annual cost of disposing of the current amount of household waste could rise by £9 million over the next few years, a figure which is more than the Council raises for all its spending from Council Taxpayers.

Around 9,000 homes in the district have an improved recycling service which takes any cardboard, cans, plastic bottles and tins left out in a special wheelie bin, and more homes will join up this summer.

"These homes are part of the alternate week collection service that has gained much national media coverage in recent weeks. However I would point out that we have experienced virtually none of the problems that are reported to have occurred elsewhere.

"Our new service has proved to be both popular and massively successful, with recycling rates of up to 54 per cent in those areas. We think we have succeeded because our brown bin service can take away old food and turn it into compost, meaning that people can still have their left-overs collected every week if they also choose to use their rubbish wheelie bin for such items," added Mr Schofield.

For further information about the Council's recycling and compostable waste collection service or how to obtain discounted garden composters please contact Suffolk Coastal Services on 01394 444000.

As part of the special week there is a Shovel-It-Yourself event at Foxhall Household Waste Recycling Centre on Saturday, May 12 from 10am to 3pm when the public can come along with their own bag and shovel and take compost for free. This is compost made from garden waste left in the skips at the site by the public and composted on site.



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Helping managers to prepare for new smokefree laws



[Listen to the text on this page](#)

08 May 2007

Archived press release.

From Sunday, July 1, it will be illegal for people to smoke in virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England and managers should be getting ready for the new smokefree law.

To help local managers of public places and businesses comply with the new regulations, Suffolk Coastal is holding three special one-hour briefing sessions where free advice and guidance will be on offer about the new law.

“The Government has introduced this new law which overnight will make this a smokefree district, with the aim that there will be a healthier environment where everyone can socialise, relax, travel, shop and work free from any second-hand smoke,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

“We think that for most managers it will be easy to comply with the smokefree requirements, but for some there will be more significant implications. We want to make sure they are aware of their responsibilities so they can be ready for July 1 when the new law starts,” added Councillor Green.

Employers, managers and those in charge of smokefree premises and vehicles will need to:

- display 'no smoking' signs (the required signs are available free by calling Smokefree England on 0800 169 1697).
- take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, customers and visitors are aware that premises and vehicles are legally required to be smokefree.
- ensure that no one smokes in smokefree premises or vehicles.

“We are pleased that the Government has awarded us specific additional funding to enable us to deliver these sessions without placing an additional burden on our limited Council resources.

“Successful implementation of smokefree legislation will be measured by the number of premises that meet the requirements of the new law rather than by the number of enforcement actions taken. We will, however, enforce the new law where our advice is ignored, but our main aim is to give as much help and support as possible to managers so they can understand their own new duties and avoid falling foul of the new laws,” added Councillor Green.

The briefing sessions, which start at 10am, will be held on:

- Tuesday, June 5 at the Riverside Centre, Great Glemham Road/Low Road, Stratford St Andrew.
- Thursday, June 7 at the Richard Rooms, Martlesham Community Hall, Felixstowe Road, Martlesham.
- Friday, June 8 at The Elizabeth Orwell Hotel, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe.

Places are limited so to ensure a place telephone 01394 444501, email smokefree@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/smokefree.

Although not required by law, some employers may be considering installing a smoking shelter for their employees or customers and of course these may need planning permission. Check with the Council's Planning Helpdesk on 01394 444403 or 01394 444423 or email d.c.admin@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

For more information on the new laws including help for businesses to prepare to go smokefree go to www.smokefreeengland.co.uk or contact the smokefree helpline on 0800 169 1697.

For information and services to help individuals to stop smoking go to www.suffolkstopsmokingservice.co.uk or contact 0800 085 6037 or www.gosmokefree.co.uk or contact 0800 169 0169.

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Leaflet has designs on reducing anti-social behaviour



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10 May 2007

Archived press release.

The ideas and designs of five local youngsters have been used to create a special leaflet aimed at steering young people in Suffolk Coastal away from anti-social behaviour.

The full-colour ASBO Wot Eva leaflet was launched this week (Tuesday) at Woodbridge's Seckford Hall when a specially invited audience saw the first copies of the leaflets that will be distributed around the district.

"The Suffolk Coastal Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) wanted to create a leaflet that explained to young people what anti-social behaviour is, its consequences and how to report it," said Cllr Sherrie Green, a Board Member of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership.

"We thought that the best people to help us get this important message across was our local youngsters so we held a competition asking for designs for a leaflet. The standard of entries to the competition was extremely high and elements of the best four have all been used. The competition winners not only got prizes but also worked with Suffolk Police to finalise the design.

"ASBO Wot Eva has taken the best of the winning designs and will help young people in Suffolk Coastal better understand the issues around anti-social behaviour and its consequences. I would thank Terry, Gemma, Becky, Eloise and Ellen for their efforts which hopefully will help further reduce anti-social behaviour in our district," added Cllr Green.

Last December Gemma and Becky Oakes, aged 13 from Dennington, were joint first prize-winners with Eloise Vest, aged 11, years from Martlesham, with each receiving a MP3 player, while Ellen Wright, aged 14, from Felixstowe and Terry Dean, aged 12, also from Felixstowe, were both given music vouchers after finishing second and third respectively.

Gemma and Becky entered the competition through the Framlingham Youth Club and Framlingham Area Youth Action Partnership and Terry entered through the Level 2 Youth Project in Felixstowe.

The total crime rates in Suffolk Coastal are among the lowest in the country but reducing anti-social behaviour is one of the main targets of the CDRP whose partners have carried out a number of initiatives. This approach has shown some success recently with the total crime statistics for the district showing a nine per cent drop in the last year, and the public perception of vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property dropping by 27 per cent over the last three years to only 20 per cent.

It is hoped that the leaflet will also be used by some of the CDRP's partners in other parts of the county to promote the anti-social behaviour message. The CDRP is part of the Suffolk Coastal LSP and the leaflet can be seen on its website www.sclsp.org.uk/crimedisorder





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Looking to a brighter future for Felixstowe



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11 May 2007

People in Felixstowe are being asked to play their part in helping draw up a blueprint that will shape the future of their town, with a focus on the seafront area from Cobbold's Point to Landguard Point, and significant parts of the town centre and surrounding areas.

Leading planning consultants David Lock Associates have been commissioned to produce the Master Plan, which will contain a number of proposals to rejuvenate the town as a seaside resort, enhance the shopping environment and provide improved access between the seafront and the town centre.

The Felixstowe and Trimleys Peninsula Futures Group has obtained funding for the project from the Haven Gateway Partnership. Stephen Bracewell, chairman of the Futures Group and Chief Executive of the Harwich Haven Authority said: "This Master Plan could be the key to unlocking a much brighter future for Felixstowe but we want it to be based on what those who live and work in the town think. It is their town and their future, and we want them to come up with the ideas on the best way forward. Delivering a new-look Felixstowe will only occur if all the relevant partners work together to make the most of the opportunities now on offer, but the most important partner in this process has to be the local community who need to share and agree the way ahead."

Work on the Master Plan is now underway and is expected to be completed in the autumn of this year. Essential to its success will be the involvement of all parts of the Felixstowe community and their thoughts on some of the key proposals. A public exhibition will be held during the early part of the summer.

In the meantime, anyone who would like to share their thoughts and views on the future of Felixstowe resort and town centre, and the changes they think might be beneficial, are asked to send their comments to felixstowe@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or by post to Felixstowe Futures, Suffolk Coastal District Council, Melton Hill, Woodbridge, IP12 1AU. The project team would like to hear about ideas anyone has seen in other towns in the UK and abroad, which could be made to work in Felixstowe.

David Lock Associates prepared the [local strategy for the Peninsula](#) in 2006, and they have experience of similar work in many similar towns around the country. Lawrence Revill, the project director, says, "We have become advocates for Felixstowe in recent years. It has some problems but huge potential. We aim to help local people develop ideas for how it can be revitalised as a resort and also as a great place to live and to work".

This press release was issued by the Felixstowe and Trimleys Peninsula Futures Group

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Woodbridge set for improved car parking and much more

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14 May 2007

Archived press release.

Pedestrians, motorists, rail and bus travellers, will all get a much better welcome to Woodbridge this summer as work is underway to make some long-awaited changes to the area around the town's railway station.

The car parking area at the front of the station will be improved to make it much more accessible to everyone and with a bigger emphasis on safety.

"We will soon have buses able to stop at the station for the first time, safer and dedicated footpaths for pedestrians, a new link to the car park behind the community hall, and an extra 12 parking spaces," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Leader of Suffolk Coastal and Cabinet Member for the Environment Natural and Built.

"This £250,000 improvement scheme has been made possible because of a partnership between this Council, the County Council, Network Rail and One Railway, with the two councils each providing about half the cost. Millcard who redeveloped the former good shed, now named Quaypoint, also assisted by providing part of the link road.

"When completed this summer it will mean a much safer and more user friendly environment for the station and its car parks, and will offer a far better first impression for the many visitors to the town," added Cllr Smith.

The work will result in a link through to the Council's improved Station Road car park to the rear of the community hall and the new public toilets, safer dedicated pedestrian routes to the Station and access for buses, with a stop just outside the Station entrance. It will also separate the taxi parking and access to the Riverside Theatre from the public parking area and much more attractive access to the station itself, as well as a safer area for users of the taxi office, the Tourist Information Centre, the Station Hotel and the Whistle Stop Café.

"We will end up with a more attractive, simpler and safer area around the station which can only be good news for everyone. This has been a complicated project, with many legal hurdles to overcome, and it has started later in the year than we would have liked.

"However, we are trying to minimise the disruption over the next couple of months and I hope that everyone will be patient because when it is finished it will be a real boost for the town, its residents and visitors," added Cllr Smith.

Because of work in the area, the Council has had to temporarily close the coach park behind the swimming pool but hopes to have it open again by the end of next month at the latest.

Woodbridge set for improved car parking and much more



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Groups across the district given council support



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15 May 2007

Archived press release.

Grants totalling over £37,000 have been agreed by Suffolk Coastal to support 32 groups working in the district to provide social or sporting facilities and services to local residents.

Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Cabinet Member for Rural Issues, has approved the grants after receiving recommendations from the Council's Grants Task Group.

"These grants go to a wide range of organisations, mainly run by volunteers, who are helping to improve the quality of life in Suffolk Coastal. In some cases just a few hundred pounds can have a huge impact on whether a project succeeds or not, and I am very pleased that we are able to help so many groups who are playing such a significant role in our community," said Councillor Burroughes.

"Despite being under severe financial pressure, this Council was still able to pay out over £65,000 in revenue grants last year. While still encouraging local groups to seek support from us, I would also strongly urge them to tap into national funding to ensure this district gets its fair share from sources like those financed by the National Lottery", added Councillor Burroughes.

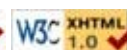
The largest grant agreed is £7,500 towards the running costs of the Rochford Trust, Woodbridge, which aims to provide a safe supportive environment to raise the confidence, self-esteem and social skills of young people to enable them to fulfil their potential.

Other successful grant applications were:-

- £400 towards street bunting for the 2007 Aldeburgh Olde Marine Regatta and Carnival
- £400 for Amber Club, Leiston – a luncheon club for physically disabled members and carers
- £400 to Arts Framlingham for its Summer Arts Festival
- £200 to Cold Fair Committee, Knodishall for its Seasonal Market
- £2000 for the Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)
- £500 to the East Anglian Sailing Trust to help disabled adults and young people go sailing
- £500 for the Eastern Angles Theatre Company's 2007/08 touring performances
- £500 to Felixstowe Area Community Transport Ltd. for their 'Dial a Ride' and Community Car Services for Felixstowe
- £500 to the Felixstowe Carnival Association for the 2007 carnival
- £1,000 to the Felixstowe Old People's Welfare Association
- £400 to the Felixstowe RLSS Lifeguard Club
- £300 to FIND (Families in Need) Ltd who help individuals caught in the poverty trap
- £5000 for Ipswich Women's Aid who help victims of domestic violence
- £300 to Kesgrave Friendship Club
- £3,000 to Landguard Fort Trust
- £2,000 to Leiston Day Club
- £2,000 to the Long Shop Project Trust towards its Museum
- £1,000 to the National Coastwatch Institution's Felixstowe station
- £630 to Leiston's Rose and Sweet William Club
- £3,000 to the Rural Coffee Caravan Information Project

- £1,000 for the Saxmundham Arts & Entertainment Festival 2007 organised by the Saxmundham Arts & Recreation Trust
- £1,000 towards the cost of running the Suffolk Accident Rescue Service
- £2,500 to Suffolk Acre
- £750 to Suffolk Artlink' Culture Club, Felixstowe
- £250 to the Suffolk Folk Festival (Woodbridge Area) for their Woodbridge Festival to be held on June 2 & 3
- £1,000 to Suffolk Historic Churches Trust
- £300 to Suffolk Open Studios
- £300 to the Voluntary Help Centre
- £500 to the Woodbridge Town Centre Management Group for their event on September 8 & 9 which will link Maritime Woodbridge with national Heritage Open Days
- £400 to Leiston's The Years Ahead Club
- £750 to Yoxford Arts Festival

Any local group or organisation that would like to apply for a grant can contact Sophie Barker at Suffolk Coastal on 01394 444626 or email sophie.barker@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk



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Training on offer as District gears up for the Suffolk Youth Games



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16 May 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal is looking for sporty youngsters to represent their district at the county's own mini-Olympics - Suffolk Youth Games, the largest multi-sport festival for young people which is being held at Bury St Edmunds on Sunday, July 8.

There are special training and selection sessions starting this month for anyone wanting to take part and Suffolk Coastal's Active Communities team has again organised a series of squad training courses for each sport that will meet and develop individual skills in the weeks leading up to the Games. Each course will cost £10 (£8 for concessions).

"The games are mainly aimed at youngsters who already enjoy taking part in sport, but have not represented their county, region or country. Also included are athletic and swimming events for young people with disabilities so there are wonderful sporting opportunities for everyone," said Councillor Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member with responsibility for young people.

"This event has the proud reputation of being Suffolk's own mini-Olympics and with the London Olympic Games 2012 looming fast, this could be a chance for young people in our district to take a big stride towards representing their country at that event," continued Councillor Savage.

This year's games will feature seven competitive sports – athletics, badminton, basketball, girls cricket, hockey, swimming, tag rugby, plus an additional stand alone judo competition Both the athletics and swimming competitions include events for young people with disabilities.

"I would particularly urge the girls in our district to get involved in the sports on offer that are usually more associated with boys. They have a chance to compete in the Girls Cricket team and to join the boys in tag rugby," added Councillor Savage.

The games attract hundreds of competitors aged 10 to 16 from across the county and the call has gone out to young people in school year 11 or below who would like to be part of Team Suffolk Coastal and represent their district.

This festival of sport, sponsored by Redrow Homes, is a guaranteed great day out for those competing and watching and there is the opportunity to try out a range of demonstration sports.

For further information on how to take part contact Sarah Shinnie, Suffolk Coastal's Active Communities Officer on 01394 444652 or email active.communities@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Details can also be found on the Council's website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

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Felixstowe skatepark takes another jump forward



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17 May 2007

Archived press release.

The dream of young people in Felixstowe of having their own skatepark in Orwell Green has been revitalised by the news it has received a £25,000 grant to help turn it into reality.

The Felixstowe skatepark project still needs to secure all its funding before the scheme can proceed but Suffolk Coastal is working with the partnership to help it all happen.

“Felixstowe’s Level 2 youth project is now leading on the fundraising efforts for this project and have already been successful in gaining a £25,000 grant from the Government’s Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund after Suffolk Coastal Teen Views supported its bid,” said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Young People.

“This was always a community project, and there is still quite a long way to go to secure all the necessary funding, but the uncertainty about its future has now been lifted following a recent decision by the Ombudsman which will be a big boost for the fundraisers.

“The skatepark has already won over £100,000 of funding but still needs another £80,000 or so before the building work can get underway. Anyone who would like to help make this project a reality can contact Level 2 at 01394 272521,” added Cllr Savage.

The official go-ahead was given in April 2006 for a 20 metre by 30-metre skateboard/BMX area at the southern end of Orwell Green, subject to some planning conditions that will help control the use of the proposed facility.

To date Felixstowe Town Council has backed the project with £30,000, while Suffolk Coastal’s Cabinet agreed £15,000 if the scheme gained planning permission. A further £40,000 has been set aside from the Council’s playspace fund, which is generated from applicants carrying out housing developments in the town.

The skatepark has been designed to be set 1.2 metres below ground level, with a landscape bund on three sides of it to help reduce the noise and visual impact. There will be two lighting columns on the site that will include CCTV coverage.

The Local Government Ombudsman recently announced that there were no grounds to investigate Suffolk Coastal’s decision on the siting of the skatepark, or the granting of its planning permission.

Preliminary investigations had been carried out by the Ombudsman earlier this year after complaints from residents that had questioned the actions of the Council.

“We have received the all-clear from the Ombudsman on the way with which this particular issue was dealt and I am pleased that on every area of complaint there has been no fault found in this Council’s actions.

“The Council is committed to working closely with local groups to help find the rest of the money, but for the project to succeed there needs to be a concerted and united effort by the community, particularly young people, to successfully bridge the gap,” added Cllr Savage.

It has also been previously confirmed that the Council has worked closely with the police on the project, who will play an active role in its first few weeks. The ban on drinking alcohol in public in some parts of Felixstowe includes the skatepark and is an important additional power to help police its use.



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Get ready for change in business rates on empty premises



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17 May 2007

Archived press release.

Commercial property owners are being given an early warning of a significant change being introduced by the Government from April 1 next year that may leave them with a bigger rates bill.

At present, any empty commercial property is not liable for business rates for the first three months, and after that only pays half of what is due, while there is no charge at all on empty factories or warehouses. From next year, empty commercial property will be liable for the full business rate after three months, or six months for factories and warehouses.

“The aim of these measures are to try and encourage the reuse or redevelopment of empty commercial property, which if it works will be good for the economy generally. However, businesses should be aware that these new rules will be in effect from next April,” said Cllr Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member for Fiscal and Democratic Services.

According to the Government these changes will modernise business rate relief for empty properties. It will be backed up with a new allowance to support the renovation of empty business premises in the country’s most deprived communities, along with proposals to extend tax reliefs on brownfield sites.

“In simple terms this may well encourage more owners to rent out their empty premises, and this increase in supply could mean a reduction in rents, which could help business and economic regeneration in some areas.

“However, it should be made clear that this additional rate income will go straight to the Government, as does all business rates, and I am slightly concerned that it seems that the extra money from this district will probably be going to help the regeneration of the run-down parts of our larger cities.

“Reforming empty property relief was one of the recommendations of the Lyons report into Local Government Finance and it will be interesting to see how many others from that long-awaited report ever make it into law,” added Cllr Whiting.

Information about this change will be made available on the Suffolk Coastal website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/businessrates when it has been published by the Government and received by the Council.



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SCTV will air the views of the district's young people



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17 May 2007

Archived press release.

The first ever districtwide forum for young people is now up and running, and Suffolk Coastal Teen Voices (SCTV) could help change the future as it aims to put everyone in the picture about what young people really want.

Created with the support of Suffolk Coastal's youth co-ordinator, Keri Mohan, the group has quickly found its own voice and helped make spending decisions that has seen money allocated to local projects.

"We decided to call ourselves SCTV and our targets are to promote the reputation of youths in Suffolk Coastal, proving that the majority of us are not the assaulting, vandalising 'jobs' that sections of the media so often likes to describe us as," said SCTV's Alexander Stewart who comes from Felixstowe.

"We want to raise the awareness of young people's need to local services, such as transport, as well as developing activity programmes with Suffolk Coastal's sports and leisure teams.

"SCTV will also be getting out to interview people at various events, like this month's Suffolk Show, to find out what youths want in their own areas and finding out what adults really think of us," added Alexander.

SCTV's work has already gained it £7,000 of funding from the Youth Opportunity Fund which will help towards equipment, transportation and volunteering expenses.

Its successful bid also includes a training programme for SCTV members so that they can take part in the selection process for new youth workers, teachers and even head teachers.

Members of SCTV were involved in recent spending decisions on the Youth Opportunity Fund and the Youth Capital Fund which saw £100,000 invested in 15 different local projects.

"SCTV is already extremely busy and after only two meetings we can see our group is going to make a difference in the Suffolk Coastal district. We are calling on any young person in our area to give us their ideas or complaints. We are here to make a difference so get in touch with us.

"We would also keen to hear from or work with any local business or organisation that works with young people or would benefit from a SCTV perspective on how they could change or improve things for this district's teens," added Alexander.

SCTV is assisted by Keri Mohan and anyone wanting more information can contact her by emailing keri.mohan@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or texting her on 07795 092255. You can also write to Keri or SCTV at Suffolk Coastal District Council, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU.

"I am delighted with the formation of SCTV and have already attended part of one meeting of the group. I am hoping to meet with them again to discuss various ideas and issues with them to bring before the LSP Board as well to Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet and Councillors," said Cllr Doreen Savage, LSP Board Member.

The Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership funded Keri as the district's first young people's

officer because it recognised the importance of getting young people involved in the way that services are provided now and in the future.

Press release from the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership www.sclsp.org.uk

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Suffolk Coastal wants local say on any Sizewell C plans



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21 May 2007

Archived press release.

Today's (Monday) Government announcements on proposed revised planning processes has prompted Suffolk Coastal to call for urgent reassurances if this does result in plans being submitted for a third nuclear power station at Sizewell.

Based on initial reports, the Government intends to make significant changes that will radically both shorten the time to consult and debate any planning decisions on a Sizewell C application, and potentially remove the chance for a locally-made decision.

"This Council accepts that it is right that decisions are made nationally about the future of nuclear power. However, we strongly believe that our 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 Cllr Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Built Environment.

"At first sight, the document provides limited 'clout' for the local view on major infrastructure projects. As always we are going to have spend a lot of time cutting through the spin and studying the small print of what is being proposed in today's announcement, especially with a further one due on Wednesday about future energy policies. What we want are guarantees that the views of local people and this Council that represents them will have a real influence on the decision.

"Only four years ago, the Government said there would be the fullest public consultation before any decision to proceed with building of new power station. They must not ignore that commitment and rewrite the rule book to allow plans to be fast-tracked in way that would deny the chance for the local voice to be heard and acted on," added Cllr Smith.

The Council has already identified a number of local issues that it feels must be taken into account and satisfactorily resolved before any permission is granted. The existing Sizewell site is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Heritage Coast and close to internationally important sites for wildlife.

"We do not want to lose the right to control the impact that any proposed development could have on this unique environment. A new nuclear plant will have a significant impact on our landscape, and the size and design must be right for this sensitive location. It should also be restricted to match the spare capacity in the existing transmission grid from Sizewell, avoiding the need for new power grids and pylons in the surrounding countryside. These are issues that will affect our local quality of life and should be debated and decided locally.

"Effects on coastal erosion - at the site, and to the north and south - are an issue which also needs to be seriously addressed. The construction process will inevitably be very intrusive over a wide area, so we would want to ensure that disruption to our residents is minimised, and generous compensation is available for the community. Housing and facilities for the workforce must be very carefully designed and located, hopefully in such a way that they can benefit local people long after the project is complete. Similarly, transport arrangements, whether by road,

rail or sea, and controls on construction noise need local input.

“There are also major concerns about the possible storage of spent nuclear waste on the site. These are all legitimate local issues that need to be positively addressed, and need to be seen to be done locally and openly,” added Cllr Smith.

The Government is now putting its planning proposals, Planning for a Sustainable Future, out to formal consultation and will be seeking views over the summer.

“In recent years, national energy policy has been described as the dash for gas. I do not want to now see there being a sprint for nuclear that leaves local communities and their representatives without the chance to influence the result,” added Cllr Smith.

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Grant help to cut your home's carbon footprint



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23 May 2007

Archived press release.

Residents in Suffolk Coastal who are planning to make their homes more energy self-sufficient are being urged to apply to a national funding scheme which is open for bids from next Tuesday (May 29).

A total of £11.9 million is being made available by the Government through the Low Carbon Buildings Programme (LCBP) which can be used to support solar, wind and water powered systems, or for wood pellets or wood-fuelled boiler systems. This includes mini wind turbines, solar PV panels and solar water heating systems.

“From our experience of holding information road-shows, there is a high level of interest among our residents about installing systems that will give their home their own source of energy. One of the most cost-effective systems to install is solar water heating, especially if you don't have access to mains gas. Our energy efficiency team provide independent advice on this and other green energy, or microgeneration as it is officially called, products,” said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

“LCBP grants for some types of renewables can be worth up to £2,500 or 50 per cent of the cost of installation. Grants for solar water heating are £400 off an average installation cost of about £3,500- £4,000. To apply you need to have installed good levels of insulation wherever possible, heating controls and fitted low energy bulbs.

“We believe there are many people in our district who would qualify and I would urge them to find out more and see if they can get help to make their homes even greener and self-sufficient,” added Cllr Slemmings.

Anyone interested in having a solar water heating system installed is recommended to seek a quote from Suffolk Energy Action Link (SEAL), a Council supported scheme which monitors costs and installer performance to ensure you get a fair deal. All installers are registered for the LCB programme. The number to call is the Climate Change and Energy Helpline on 0800 02 88 938.

This latest phase of Government grants is not available until May 29. Anyone interested must obtain a quote from an accredited installer from an accredited product. More information is available from the website www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk or from the Helpline above.

“The Government is also recommending that a home energy check is carried out to assess which measures are most suitable for your home. This is a good idea for all our residents, whether they are thinking of applying for this grant or not.

“Just call the Energy Saving Trust advice centre on 0800 512 012 for free advice on energy efficiency measures and energy efficiency grants available in your area” added Cllr Slemmings.

The LCBP also provides grants microgeneration technologies to community organisations, schools, and to not for profit sector and private businesses.





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Cliff Cocker is new Chairman of the Council



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25 May 2007

Archived press release.

Woodbridge's Cliff Cocker is officially the district's new first citizen after being elected as Chairman of Suffolk Coastal District Council at its Annual Meeting last night (Thursday).

Cllr Cocker will be Chairman for the next 12 months, and was this month elected for Woodbridge Seckford, having previously represented the town's Riverside ward since 2003.

A former Mayor of Woodbridge, Cllr Cocker moved to Suffolk to work on the construction and operation of the Orfordness Radar Station from 1970 to 1973. After a short spell at the Post Office Tower at Martlesham Heath, he then returned to his original profession as a chief engineer in the Merchant Navy. After redundancy, he returned to building services engineering at RAF Woodbridge until 1991.

He is chairman of a small Woodbridge Almhouse Charity, and also of the advisory committee of the Deben Family Centre, while he is also a committee member of the Coastal Accessible Transport Scheme and Woodbridge Community Council.

"It is a great honour to have been elected as Chairman of the Council for the coming year. I have now lived in Suffolk for 37 years and recognise the unique qualities of this district's people and our environment that makes it such a great place to live, work or visit," said Cllr Cliff Cocker, Chairman of the Council.

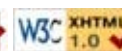
"The role of Chairman is largely ceremonial and I look forward to representing this Council and the district while meeting the business, community and voluntary organisations who are working for the wellbeing of all those who live within our area," added Cllr Cocker.

The Chairman's role is a politically neutral one of chairing meetings of the full Council and acting as the Council's representative at about 200 formal and less formal public engagements a year. Suffolk Coastal's Chairman wears a chain of office when carrying out most duties, but unlike a mayor does not have any formal robes.

Cllr Cocker replaces Cllr Sir Peter Batho, and Cllr Jim Bidwell of the Melton and Ufford ward was elected the Vice-Chairman.

At the same meeting Cllrs Ray Herring and Andy Smith were re-elected Leader and Deputy Leader respectively, and the Chairmen and membership of the Council's committees were agreed. Full details will appear on the Council's website suffolkcoastal.gov.uk although the Chairmen are as follows

Corporate Management Overview and Scrutiny – Cllr Trevor Hawkins
 Community Well-being and Rural Issues Overview and Scrutiny – Cllr Phillip Dunnett
 Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny – Cllr Phillip Dunnett
 Economy and Service Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny – Cllr Cyril Fidler
 Development Control Committee - Cllr Ivan Jowers
 Licensing and Health Committee – Cllr Les Binns
 Rights of Way Committee – Cllr Rhona Sturrock.





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Economic success wins Council a cash boost



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25 May 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal has received a cheque for £284,000 from the Government in recognition of how successful the district has been in attracting additional economic investment.

This is the second year of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme which offers a financial incentive to all councils to promote enterprise, employment and growth among the local businesses in their area.

“While this is welcome new money for this Council, it is coming from the national pot of business rates which this and all other councils collect from local companies and pass onto the Government for it to distribute as it sees fit,” said Cllr Colin Hart, the newly-appointed Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

The scheme measures how much each district's rateable value for businesses has grown over the previous year, and how each council has performed above a basic target set by the Government. On this measure Suffolk Coastal has been awarded £284,309 which is a significant boost given that last year the district gained nothing at all from this scheme

“This is welcome news, and I am delighted that the Government recognises the successes we have achieved. I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor John Perry for his leadership in this area and to the whole team for their efforts,” added Cllr Hart.

Among the actions taken by Suffolk Coastal's economic regeneration team over the last year has been helping attract new jobs and investment at Rendlesham and Felixstowe, offering specialist advice and grants to rural businesses, working with the Business Forum to compile a detailed data base of companies in the district, and supporting the work of the Felixstowe and Trimleys Peninsula Futures Group.

“A successful local economy is central to the future of this district. Investment decisions are never made on just economic grounds alone, which is why the excellent quality of life on offer in our district is such an important asset. We aim to maintain the right balance in our district so that economic growth can occur in a way that reinforces our unique character.

“This additional funding will help support the work of our economic regeneration team but will probably also be used so that we can go on delivering value for money across the whole range of our services,” added Cllr Hart.

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Felixstowe youth subject to ASBO



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25 May 2007

Archived press release.

A 16 year old Felixstowe youth was this week (Monday) given a two-year anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) by a district judge at Ipswich Magistrates Court after calls from Suffolk Coastal and local police to extend and confirm an interim order issued last month.

The confirmed ASBO bans the youth from entering Orwell High School and Maidstone Road in Felixstowe, and from committing, or encouraging others to commit, anti-social acts. For legal reasons, it is not possible to name the youth.

“The police and the Council have found this youth to have been at the heart of some serious incidents in and around Orwell High School. I am pleased that the Courts backed our joint request for an interim ASBO and on hearing the evidence agreed that it should be confirmed,” said Cllr Sherrie Green, Chair of the Suffolk Coastal Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and Cabinet Member for Community Safety.

“This youth now knows that for the next two years he will be firmly under the spotlight, and the consequences could be severe if he is found to have broken the conditions of the ASBO laid down by the Court.

“Suffolk Coastal is committed to working with the police to tackle all aspects of crime and disorder in this district. The Council’s anti-social behaviour officer and the police are ready to use ASBOs to help those parts of the community blighted by the uncivilised actions of a few individuals,” added Cllr Green.

Anyone who would like to report a problem of anti-social behaviour should first report it to the police, dialling 999 if it is a serious incident. If there has been a pattern or regular problems with anti-social behaviour then call Kate Rookyard, anti-social behaviour officer on 01394 444322 or by email to community.safety@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Information on how to combat anti-social behaviour, along with a copy of a special reporting form, can be found on the Council’s website

www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/communitysafety/anti-social/



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New members join Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet



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25 May 2007

Archived press release.

Following this month's election, Suffolk Coastal's Leader has announced the membership of his Cabinet, with three changes being made to the team that make the day-to-day policy decisions at the Council.

Cllr Colin Hart returns to the Cabinet after a two-year break, while Cllrs Kevin Keable and Mary Neale are making their debuts after being elected for the first time to the Council on May 3.

"I would like to publicly thank all those who took the time to vote, with 42 per cent of our electorate turning out. The results, which strengthened the Conservative majority, was I think largely a vote of confidence in our policy of better services and even better value," said Cllr Ray Herring, who was re-elected Leader of the Council at last night's (Thursday) Council meeting.

"My new Cabinet will work hard to deliver on the main priorities facing this district, and we have some new faces joining us who will bring new skills and experiences on board. I must also pay tribute to the three retiring Cabinet members, two of whom have also left the Council. Rae Leighton, John Perry and Stephen Burroughes have all played significant parts in helping to modernise and improve our services," added Cllr Herring.

Cllr Colin Hart will now be the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, having previously held the post of Community Development in 2003 before standing down in 2005 to join the Cabinet at the County Council.

Cllr Mary Neale is the Cabinet Member for Rural Issues/Community Development, and was previously a Cabinet Finance Member on West Oxfordshire District Council, while Cllr Kevin Keable, a training consultant and experienced businessman, is responsible for Community Well-being with particular reference to the arts, leisure, sport and the countryside.

"Ensuring value for money for residents remains the key task facing this Council and with the continuing failure of the Government to fairly fund this district we have increasingly limited resources.

"To ensure that we can make a real difference we have to prioritise our actions to ensure we are making real progress on the key issues that affect our communities and so further improve the quality of life in our district.

"We are concentrating on seven areas, which include an added emphasis on developing and promoting Green policies and improved management of the environment across our district. Most of our goals cannot be achieved by this Council alone and we will continue to strive to work with our partners and our communities to successfully deliver for all," added Cllr Herring.

The Council's priorities are:-

- increasing access to housing to meet local needs,
- improved waste management with greater recycling and reduced proportions of waste going to landfill,
- coast and estuary management that will enable key assets to be retained,

- strengthening the economy through facilitating key investments,
- feeling safe and being safe from crime,
- develop and promote Green policies and improved environmental management in the district, and
- delivering well performing, efficient and accessible services to all.

The rest of the Cabinet is unchanged and as follows:

- Cllr Andy Smith - Deputy Leader and Member for the Built Environment;
- Cllr Andrew Nunn - Member for the Natural Environment;
- Cllr Sherrie Green – Member for Community Well-being;
- Cllr Chris Slemmings – Member for Housing;
- Cllr Robert Whiting – Member for Fiscal and Democratic; and
- Cllr Doreen Savage – Member for Customers and Partners.

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Change a bulb and pledge to help make the world greener



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29 May 2007

Anyone popping into Suffolk Coastal's offices in Woodbridge on Tuesday, June 5 will be offered a free low-energy light bulb in return for them signing a personal carbon dioxide (CO2) reduction pledge.

This special initiative is being held to mark World Environment Day, and the offices at Melton Hill are part of a countywide partnership that aims to give away 2,000 light bulbs that will save 66 tonnes of CO2 a year. Suffolk Coastal's Felixstowe office will be repeating the offer on June 6.

"Here is a great chance for people to get some free help to play their part in protecting the environment by reducing CO2 emissions and so tackling the effects of climate change. Anyone signing up to a personal pledge will get the chance to win a wind-up solar powered radio and a DVD of An Inconvenient Truth, the documentary by Al Gore," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Natural Environment.

"Our efforts on June 5 have been made possible by CRed Suffolk, the countywide partnership that provides information and advice to help identify easy, everyday energy savings.

"I hope that as many residents as possible will use June 5 as a day to take a serious look at how they can do more to cut their own CO2 use. There are so many simple steps that we can all take that can make a difference – they can help save us money as well as our environment," added Cllr Nunn.

CRed has loads of useful tips on how to save energy and so cut down CO2 consumption. These include how switching to a low energy light bulb can save around 29 kilos of CO2 a year, or how a TV left on standby can waste 30 kilos a year, while putting a lid on a saucepan can cut the amount of energy needed to cook by up to 90 per cent.

On average, our actions result in around 9,000 kilos of CO2 emissions each year, which CRed wants to cut by 60 per cent by 2025. The advice is that changing our personal behaviour can make a significant start in achieving that goal.

Anyone wanting to find out more about how they can cut their own carbon footprint can call CRed Suffolk on its free helpline 0800 028 8938 or visit its website www.cred-uk.org

The CRed Suffolk partnership was set up in December 2005, is supported by SEAL and Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre Anglia, and includes local councils, businesses, schools, communities and households, each of who have made a commitment to reduce their CO2.

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Working together to keep pubs safe and legal



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29 May 2007

Archived press release.

A new partnership has been formed to make sure that all pubs, clubs and other licensed premises in Suffolk Coastal are providing a safe and legal service to their customers.

The Suffolk Coastal Licensing Partnership carried out its first joint inspection last week (Friday night) when officers from six different groups inspected all aspects of The Cross pub in Woodbridge. Among the problems immediately identified was that there was significantly more customers than the pub can safely hold.

“This is an excellent example of how by working in partnership we can provide a better service to both the public and our licensed premises. In one visit we can carry out a detailed check of whether the laws are being complied with regarding issues such as food and drinks, fire safety, noise, and under-age drinkers. This new approach is about ensuring that those standards are being met with a one-off MOT style inspection,” said Cllr Sherrie Green, Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

The new partnership has been prompted by the recent new licensing laws, which passed much of the responsibilities on controlling licensed premises onto local councils.

County Cllr Joanna Spicer, Suffolk County Council portfolio holder for public protection said: “At the county council we are always keen to join with our partners to ensure resources are used in the most effective way. By working together it has been possible to carry out one joint inspection rather than the same place being visited a number of times. I am encouraged by how the evening has worked and look forward to developing the partnership in the future”.

The full results from Friday's inspection are still being assessed, but did raise issues that will now be taken up with the pub and future checks will be carried out to ensure that the necessary improvements and changes have been made.

“We believe this new initiative, working in close partnership with all the responsible authorities, is a real strength. Our aim is to ensure compliance with the conditions of an individual premises licence and improve good operating practice, which should lead to reductions in crime and disorder and increased feelings of safety for local communities.

“Where premises are shown to be causing problems within a local neighbourhood they can be dealt with appropriately via various methods of enforcement under the legislation and this could even result in a review of the licence, resulting in more robust conditions being imposed,” added Sgt Neil Reid of Suffolk Police.

The SCLP includes representatives of the licensing team, fire service, trading standards, the police, environmental protection, and food safety, and is the first of its type in the county. The Partnership will now be considering when and where to carry out its next joint inspection.

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More homes set for improved recycling service



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01 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

A series of roadshows is being held over the coming fortnight aimed at those living in the 4,500 homes that in July will switch to Suffolk Coastal's improved recycling service.

These homes will join the 9,500 in the district who since last year have been able to recycle cans, tins, foil, plastic containers, cardboard and paper every fortnight in their special blue-lidded bins.

"All these new households have been invited to the 10 local roadshows we are holding when they can find out first-hand everything they need to know about the service and how they can help us recycle even more of this district's rubbish," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Natural Environment.

"Those on the new service will now have two more wheelie bins, to add to their brown bin for composting, with the blue-lidded and brown recycling ones being emptied one week, and the one for household waste being emptied the other week.

"As our brown bins can take all food waste, cooked or uncooked, all our residents can still have a weekly collection of these materials. This avoids the problems, reported by the national media, that have been experienced in other areas, and certainly the improved service used by 9,500 homes has had barely a complaint," added Cllr Nunn.

The areas included in this third phase of the gradual rollout of the improved service are Grundisburgh, Hasketon, Knodishall, Friston, Waldringfield, Bramfield and parts of Framlingham, Kesgrave, Felixstowe, and Yoxford.

All the homes due to get the new service will already have received an invitation to their local roadshow, when they can see first-hand the different size of bins available and ask any questions.

The roadshows are being held at:-

Waldringfield Village Hall - 10am to 12 midday, and **Kesgrave** Community Centre - 1pm to 3pm and 6pm to 8pm on Tuesday 5 June.

Bramfield Village Hall - 10am to 12 midday, and **Yoxford** Village Hall - 1pm to 3pm on Wednesday 6 June.

At the junction of Grange Farm Avenue and Hall Pond Way, **Felixstowe** from- 1pm to 3pm and 6pm to 8pm on Thursday 7 June.

Grundisburgh playing field - 10am to 12 midday and **Hasketon** Village Hall - 1pm to 3pm on Tuesday 12 June.

Knodishall village car park opposite the Butchers Arms - 10am to 12 midday and **Friston** church car park - 1pm to 3pm on Wednesday 13 June.

Framlingham Elms car park - 1pm to 3pm and 6pm to 8pm on Thursday 14 June.

"Staff from Suffolk Coastal Services have been working very hard to sort out any practical problems such as bin storage arrangements and collection points. These roadshows proved very useful last year in explaining how people can play their part in increasing recycling and make the most of the service.

“We also have a special helpline just for those with any questions about their new improved service which is available on 01394 444050. Following the simple advice on wrapping food waste in paper or cardboard and using the brown bin has proved a really effective way to avoid the problems that some other areas have apparently suffered.

“This new service has proved very popular so far, and I know that there are many people who are looking forward to joining it. I wish we could do the whole district now but it is a £1 million plus investment so we are phasing it until 2011. The 9,500 homes already on the service are recycling around 54 per cent of their waste and are doing it so well that none of our loads have been rejected,” added Cllr Nunn.

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Could you help the Alde and Ore's history Ebb and Flow?



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05 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

The call has gone out for a project co-ordinator who can work with people living along the Alde and Ore to create a community arts and heritage project that explores, reveals and celebrates the rich heritage of the area.

Suffolk Coastal and Suffolk Coast and Heaths have linked up to form Ebb and Flow, a landscape heritage project that has gained a £48,300 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

"This is a really exciting project and it is excellent news that our bid for lottery funding has been successful. It means we can now recruit someone who can set sail on this voyage of discovery about life along the Alde and the Ore," said Cllr Kevin Keable, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being and the Arts.

"We expect that over 1,000 local people of all ages will get involved with Ebb and Flow, which will include community workshops looking at the oral history, archaeology and topography of the river. We also plan to create a heritage trail, a touring exhibition and an educational DVD.

"There are 2,000 years of history and changes for Ebb and Flow to capture and relate to a modern audience. There is such a rich past that is waiting to be drawn upon. I am sure this will prove an exciting opportunity for someone to turn this project into reality," added Cllr Keable.

Suffolk Coastal's arts team drew up the successful bid for lottery funding and is now looking for a project manager who can commit themselves for the next 15 months. It is likely to involve working three days a week, based at home, and will pay £18,000 over the length of the contract.

The Council is also keen to hear from anyone who could help in the recording of the oral history, either as a member of the team carrying out the interviews or as someone who has their own memories, whether as a fisherman, farmer, leisure user or a resident.

"Ebb and Flow will also draw together all the available maps that, when compared, will help provide a visual portrait of how the river landscape has changed and evolved over the centuries," said Simon Hooton, manager of Suffolk Coast and Heaths, which has put in £20,000 towards the initiative.

"We are delighted to be involved in this project as one of its aims will be to inform people about the past while encouraging them to get involved in the planning for the future conservation and enhancement of this unique landscape," added Mr Hooton.

Anyone interested in the project, or the post of project co-ordinator, can contact Suffolk Coastal's arts officer, Rachel Nightingale for more information on 01394 444294 or email arts@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk Further details will also be available on www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/arts

Could you help the Alde and Ore's history Ebb and Flow?



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Blue Flag flying high over Felixstowe again



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15 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

For the seventh year running, Felixstowe has earned the right to proudly fly the Blue Flag for the quality of its beach and its resort management, with the event officially being marked on Monday, June 18.

The internationally recognised flag of beach quality will be hoist on the flagpole on the seafront close to Arwela Road by the Chairman of the Council, Cllr Cliff Cocker, at 10.45am. The Chairman will then join invited guests, including a group of children from Langer Primary School, to enjoy an open top bus ride around the resort.

"The thousands of visitors who will flock to Felixstowe this summer can enjoy its South beach knowing it has met the tough requirements of cleanliness and good management set by ENCAMS," said Cllr Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Tourism.

"ENCAMS measures nearly 20 different criteria before the awards are decided, and to win the Blue Flag, Felixstowe South beach also had to meet categories on dog control, supervision and first aid facilities during peak hours and the provision of parking and toilets for disabled visitors.

"A lot of effort goes in each year to keep our beaches clean, fun and safe, and I am so pleased that ENCAMS recognises the good job being done by Suffolk Coastal in Felixstowe," added Cllr Hart.

Visiting beaches with the Blue Flag does guarantee swimmers or beach strollers the official stamp of approval that does not exist with most beaches.

The Blue Flag beach is clearly indicated by the flags flying at each end but if anyone wants confirmation of its exact location they should contact the Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre on 01394 276770.

A reminder to dog owners that they cannot use the Blue Flag beach between May 1 and September 30, but that a registered blind person in charge of a dog can still officially access the beach.

Anyone can enjoy the open top bus experience around Felixstowe during the summer holidays, as the bus will be running from July 22 to September 2 every Wednesday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday.

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Wines with a TIC of approval?



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19 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

Aldeburgh Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is hosting a special wine tasting event this Saturday (June 23) from 10am to 3pm at its office in the High Street.

Some of the award-winning wines and non-alcoholic grape juices from Framlingham's Shawsgate Vineyard and Winery will be available for visitors to the TIC to sample.

"The demand for English wines has been growing in recent years, and I can say that in my experience the range on offer from Shawsgate is one of the best of this country's crop," said Cllr Colin Hart, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Tourism.

"Shawsgate has built itself over the years a real reputation for producing quality wines and also offering a big welcome to visitors to its vineyard. It has certainly managed to put itself on the map as one of this district's more interesting attractions.

"I am pleased that our TIC has arranged this link-up with Shawsgate on Saturday. There are clear tourism links, and it is also a refreshing example of a locally-made product that I think deserves to be put in the spotlight so our residents can sample some of the quality produce created on their own doorsteps," added Cllr Hart.

Shawsgate make a range of wines, with 12 different varieties currently available, from dry through to medium sweet white and rose, as well as Beaujolais style red wine. Its Bacchus dry wine has consistently won national and international awards over the last five years, with the 2004 variety winning a bronze medal at the English and Welsh wine of year competition in 2006.

The Shawsgate vineyard is in Badingham Road, and is open free to the public. Guided tours of the vineyard are also available. Its website can be visited on www.shawsgate.co.uk

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Council pledges to work together for carbon reduction



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22 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal's ongoing commitment to green issues has seen it formally sign up to the CRed Suffolk Partnership Climate Change Partnership that is working to encourage behaviour changes across the county.

The Council last year signed up to the national Nottingham Declaration that committed it to actively tackle climate change in its area and work with others to reduce emissions.

"CRed Suffolk, as the partnership is known, is the logical way forward for us locally as it links together organisations across our county to positively combat climate change," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Natural Environment.

"We have been working with our CRed partners to encourage all sectors of our local community to take action now to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action.

"Our green pledge day earlier this month proved popular with the public and we will step up our efforts to review how to make this both a greener Council and a greener district," added Cllr Nunn.

Eighty-eight members of the public visiting the Council's offices at Woodbridge and Felixstowe signed the green pledge and agreed to take some simple actions to cut down their personal carbon footprint, receiving a free low-energy light bulb to help them.

"Members of the Council's Cabinet have also taken the green pledge, and over 130 of our staff also joined in. The next few weeks are quite important for us as well as we are having independent energy audits carried out in our main buildings to help us target our future efforts on energy conservation. We will also be welcoming our first green officer who starts work next month.

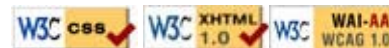
"There are actions we can and will take to reduce this Council's carbon footprint, but the real task before us is to encourage as many of our residents, businesses and other organisations in this district to play their part as well.

"We will be working in partnership with CRed Suffolk and others to get the message across that differences can be made whether on a personal, local or organisational level. Last year we worked with others to help Middleton turn green and this month sees the start of a similar initiative at Wenhaston, and I would recommend that people come along to see how a village can join together to reduce carbon emissions," added Cllr Nunn.

The Wenhaston Village Energy Day is being held at the village hall, Hall Road, Wenhaston on Saturday, June 30 between 10am and 2pm with free advice and help on how to conserve and save energy. The event is organised by the Wenhaston Energy Support Committee with help from Suffolk Coastal and the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre Anglia, and will include information on solar panels, wind turbines, and other alternative home energy sources.

CRed's key objectives include raising awareness and promoting behavioural change in individuals and communities and also businesses, providing them with advice and help so that they can reduce their energy demand and impact on climate change.

The partnership has set up a Climate and Energy helpline on 0800 0288 938 and people visiting its website www.cred-uk.org/suffolk can register and make a pledge to take action.





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Suffolk Coastal sees unitary Ipswich as a backward step



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22 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal has told the Government that it cannot support Ipswich Borough Council's bid for unitary status because it would not help meet the problems and challenges facing local communities and their councils.

The eight-page response sent to the Government details Suffolk Coastal's concerns about the proposals and also those of the district's town and parish councils.

"At this Council we believe that the way forward is working in partnership to deliver modernised services in a business-like way. Suffolk Coastal has recognised that councils have to change and evolve, and that a 21st Century solution is required to effectively address the problems and challenges facing 21st Century councils and the communities we serve," said Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of Suffolk Coastal.

"Suffolk Coastal has modernised in recent years and become more business-like in the way we deliver services and make decisions and it has helped us provide better services and even better value for money for our communities.

"Part of our modernisation has been to actively seek partnerships with other councils to share expertise and spread our costs. A successful bid for unitary status would inevitably disrupt much of that partnership work and would be bad news for our residents," added Cllr Herring.

Suffolk Coastal is committed to the Pathfinder bid to the Government, which has seen all Suffolk's main councils other than Ipswich agree to working closer together in partnership in future while still retaining their individual identities.

"We are committed to developing and improving services through new ways of working together, some of which we have already introduced. However, the involvement of two of our key partners, Ipswich and Suffolk County Council, would inevitably be disrupted if they have to spend considerable time and effort splitting up services," added Cllr Herring.

There are also significant concerns about the confusion that a unitary Ipswich could have on those communities on its immediate boundaries, who also fear that they could be subsumed into an expanded Ipswich with a much higher Council Tax.

Councillors also believe there are some significant and worrying gaps in the Ipswich bid, including what exactly would be the financial implications of it being given the go-ahead.

"The bid also takes far too blinkered a view of the local economy. It treats Ipswich as a stand-alone area and so significantly underestimates the importance to the future well-being of the town, and its population, of some of Suffolk Coastal's assets such as Felixstowe Docks, BT Adastral Park, Trinity Park, and Snape Maltings.

"The economic reality is surely that the features that make up this county's economy are all inter-linked and are again based on partnership, rather than on the aspirations of one town. We are

worried that all the other partnerships that help shape the quality of life would also be detrimentally affected.

“Much is made of Ipswich’s uniqueness, but most of the important challenges it faces also have to be addressed by other towns such as Felixstowe, Bury and Lowestoft. Working together should be the way forward, taking a modern approach to modern problems, rather than a route that will cause disruption, significant expenditure and seems to seek isolation,” added Cllr Herring.





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Summer activities on offer across the district



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25 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

This summer promises to be one packed with fun things for children and young people to do, thanks to a bumper programme of activities that has just been published.

The Summer Activities in Suffolk Coastal is now available via the Council's website, and 25,000 copies will be distributed around the district's schools, so children and their parents can start planning for a summer of fun.

"This free 24-page booklet is jam-packed with exciting, stimulating or exhausting things to do for children and young people throughout the summer holidays and is the perfect protection against boredom," said Cllr Kevin Keable, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"Suffolk Coastal is once again putting on its own activities and this booklet also includes everything on offer at our sports centres managed by DC Leisure as well as what's on at the Spa Pavilion in Felixstowe.

"This Council recognises how important it is for children, young people and their parents to have something that is fun and safe to do during the long summer break. I recommend everyone to have a look at our website or watch out for their own copy," added Cllr Keable.

Among the attractions are the Coastal Playscheme which will be visiting 10 different locations every week during the holidays, the mobile skatepark's daily tour of six towns, and the chance to pick up new skills in football or angling.

Visit www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/summer/ now to see all that is on offer, or wait to get a copy of the booklet. Places on most of the activities can be pre-booked and it is recommended to do so.

"The Council is also launching a special website which will include details of all the activities it is aware of being held during the summer holidays - all people have to do is visit www.coastalpotato.co.uk," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Young People.

"To ensure that the activities we are offering are available to as much of our community as possible, our Council-run activities offer a half-price deal to any child whose parent or guardian is in receipt of job seekers allowance, housing or Council Tax benefit, working families tax credit, income support, or is registered unemployed, received an invalid care or disability allowance," added Cllr Savage.

Anyone wanting more information about the Council's concessionary scheme, or would like more details about the booklet, can contact the Active Communities team on 01394 444652 or email active.communities@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

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Directory puts arts in the spotlight



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25 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal's first arts directory has just been published, a one-stop shop information goldmine that aims to put the spotlight firmly on the district's cultural activities with a who's who list of contacts.

The booklet is crammed with nearly 160 different entries, offering an A-Z of people and places in the district who are involved in the arts, and will be available next week from tourist information centres and libraries in the district.

"Suffolk Coastal is bustling with all types of cultural activities, whether it be camera clubs, choral societies, rock schools, recording studios, theatres or international festivals of music and poetry, to name a few. However, this is the first directory that can tell you who is doing what, how to get involved or who offers venues and specialist services," said Cllr Kevin Keable, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"This is a very active district for the arts, with a great deal on offer, but we know from talking to local groups that there was a demand for a one-stop shop that could help them publicise their activities and help them make contact with others in the arts so they can share their knowledge and resources.

"From my first use of the Arts Directory, I think it will become an essential publication for anyone involved in the arts locally," added Cllr Keable.

The directory is divided into crafts, dance, drama and musical theatre, film, music, professional agencies and services, spoken and written word, visual arts, as well as sections on concert halls, theatres, cinemas, practice spaces, galleries, art studios, museums and heritage. Each entry contains brief details and contact information.

The Arts Directory is available now on the Council's website www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourfreetime/arts/directory or people can ask for a copy by emailing arts@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk or call 01394 444538. Any group that would like a free entry in the next edition can use the same email or phone number.



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Sit down and keep fit



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26 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal is launching special new exercise classes for those people in the district who want to keep fit but whose age, disability or lack of mobility means that a visit to the gym is out of the question.

The new Active Life Programme classes are chair-based, and have been trialled over the last two years at sheltered housing schemes across the district. The sessions have been put together by the Council's health improvement officer, Sharon Jarrett, and its active communities officer Richard Baldwin, with funding from the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership.

"Chair-based exercise brings together a range of movements that increase your flexibility, balance, muscle and bone strength. These special classes will be great for making people fitter and better able to carry out everyday tasks. Our Active Life Programme is a gentle way to help people be healthier," said Cllr Kevin Keable, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

The first of the sessions begin this Friday (June 29) at 3.30pm at the Avenue Evangelical Church Hall, 42 Warwick Avenue, Woodbridge. The first class will be free, and after that will be held every Friday for £1.50 a session.

The ALP sessions will this summer spread to venues across the district and will last about an hour, usually giving time for a chat and a cup of tea afterwards. Anyone interesting in joining one of the sessions can find out more by calling Sharon on 01394 444697 or Richard on 01394 444318 or email active.communities@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk



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New system goes live to help Suffolk's home-buyers



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27 Jun 2007

Archived press release.

Suffolk councils have formed a new partnership that will make it easier for people who want to buy a home get vital local land charge information to make sure their most important purchase is a wise decision.

Suffolk Searches is the new one-stop virtual shop for local land searches and means that any potential home-buyer, or anyone acting on their behalf, can visit www.suffolksearches.co.uk and order a detailed electronic search from any Suffolk council.

"After months of hard work, Suffolk Searches went live at the start of June and is the new one-stop shop for local land charge searches for Suffolk. We are certain that conveyancers will find it a big help as our fast and easy service should mean they can assist their clients through the home-buying maze," said David Burnip, Chief Executive of Forest Heath District Council, on behalf of the Suffolk Searches partnership.

"We aim to offer an efficient, value-for-money service that will be a real boost for home buyers and sellers across our county. Buying their dream home is the most important and biggest purchase that anyone can make and for years it has been sensible to get as detailed a search as possible to find out all the facts and history of it," added Mr Burnip.

The new service offers an electronic official search carried out by the relevant council's team who have the expertise and experience to find all the necessary information regarding a particular property.

The cost of any search will depend on how much detailed information is wanted, and in which area the house is. All the current fees for each council can be found on the website.

A Local Authority Search will be a compulsory part of a Home Information Pack (HIP) once the scheme is launched. Suffolk Searches will streamline the process of applying for a search and will be an established countywide asset when HIPs are finally launched.

Local land charges were created by Parliament in 1925 and designed to ensure that purchasers of land were not caught unawares by obligations enforceable against successive owners by local authorities under the terms of various statutes.

The Suffolk Searches partnership is made up of Babergh District Council, St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Forest Heath District Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Suffolk County Council, and Suffolk Coastal District Council. *This press release was issued on behalf of the Suffolk Searches partnership.*