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## Suffolk Coastal delivers a planning success story



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05 Apr 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal's commitment to deliver success has seen a major improvement in the performance of its planning service over the last year, whose efforts have resulted in an increased grant from the Government.

Last week's announcement of planning delivery grants (PDG) for the coming year saw Suffolk Coastal receive the second highest amount in the county, with £302,000 being awarded.

"All councils receive some money, but the Government's top allocations go to those who have performed well and improved from last year. The fact that we got over £300,000 of the £135 million available nationally is official recognition of the real and excellent improvements being carried out in our district," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"Over the last couple of years we have worked hard to move from being a Council that made good and well-considered decisions on planning applications to one that still provide that quality but is more in line with national targets for the time taken with dealing with each application.

"We have put in place an improvement plan and made use of money available from the Government to provide a speedier, more customer-friendly service but one which is still providing the protection for our district that our residents expect," added Cllr Leighton.

The vast majority of planning applications are now determined in less than eight weeks, largely thanks to changes introduced as part of the improvement plan, the use of new computer software, and additional staffing.

Much more information on planning is now available on the Council's website, with people now able to apply online, and find out much of the background information about any plans that have been submitted. A planning helpdesk at Melton Hill has been open for a year and has also helped provide a better service to customers of the planning service.

"There is still scope for more improvements but I must thank the efforts of all our planning staff and our councillors who have delivered this success story. They know that there can be no let-up in their efforts as we are committed to maintaining and beating our current high standards.

"What residents should also be pleased by is that there is no indication of any drop in the quality or wisdom of the decisions being taken by this Council on planning matters. Recent statistics show that we were successfully defending 86 per cent of our decisions when they were taken to appeal, which compares with a national average of 64 per cent," added Cllr Leighton.

Anyone wanting information about planning can visit the Council's website [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) where there is a link off the home page, or pop into the new-look planning helpdesk at the Melton Hill offices during normal office hours Monday to Friday.



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## Wheelchair will open up access to Felixstowe beaches



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05 Apr 2006

### Archived press release.

People with mobility problems will find it easier to get to enjoy the seafront at Felixstowe from this Easter, thanks to a new 'all-terrain' wheelchair that will help them access the beach.

The wheelchair has been provided by the BASIC Life Charity, who are based in Felixstowe and have kindly donated nearly £3,000 for the specialised wheelchair. Suffolk based disability charity Optua has also helped to co-ordinate the project, after being involved in testing a similar wheelchair for Aldeburgh.

"It has long been the national belief that it is virtually impossible to offer suitable access for disabled people on shingle or sandy beaches, but we decided to challenge that view and, after in-depth investigations, we found an American-made wheelchair which is especially designed for use on soft or rough ground," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Customer & Partners.

"With the help of Optua (formerly Rethink Disability), we tested it out and were very pleased to see how successful it was, and last May a chair for use on Aldeburgh beach was purchased from contributions to the public subscription for the Scallop.

"Now, thanks to a very generous donation from the BASIC Life Charity, a similar chair is available for use by residents and visitors in Felixstowe who have mobility problems and who wish to access the beaches in this popular resort," continued Cllr Savage.

The chair will be stored at the Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre at Undercliff Road West, and is available for free use for up to two hours per user between 9am and 5pm Monday – Sunday (April – October), 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday (9.30am Saturday) (November – March) on deposit of a Blue Badge, driving licence or similar document.

The chair at Aldeburgh is stored in a shed in the Council's car park in Thorpe Road, and is available for use on the same terms. The key to the shed can be obtained from the Aldeburgh Tourist Information Centre.

"Having seen the Aldeburgh chair successfully in action, we were pleased to be able to find an all-terrain chair for visitors to Felixstowe. We are sure that this chair will make the experience of a day on the beach more fun and will make it much more accessible to a significant part of our community," said Graham Denny of BASIC Life Charity.

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## Report shows how and why Felixstowe needs improving



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

06 Apr 2006

### Archived press release.

The detailed report from consultants setting out their vision for the future of the Felixstowe Peninsula has now been made public and has been welcomed as an exciting step forward by the partnership that commissioned the study.

Last year David Lock Associates were asked to draw up a long-term vision for the regeneration and future of Felixstowe with funding from the East of England Development Agency, English Partnerships, Felixstowe Town Council, Haven Gateway and Suffolk Coastal.

“Supporting urban renaissance is central to English Partnerships’ activities. We believe that bringing about change relies on forging strong working partnerships which are capable not only of creating a vision, but also have the capacity to deliver ambitious plans. After widespread engagement with local residents, businesses and the wider community, David Lock Associates have now produced a vision for how Felixstowe and its peninsula could develop in the future. The Local Strategy for the Felixstowe Peninsula is a detailed look at the issues facing the area and presents some of the possible solutions that could assist its regeneration,” said Mark White, Regeneration Manager at English Partnerships.

The town planning and urban design consultancy sought the views of the public at exhibitions and through questionnaires, and held a number of meetings with town and parish councillors, local community and other groups.

“There is a great deal here to weigh up and discuss and I hope as many people as possible take the chance to read and debate the recommendations that have been made. This is an important document which deserves some serious consideration and I am sure that it will stimulate a great deal of thought at this Council and any other organisation that is committed to building a better future for Felixstowe,” said Cllr Cyril Webb, Mayor of Felixstowe Town Council.

The consultants point out the major challenges facing the town as average households are becoming smaller, so that over 20 years some 1,700 new homes would be needed just to accommodate the same population. The current demand for new homes from the local community, as well as those wanting to move to the town, is not being met. Without new homes, the population will decrease, becoming older on average. As a result, there is more traffic on the roads as people have to commute into the town, and if this population trend continues, some schools are likely to close, and shops lose trade.

Four scenarios for future development have been outlined, each with a range of approaches for addressing the negative trends that the consultants have identified in relation to housing, employment, leisure, the town centre, and community development.

The report recognises that around half of the jobs in Felixstowe are dependent on the Port and suggests that there may be a need to diversify to offer alternative job prospects so that the town is not so reliant on one activity.

“The Port is a valued and welcome source of employment, but the consultants are right to highlight that our local labour market is highly dependent on it. The report points to the need for

strategies to be adopted that can attract new inward investment that will help create new jobs and fuel the regeneration of Felixstowe,” said Cllr John Perry, Suffolk Coastal Cabinet Member for the Economy and Tourism.

The report suggests the best locations for future development that include previously used land in Felixstowe and also parcels of land around the Trimleys. It also proposes some radical and innovative ideas for improvements to ‘the public realm’ – in Hamilton Road, the seafront and elsewhere.

“As the consultants emphasise, this report should be seen as ‘independent recommendations’. We called in outside experts because we wanted someone with proven experience, skills and creative solutions to come up with proposals for the way forward for Felixstowe. A key aspect of the report is that it identifies that doing nothing is not an option. Without any positive intervention issues, such as an ageing population, the trend for young people to leave and the need for more homes, will result in a lower quality of life for everyone living around the town,” said Samantha Togher, Senior Executive of the East of England Development Agency.

Any proposals for the future development of land and property in Felixstowe and its peninsula would still be subject to full and formal public consultation as they would have to be incorporated into the Local Development Framework being drawn up by Suffolk Coastal – a process which has already started.

“Their ideas for a new look for the Town are exciting – but a real challenge to us all to bring about. This report is a valuable and exciting analysis of ways that we could progress – but these are not cast in stone, they are only proposals and are therefore open to challenge, debate and improvement. What is clear is that we cannot afford to do nothing and this report sets the foundation for us all to start working together to help provide the planned and carefully managed changes that will help build a better Felixstowe. Today is the end of the consultants’ work – but the beginning of the whole community’s chance to debate and shape a better future for us all,” said Cllr Andy Smith, Suffolk Coastal’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning.

The next stage for the consultants’ report is that it will be considered by the partner organisations, including Suffolk Coastal’s Cabinet. The report can be viewed in full on [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/felixstowe/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/planning/felixstowe/) while hard copies can be read at the Council’s Melton Hill offices and Felixstowe Town Council, and from Saturday at Trimley Post Office and Felixstowe library.

“Felixstowe is a key part of one of the areas for investment that the Haven Gateway Partnership has identified in its bid to Government for the sub-region to be designated a ‘Growth Point’. The master plan will support that submission as well as being one of the key documents we will use to attract funding for the town. The Partnership helped initiate this project and is very keen to work with the other agencies to help realise the aspirations that have been identified,” said Mike Bateson, the Haven Gateway Partnership Secretary.

*Notes: The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) is the driving force behind sustainable economic regeneration in the East of England: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The vision for the East of England is to create a leading economy, founded on a world class knowledge base, creativity and enterprise to improve the quality of life for all who live and work here. For further information follow the link to [www.eeda.org.uk](http://www.eeda.org.uk).*

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## Ben's perfect pitch put Suffolk Coastal back to top of the league



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10 Apr 2006

### Archived press release.

Once again, Suffolk Coastal has netted the county division Local Authority Groundsman of the Year award, with Ben Connell carrying off the trophy run by the Institute of Groundmanship and the Football Association.

Ben, who is Head Groundsman at Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd., who maintain the outdoor play and leisure spaces on behalf of Suffolk Coastal, also came second overall in the Eastern region finals.

Earlier in the year judging took place at the football pitch at Dellwood Avenue in Felixstowe, which is maintained by Ben and his apprentice Thomas Mayes and the awards were announced at a ceremony in March.

"This is the fourth year we have won this award which aims to put the spotlight on councils who are premiership class when it comes to providing football pitches for their local teams," said Councillor Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member with responsibility for leisure.

"Ben is continuing to maintain the high standards set by his predecessors and when he is not looking after the Dellwood pitch he is responsible for our other football and sports pitches such as rugby and cricket, while keeping a careful eye on some of the district's flowerbeds," added Councillor Leighton.

The judges not only inspected the Dellwood Avenue pitch, but also met with Ben to find out more about what is done to maintain the quality of the playing surface. Factors taken into account included the number and frequency of games, standards of maintenance and fertilising.

Ben and his team are responsible for 16 football pitches (12 adult and four junior), two cricket wickets and outfielders, two hockey pitches, two grass tennis courts and one rugby pitch across the district. Anyone who would like to book one of these pitches can contact Matthew Payne on 01394 444233.

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## Make sure someone is not dumping your rubbish



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

18 Apr 2006

### Archived press release.

Residents across Suffolk Coastal are being asked to play their part in stopping illegal dumping by checking that the people they employ to dispose of their rubbish are following the official rules.

Since November 2005 a new law passed by Parliament placed a legal responsibility on all householders to ensure that all their waste is disposed of properly, with the threat of being fined if they do not comply.

“Waste cowboys can make huge sums of money by charging to take away household rubbish and dumping it illegally. If that rubbish is traced back the Council could fine the householder,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

“This could affect people who hire workmen who take materials away from their property as part of their service. Contractors such as builders or waste clearance companies will normally need a waste carrier registration. To ensure residents do not fall foul of the law they should ask their contractor for their registered waste carrier number and documentation to say how the waste was disposed of.

“Normal domestic waste is collected by Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd, a registered contractor, on the Council’s behalf, but this waste should only be put out on the day of collection. Domestic rubbish left in or close to litter bins or at recycling centres will be regarded as fly-tipping which attracts a £80 fixed penalty fine,” continued Councillor Nunn.

Householders can still dispose of their own waste at Suffolk County Council’s household waste and recycling centres at Leiston, Foxhall and Felixstowe, free of charge. If an item is too bulky to take to one of the centres, Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd can collect and dispose of these items for a fee.

The Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1992 (as amended) requires householders to make sure their waste is only removed from their premises by registered waste carriers.

“We intend to enforce the new legislation to deter illegal dumping and fly-tipping as the clearing up of dumped rubbish costs the country over £500 million a year, and in Suffolk Coastal the cost of its cleansing operations including its litter clear up teams is around £700,000,” added Councillor Nunn.

Householders who want to check whether their carrier is registered can either phone the Environment Agency on 08708 506 506 or visit their website <http://www2.environment-agency.gov.uk/epr/search.asp>

People who want to register as legal carriers can do so by contacting the local Environment Agency office at Cobham Road, Ipswich, telephone 08708 506 506.

To request the removal of bulky items by Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd telephone 01394 444000.



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## Skatepark jumps over latest hurdle



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

27 Apr 2006

### Archived press release.

The dream of young people in Felixstowe of having their own skatepark took a significant leap forward this week when planning permission was granted for the new facility at Orwell Green.

The go-ahead was given 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.

"This is great news that we now have an agreed site for Felixstowe's first skatepark but to take it off the drawing boards and into reality will need young people to play their part," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"The total cost of getting the skatepark in place is £140,000 and to date £85,000 of that has been set aside but that still leaves a significant amount of funding to be found.

"This Council will be working closely with local groups to help find the rest of the money but for the project to succeed we need a concerted and united effort by the community, particularly young people, to successfully bridge the gap," added Cllr Leighton.

To date Felixstowe Town Council has backed the project with £30,000, while Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet agreed earlier this month to put in £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.

Tuesday's meeting of the South Area Development Control Sub-Committee unanimously approved the application with conditions to be agreed to ensure that the lighting would be switched off at 8.30pm, along with controls on the times of use and some additional landscaping works. The Committee had recently visited the site to help them reach their decision.

"Last year's launch of a skatepark in Leiston has I think shown clearly how such a facility can be safely run and prove a big attraction for local youngsters. There are no doubts that there is a demand for such a facility in Felixstowe and I believe that we have now found the best possible location for it.

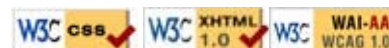
"Clearly there will need to be a close eye kept on this facility when it opens. We have been working closely with the police on this project, and they will play an active role in its first few weeks. The proposed ban on drinking alcohol in some parts of Felixstowe will include the skatepark and is an important additional power to help police its use.

"The young people themselves will be the key to both delivering the skatepark and its subsequent success. I hope that they will now come forward to get involved in playing an active part in what will become an exciting facility for their town," added Cllr Leighton.

Any young person, or any community group, that wants to become involved in the Felixstowe skatepark project can find out more by contacting Joe Liggett at Suffolk Coastal on 01394 444318.

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## Ban will tackle rowdy drinkers in Felixstowe



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04 May 2006

### Archived press release.

By the time that the first ball has been kicked in next month's World Cup, local police should have the powers they need to stop people drinking in public, in parts of Felixstowe that have been plagued by bad behaviour linked to alcohol.

Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet this week (Tuesday) gave the go-ahead to a Felixstowe Town Council-led initiative to bring in designation orders to tackle the problem of alcohol-related incidents in its town, a move that has also been backed by the Suffolk Coastal Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

"We hope to have the designation orders in place in time for the start of the World Cup that kicks off on June 9, and this will enable the local police to enforce bans on drinking in public in key parts of Felixstowe," said Cllr Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"With these new additional powers, the local police will be in a better position to deal with drink-related incidents in the areas of Felixstowe that they and the Town Council have identified.

"This is not a ban on everyone drinking in these places but will mean that the police would have the authority to take action against anyone acting in an anti-social manner. The aim is to give the resort a more friendly and welcoming environment and to improve the quality of life of those living in and visiting the town," added Cllr Green.

Signs will be erected warning people that they are in a designated zone and that if they continue to drink alcohol and behave in an anti-social manner they risk being fined up to £500 and being arrested if they fail to surrender their intoxicating liquor. Similar drinking bans were introduced last year to parts of the town centres in Woodbridge and Leiston.

Between September 2004 and October 2005 there were 554 alcohol-related offences recorded by the police in Felixstowe. The statistics show that over one quarter of all crimes recorded in Felixstowe were alcohol-related, with this being at the root of nearly half of all incidents of violence against the person, and a third of criminal damage and theft from motor cars.

"It must be emphasised that this district is officially one of the safest in terms of crime in the country and Felixstowe compares very well with other similar towns. But alcohol is at the root of 27.8 per cent of the resort's crimes, which make up about one-fourteenth of the entire district's recorded crime. Giving this extra power to the police could have a really significant impact on making both Felixstowe and this district even safer, and should help improve the quality of life of the resort's residents.

"I am delighted that we will have this in place ready for the summer months when anti-social behaviour linked to drinking in public places is traditionally at its worst, and I am sure it will be a boost for the police that they can invoke the powers by the start of the World Cup which has often sparked problems across the country.

"The new licensing laws may mean that it is easier than ever to drink, but that does not offer an excuse for bad behaviour. This Council supports designation orders like these and partnership campaigns like Operation Nightsafe which are aimed at encouraging sensible drinking and better

behaviour,” added Cllr Green.

The proposed designated areas in Felixstowe are:

- a) The Gardens, Promenade, Seafront and foreshore from Orford Road to Cobbolds Point and bordered by and including Sea Road, Undercliff Road West, Hamilton Gardens, Bath Hill and Undercliff Road East, the Convalescent Hill, Pier Bight, Spa Pavilion Car Parks and Wolsey Steps.
- b) Hamilton Road from Bent Hill up to St Andrews Road including the area around the Triangle.
- c) Undercliff Road West from Sea Road to Ordnance Roundabout including Snow Hill Steps and Pram Hill Walk.
- d) Cavendish Park North and South including the proposed Orwell Green Skatepark.
- e) Orwell High School All Weather Sports Area (to be constructed) and surrounding playing fields and parking areas.
- f) Felixstowe Cemetery, including the proposed Cemetery extension on the adjacent allotment land and Cemetery Path.
- g) The car parks at Crescent Road, The Grove, Ranelagh Road, Golf Road, Brackenbury Fort, Highfield Road, Manor Terrace, and Arwela Road.
- h) The following open spaces; Adastral Close, Langer Park, Allenby Park, Coronation Playing Field, Dellwood Avenue Recreation Ground, Brackenbury Cliff known as “the Dip”, Eastwood Ho!, Walton Recreation Ground, Gosford Way and The Grove.
- i) High Road West and High Street, Walton between Garrison Lane and the bridge over Port of Felixstowe Road.
- j) Brackenbury Sports Centre.



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## Tourist information goes mobile



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05 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Visitors to Framlingham this summer will be able to visit the region's first mobile Tourist Information Centre to find out more about the town and the attractions on offer in the surrounding villages.

The trailer will be used to promote the tourist attractions, local shops, restaurants, and food and drink producers that are clustered around the historic town.

"The trailer has been provided by the Framlingham & District Development Trust with grant aid from Suffolk Coastal and the Action for Market Towns 'Quality of Place' scheme," said Councillor John Perry, Cabinet Member with responsibility for tourism.

"As well as promoting the attractions of Framlingham and the surrounding area, this facility will also be a useful resource for local residents as it will have information on the range of clubs, organisations and activities that go on in this bustling market town.

"This is another excellent example of what can be achieved when organisations work together for the benefit of the local community and I am sure it will be well used by visitors and residents," added Councillor Perry.

During the summer the trailer will visit various sites in Framlingham and the surrounding area as well as local events. It will be staffed by volunteers and information that can normally be found in the district's Tourist Information Centres at Woodbridge, Felixstowe and Aldeburgh will be available.



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## Travellers called on to leave nature sites



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05 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal has given letters to groups of travellers who have set up camp at two of the district's most important sites for wildlife as the first stage of an attempt to get them to move on.

On Tuesday a large party of travellers with around 40 vehicles moved onto a particularly sensitive part of Sutton Heath, while four family groups have been camped at Upper Hollesley Common for just over a week.

"We have delivered letters to both groups as we take their presence very seriously and we want them to get off these sites now. Sutton Heath and Upper Hollesley Common are two of our district's most important areas for wildlife and it is now the nesting season so this is a particularly sensitive time," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"Sutton Heath and Hollesley Common are also key parts of the coast and heaths area that is officially an area of outstanding natural beauty. The travellers' presence is putting at risk our natural environment.

"I would ask publicly for both these groups to show their commitment to the environment by moving on now. I can assure them that we are ready and willing to use the power of the courts to seek the legal backing to evict them, and we asked our colleagues at the County Council to urgently carry out the reviews that would strengthen our legal case," added Cllr Leighton.

Suffolk County Council has been asked by Suffolk Coastal to carry out urgently the necessary welfare audits for both camps so that any education, health and social issues can be considered and presented at court if eviction orders are to be sought.

As part of its ongoing campaign to keep travellers off its land, particularly in environmentally important or sensitive sites, Suffolk Coastal maintains ditches and embankments as an appropriate way to deter trespassers.

"In these instances we have also relocated a car park, and installed gates and barriers which are locked wherever it is permitted. Given that we know from bitter experience that travellers are prepared to fill in ditches, flatten banks, or remove locks and even gates, it is becoming an increasingly frustrating battle.

"I can, however, assure our residents that we will continue to be vigilant and proactive in protecting these special places and would urge the travellers to show the same respect to our communities and our environment and leave the site now," added Cllr Leighton.

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## Big boost for those wanting affordable housing



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08 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The district's need for more affordable housing for local residents has received a significant boost with the recent news that a trebling of national funding will see 86 more homes being built in the next two years.

Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet has already shown its backing for this major boost by agreeing last week (Tuesday) to transfer some land it owns in Kirton to Suffolk Heritage Housing Association (SHHA) so that 13 homes for rent can be built.

"It is very good news that we managed to get £3.477 million of funding from the Housing Corporation to enable 18 different developments to get underway across our district over the coming two years," said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

"This will mean that 86 more affordable homes will be built by our partner housing associations, with 23 of them being under the Homebuy part-rent, part-buy initiative, and the rest being rented. It is a shame that a further £4 million worth of schemes failed to gain funding but it is a big improvement on the £1.169m we had for the last two years.

"One of the schemes that gained funding was at Weir Place in Kirton where SHHA will get £481,000 so it can build 13 rented homes for local people and to enable this important project to proceed we will transfer the land at no cost to SHHA. This is a significant decision as the land is estimated to be worth £300,000 but providing more affordable housing is a key priority of this Council," added Cllr Slemmings.

The other proposals that have gained financial backing from the Housing Corporation are at Trimley Road, Kirton for six HomeBuy homes, at Aldeburgh for 14 HomeBuy homes, and at Orford for three HomeBuy homes.

Six homes for rent are set for Trimley Road, Kirton, one at Church Lane, Felixstowe, three at Walton Community Centre, Felixstowe, three at the Close, Sudbourne, four at Adams Lane, Walberswick, four at Aldeburgh, two at Maidstone Road, Felixstowe, two at Waveney Road, Felixstowe, three at Glanville Place, Kesgrave, six at Ropes Drive, Kesgrave, three at St Margaret's Crescent, Leiston, eight at Orford, four at Parham, and one at Mayflower Avenue, Saxmundham.

"There is a very real and proven need for more affordable housing across the whole of our district and it is good news that this successful bid to the Housing Corporation will see more homes being built in so many different sites.

"I would like to thank our partner housing associations, Hastoe, Suffolk Heritage, and Orwell, who along with our housing team have drawn together these plans that have succeeded in gaining some much-needed and well-deserved funding for more affordable homes for our local residents," added Cllr Slemmings.



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## New powers will help make bedsits safer



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08 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal's housing team is ready to use new laws that came into effect last month that require many houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) to be officially licensed to ensure they meet national standards.

The new laws are intended to raise standards of accommodation in the private rented sector with the threat of fines up to £20,000 on landlords if their properties do not come up to scratch.

"We think the new rules will affect 20 or so properties in our district as they apply to any landlord letting out large HMOs that are on three storeys or more, and have five or more unrelated people living in them. They must now apply to us for a mandatory licence," said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

"The Government has specified minimum amenity standards, setting out the requirements for kitchens, bathrooms and toilets in these types of HMO. We will also have to carry out a health and safety hazard rating assessments which will look at 29 different potential hazards, and there is a range of enforcement action we can take if we think there are serious breaches," added Cllr Slemmings.

From July 2006 it will be a criminal offence to operate an HMO without applying for a licence with a possible fine of up to £20,000. The local housing authority, and in certain circumstances the tenant, can apply for a rent repayment order, under which they can reclaim the rent paid during the period up to a maximum of 12 months when the landlord did not have a licence or a licence application outstanding.

A landlord without a licence will also not be able to use a section 21 notice to evict tenants. A section 21 notice can be used by landlords to serve notice to quit on tenants simply because he wants to regain possession of his property, not on grounds of rent arrears or other reasons.

"This is an important part of our housing sector as HMOs provide affordable housing for many young and vulnerable tenants, and this Council has worked closely with landlords to bring about good standards.

"These new laws have been brought in to ensure that the very worst housing standards in HMOs can be identified and successfully tackled, and those tenants most at risk from poor management are given proper protection.

"Nationally, the most common problems associated with multiple occupancy relate to poor fire safety standards, overcrowding, inadequate facilities and poor or unscrupulous management. These new powers will help us ensure that these are not issues in our district," added Cllr Slemmings.

Licensed landlords also have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure that tenants are not causing problems within the boundaries of the property through anti-social behaviour.

Any landlord wanting more information can contact Suffolk Coastal's private sector housing team

on 01394 444273 or visit the Government's website <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1151996>

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## Help make your district even cleaner



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10 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal is encouraging even more groups to come forward and help clean up their local communities after the success of the recent Suffolk Spring Clean which saw over 500 people filling 1,100 black sacks with litter.

The countywide campaign ran for the week beginning March 20, and in Suffolk Coastal it saw 20 groups from parishes across the district organising litter picks in their local area, with support from the Council.

"We have an excellent tradition of volunteers helping to clean-up their local communities, as shown by the fact that another 30 groups have already carried out or plan to carry out a litter-pick in their area," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

"Among those who have come forward to help their community are parish councils, schools, a young farmers' group, a conservation group, residents' associations, a college and a yacht club. I would like to pay public tribute to all these groups and the countless other individuals who have come forward to help keep this district clean and green.

"I hope that this will encourage more groups to come forward and carry out either a one-day blitz or begin regular clear-ups in their area – certainly this Council will offer whatever support we can. I would also warn the thoughtless minority that drop litter, that we will take action against them if we catch them," added Cllr Nunn.

As well as supporting local litter pick initiatives, Suffolk Coastal carries out its own street cleansing programme, and the Council's enforcement officers issue Fixed Penalty Notices to people caught littering or failing to clear up dog mess.

Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued to anyone dropping litter, including cigarette ends and chewing gum, or failing to clear up after their dog. If the penalty of £80 is not paid then prosecution for dropping litter onto land, beaches, rivers, ponds or lakes can result in a fine of up to £2,500 if the case is taken to court.

Street cleansing and clearing up litter costs Suffolk Coastal residents £700,000 every year, and litter poses additional costs to the environment not only through pollution but also the hazard it poses to wildlife.

"It is disappointing that some people care so little about the local environment as to drop so much litter. There is no excuse for dropping litter, failing to clear up after your dog, or for fly tipping. The district is well served with litter and dog waste bins at over 2,000 locations, we offer a special collection service for unwanted household items and there are three County-run household waste and recycling centres where household items can be disposed of free of charge," added Councillor Nunn.

Any parish, town council or organisation or individual who would like to help maintain or further improve the cleanliness of their neighbourhood by organising a litter pick at any time of the year can get support from Suffolk Coastal, including sacks, gloves and disposal of waste collected.

Anyone who would like to participate can contact their parish or town council or call Suffolk Coastal on 01394 444000 or email [scsltd@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:scsltd@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) for events in their area or to register an event.

Suffolk Coastal can also arrange to visit schools to talk to pupils about litter and its environmental impact; any school interested in receiving a visit can contact Suffolk Coastal on 01394 444000.



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## Compulsory purchase will only be final option



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11 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The go-ahead was given last week by Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet to begin the official process of allowing the Council to compulsorily purchase three plots of land that are essential to the comprehensive development proposed for the South Seafront development site in Felixstowe.

Planning permission for the multi-million pound redevelopment of 17.5 acres of mainly derelict land is expected to be issued in the near future after the recent Government announcement that it would not call in the decision made by Suffolk Coastal's South Area Development Control Sub-Committee last December.

"Virtually all the site is owned by the Council but there remain three plots of land that despite continued negotiations are still privately-owned. This is an important development for Felixstowe and we are prepared to use a compulsory purchase order (CPO) to buy the sites if we fail in our ongoing attempts to reach agreements with the landowners," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member leading on the South Seafront project.

"The agreed scheme, which last year gained the unanimous support of councillors at the development control meeting, will be a major boost for residents and visitors, creating a number of new public services and facilities and attractions for all the family. The sites are critical to the delivery of the regeneration scheme that is likely to lead to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

"This is a very important project for the regeneration of this key part of the seafront in Felixstowe. I remain hopeful that we will be able to reach an agreement with the owners without having to use our final resort of a CPO to ensure that this vital development can proceed," added Cllr Leighton.

Both the Council and its development partner, Bloor Homes, have been in renewed contact with those owning the land or acting on their behalf. The sites in question are a currently unoccupied bungalow in Langer Road and two pieces of land facing Langer Road and Orford Road.

If a CPO is issued, then the owners will be entitled to compensation determined by the independent Lands Tribunal office. The intention to proceed with a CPO will be advertised and it is possible for people to object to it, although the decision on whether to take account of the objections would rest with the Government.

There is no fixed timetable for how long the CPO process would take to acquire the land, although 18 months is being offered as a guide. However, the Council remains hopeful that an agreement can be reached with the owners so that the CPO powers will not have to be used.

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## Council's performance earns praise



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

11 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The annual in-depth report by the Audit Commission has given Suffolk Coastal a very positive report with praise for its progress in a number of areas in the year 2004/05.

The report gives Suffolk Coastal a three marks out of four assessment, making it equal best with two other councils in the county, Babergh and St Edmundsbury, with the Council being praised for showing 'a clear focus on value for money and providing cost-effective services'.

"The latest detailed inspection of Suffolk Coastal by the Audit Commission has given the Council another positive report, and recognises the progress that we have been making to improve our services. This has been achieved against a background of achieving large budgetary efficiencies and we were recently recognised as being the eighth best district in the country for delivering efficiencies and savings," said Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of the Council.

"Due to some adjustments to how the auditors have compiled their reports, this document largely focuses on the financial year that ended 12 months ago, and as such highlights the improvements in our recycling and benefits services. I am pleased that those improvements have been maintained during the last year when we have also delivered significantly better results in planning and tackling the need for more affordable housing," added Cllr Herring.

The Council's financial position remains at the top of its agenda. To put its efforts in context, its ongoing efficiency drive has seen it achieve £6 million of savings and increased income since 2001. Its Council Tax level remains in the lowest third of all shire district councils, and although nationally Council Tax bills have risen by an average of over 65 per cent in the last nine years, Suffolk Coastal has kept its rise to 42 per cent. The Council is succeeding in delivering quality services despite its expenditure per head of population being relatively low, with nearly two – thirds of shire district councils spending more than Suffolk Coastal in 2004/05.

"We remain committed to delivering value for money services that meet the priorities of this district and have embedded monitoring systems to ensure our performance is of the standards we and our residents demand.

"This report shows we are making progress in the right direction, and that we are performing as well as anyone locally. However, as the last year has shown, there are still further improvements that can be made and this Council will aim to deliver even more success in the years ahead," added Cllr Herring.

The report notes that 'the Council is making progress against the actions in the (Comprehensive Performance Assessment) Improvement Plan ... (that) there has been good improvement in areas of service performance ... (and that) the Council has taken positive steps to work with partners and stakeholders.'

In its summary, it also states that 'the Council is performing well in terms of financial reporting, financial standing, internal control and value for money' and that integrated quarterly reports introduced in November 2004 has 'significantly improved the reporting arrangements of the Council ... and helped (the Council) focus on key performance variances'.

The role of these annual reports is to provide an independent assessment of how the Council is discharging its stewardship of public money and to offer practical and positive contributions to the way the Council operates. The report can be found on [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/performance/audit/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourcouncil/performance/audit/)

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## Martello Tower set for major boost from development



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11 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The Martello Tower that forms the centrepiece of the planned multi-million pound regeneration of Felixstowe South Seafront is set for another major boost.

Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet agreed last week the way that any future profits that might arise from the development of the 17.5 acre site would be allocated, with the funding of a scheme to re-use the Martello Tower taking top priority.

"Bloor Homes, our partners on this exciting and much-needed development helping to regenerate Felixstowe, had already as part of the planning process agreed to set aside at least £300,000 for the restoration of the Martello Tower, which is intended to be the centrepiece of the development," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member leading on the South Seafront project.

"We have now listened to the case made by councillors when they unanimously approved the planning application that the tower should also be given first call on any potential future profits generated for the Council by the scheme, with the money helping the attempts to bring it back into public use.

"If there is more money left after helping the tower, this will be set aside in the following order – for maintenance of the public facilities at the new development, to contribute to the cost of any additional primary school places caused by it, and finally any other projects or work that needs doing within the site," added Cllr Leighton.

The revised plans for the South Seafront development approved in December would result in a maritime park, car parking and other leisure facilities being built, funded by 158 new homes.

The plans offer a much-needed injection of leisure facilities and other services for residents and visitors alike, all funded by a modern, creative approach to the housing part of the scheme. The revised application included more leisure and green space, with a bigger and better choice of play equipment, a refreshment kiosk, and new modern toilets. There will also be 261 additional car-parking spaces that surveys show will be sufficient to meet demand.

Play equipment will be at the heart of the scheme, which is aimed at all the family, with a wide range of entertainment including an adventure trail, slides and climbing rocks for juniors and toddlers, an infant play area including see-saws, and springing items, plus a more adventurous 'spacenet' for more active play. There will also be an eight pad water splash feature to help build on the maritime theme of the park.

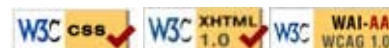
"The park, with its maritime theme, and the high-quality residential development, promises to be a multi-million pound addition that would be central to the much-needed regeneration of the resort," added Cllr Leighton.

An Ancient Monument Consent has already been gained by Bloor Homes so the unsightly garages can be removed from next to the Martello Tower. The Consent will also lead to an archaeological examination of the historic moat around the tower, and the former Royal Observer Corps bunker will be preserved, as recommended by English Heritage.

Just under one-third of the site will be used to build 158 homes, with 16 homes of the same design available for rent from a housing association. Most of the homes for sale will be two-bedroom and will hopefully prove attractive to local first-time buyers.

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## Be part of the team-Suffolk youth games



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

12 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal is looking for boys and girls to represent their district at the county's own mini-Olympics - Suffolk Youth Games, the largest multi-sport festival for young people being held at Bury St Edmunds on Sunday, July 16.

The games attract hundreds of young people aged 10 to 16 from across the county and last year Team Suffolk Coastal competed in nine of the ten events winning gold in both the netball and tennis. This year the team hopes to build on this success and make another strong showing across all the events.

The call has gone out to young people in school year 11 or below who would like to represent the district at one of the following sports – athletics, badminton, girls basketball, girls cricket, hockey, netball, rugby (tag), squash, swimming and tennis.

“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.

“There will be training and selection sessions for anyone wanting to take part, with a development squad for each sport being selected that will meet and develop their individual skills in the weeks leading up to the Suffolk Youth Games.

“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 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.leisure@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:active.leisure@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

Details can also be found on the Council's website [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) and the closing date for registration is Monday, June 5.



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## Council's website a million-sized hit



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12 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The growing importance and popularity of Suffolk Coastal's website can be seen in its statistics for last month which saw the number of hits on the site break the one million mark for the first time.

April saw 1,014,104 hits measured on the website, and brought the running total of hits since July 11 last year to a massive total of 7,414,111, with 2,464,301 pages being viewed during that time.

"We quietly relaunched a more user-friendly version of our website last July and since then the take-up has been quite staggering, particularly when you realise that all these figures have been filtered to exclude random hits by search engines or use by Council staff," said Cllr Stephen Burroughes, Cabinet Member for Rural Issues.

"Our monthly total of unique visitors, which measures the number of different people using our site, also hit a record number in April with 15,753 logging on to [suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

"We are constantly adding more information and services on the site, with recent additions such as excellent online information about planning applications and building control including the ability to make applications online, plus a really useful section for and about town and parish councils," added Cllr Burroughes.

The monthly breakdown of statistics also reveals what are the most visited parts of the site with planning, job, leisure and Council Tax information scoring highly, along with tourism related pages.

In April among the top 20 visited sections were the details about a local strategy for Felixstowe that has been produced by planning consultants and offers proposals on how the resort and its surrounding areas could develop in the future.

"We are further developing our website as somewhere that people can rely on finding useful information about their Council and its services 24 hours a day, as well as adding those options that enable them to get things done without having to speak to one of our officers.

"Within weeks we will have an improved online payment system and we will continue to put on new pages that are aimed at making it easier for all to get the service they want from their Council.

"This is about adding value to what we do – the website is an important extra resource and means of dealing with this Council, and we are committed to making it an even better service. However, at the same time we are committed to ensuring that our customer service to those who prefer to use other more traditional ways of contacting their Council, such as the phone, letter or calling in personally, are also available," added Cllr Burroughes.

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## Turn your garden waste into home compost



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12 May 2006

### Archived press release.

This is Compost Awareness Week and with record amounts of garden waste being collected by Suffolk Coastal from homes across the district, what better time for gardeners to pick up a bargain home composter.

To help would-be composters get started, Suffolk Coastal has linked up with the Government-funded Waste Resource Action Programme (WRAP) to offer compost bins at a bargain rate, with prices beginning from only £4 to have one, including free delivery.

“Since the beginning of this year over 550 compost bins have been bought by our local residents through our partnership with WRAP, and we estimate that well over 11,000 bins have become features of this district’s gardens since we started promoting home composting,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment – natural and built.

“It is not that unusual for people to have more than the one compost bin and this special offer is the ideal chance to either start getting into the composting habit or to buy an additional one to double the goodness that you are creating in your own back garden,” added Cllr Nunn.

A 220 litre bin costs only £4, a 330 litre £6, while the giant 700 litre is £20. All prices include free delivery and a free kitchen caddy to store up those vegetable cuttings before adding them to the compost bin. Call 0845 077 0759 to order one now.

“These prices are a saving of up to £86 off the recommended prices so they really are a bargain, while helping people get free compost from their own garden.

“Many people like having their own compost bin because they know it is their own personal free source of environmentally-friendly soil improver, but we also collect garden waste from every home in the district which is turned into compost at the Household Waste and Recycling Centre at Foxhall,” added Cllr Nunn.

As part of the Compost Awareness Week initiative, free compost is being given away at Suffolk County Council’s “Shovel It Yourself” promotion. On Saturday May 13 and Sunday May 14, residents can bring their own bag and a shovel to the Household Waste and Recycling Centre at Foxhall, and help themselves to free compost made from the green waste collected at the site.

Compost Awareness Week which runs from May 8 - 14 this year, is a national initiative to promote the use and benefits of compost and to encourage gardeners to make their own.

Useful tips on composting can also be found on the Council’s website

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



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## Flying the flag at Felixstowe



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15 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The Blue Flag will fly at Felixstowe South this summer for the seventh consecutive year as the beach has again scooped the internationally recognised Resort Seaside Award.

The Seaside Awards given by ENCAMS recognise clean, well-managed resort and rural beaches that comply with the legal minimum standards of water quality as laid down by the European Union. All bathing water is tested and only those beaches that meet the strict European guidelines are eligible for an award.

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

“The Blue Flag flying at Felixstowe is becoming a virtually permanent fixture and this year's success is another big thumbs-up for the resort and the efforts of this Council to ensure the beach meets the tough quality standards,” said Cllr John Perry, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Tourism.

“What is also good news is that the Dip at Felixstowe has again won the prestigious Rural Beaches Award for beach cleanliness and water quality which means that visitors and residents to the resort are officially guaranteed good facilities, good quality beaches and safe bathing water”, continued Cllr Perry.

Three other tourist destinations in the district have also gained the Rural Beaches Award with Aldeburgh, Sizewell and Thorpeness again being successful this year. ENCAMS is Environmental Campaigns, an independent environmental charity previously known as the Keep Britain Tidy group.



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## New Parham facility to help district be even greener



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15 May 2006

### Archived press release.

A major new recycling facility is set to give the residents of Suffolk Coastal an even better opportunity to help save the earth by cutting down the amount of waste going into landfill sites.

The multi-million pound composting facility, operated by Bioganix, has been part-funded by the Government and is set to make a massive change in the way that people in Suffolk Coastal deal with their rubbish.

“All the garden waste collected fortnightly in brown bins from across the district is being delivered to the new Parham centre where it is loaded into large rotating drums, pasteurised by heat treatment and turned into a rich soil improver,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment – natural and built.

“This is a much quicker process than traditional composting and, as it all takes place in a fully enclosed building with high-tech air handling and air washing systems, there will be no bad smells either.

“What is really exciting is that in a few weeks' time we will be able to tell residents that as well as their garden waste they will also be able to put in all types of food waste. Once the Parham plant is ready, this will mean that all manner of raw or cooked foods can safely be put in a brown bin to be turned into compost,” added Cllr Nunn.

Residents must not start including food waste in their bins yet, as the plant has yet to be fully commissioned. Once this has been completed Suffolk Coastal residents will be given details of exactly what materials can go in the bins.

“We are really excited by the potential of this new improved service that we expect to be able to offer to every resident in the district from next month. As soon as we are all satisfied that Parham is ready, then we will let our residents know when they can start putting even more into their brown bins.

“This new service will be unique to the residents of our district, and is one of the first of its kind in the whole country. I hope it will encourage even more people to get into the recycling habit as it will literally cost us all the earth if we carry on throwing away as much rubbish as we currently do.

“Although we are currently well above the national average, with 34 per cent of our rubbish being recycled, the cost of dealing with domestic waste will rise to £9 million a year if we do not increase our recycling rate. This improved service, and the fact that this summer 10,000 homes will get a new fortnightly collection of cardboard, tins, plastics and foil, shows how committed this Council is to making it easier than ever for residents to recycle,” added Cllr Nunn.

Residents from other local authority areas should not include food materials in their brown bins unless they are advised to do so by their local authority. Not all composting facilities within the county are able to handle the range of materials that the new Parham facility can compost, and authorities will not be able to collect bins containing the wrong materials.



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## Community organisations given Council grant backing



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18 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The continuing vital work of local community organisations has been recognised by Suffolk Coastal with 39 different groups gaining funding over the coming 12 months.

Grants ranging from £300 to £10,000 were recommended by the Grants Task Group after it considered nearly 60 requests for support.

“Councillors had a thorough look at the merits of all the applications received and given our limited resources had some tough decisions to make. However, I am delighted that we are still able to provide over £60,000 worth of revenue grants to organisations this year who are making a real difference in our communities,” said Cllr Stephen Burroughes, Cabinet Member for Rural Issues.

Seven key local organisations that are regularly supported by Suffolk Coastal have again received funding for the coming year. Suffolk Acre will receive £5,000, The Rochford Trust £6,650, Cedar House Trust £4,100, Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality £1,750, Suffolk Coastal Disability Advice Service £2,000, Coastal Homeless Action Group £7,500 and Ipswich Women's Aid £3,250.

“These are important groups who offer help across our district to a wide range of our community with information and advice on hand for young or disabled people, or those facing problems with domestic violence or racial harassment, or those in rural communities.

“All our grants are aimed at providing support to those voluntary organisations who are either giving support to people in our community or are improving the quality of life of residents by the service they provide.

“We have an active and excellent voluntary sector in our district, with lots of groups who are making a real difference and this Council is keen to support these activities. The largest grant we are making of £10,000 is to assist the work of community partnerships in the district who are busy promoting new initiatives in their towns,” added Cllr Burroughes.

The full list of other organisations that are receiving funds is as follows:

Art on the Prom £400, Aldeburgh, Leiston and Saxmundham Volunteer Centre £2,480, Arts Framlingham £400, Aldeburgh Marine Regatta and Carnival up to £400, Coastal Accessible Transport £600, Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk) £2,000, East Anglian Traditional Music Trust £300, East Anglian Sailing Trust £500, Eastern Angles Theatre Company £500, Felixstowe RLSS Lifeguard Club £500, Felixstowe Area Community Transport Ltd £500, Felixstowe Old Peoples Welfare Association £500, Framlingham and District Volunteer Centre £500, Felixstowe and District Council for Sport and Recreation £500, Ipswich Transport Museum £100, Ipswich and Suffolk Credit Union Ltd £1,000, Just 42 £1,000, Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council £1,000, Long Shop Project Trust £1,000, Mouth to Mouth Theatre Company £300, National Coastwatch Institution £850, Pisces Swimming Club for Disabled People £500, Rendlesham Youth Group £2,000, Suffolk Artlink £750, Suffolk Coastal Crossroads £450, Suffolk Accident Rescue Service £400, Suffolk Real Nappy Network £400, Saxmundham Arts and Recreation Trust £400, The

Voluntary Help Centre £300, Woodbridge Regatta £250, and Yoxford Arts Festival £400. Landguard Fort Trust received £1,500 and Volcare £1,000 and their grants will be doubled if they provide the relevant information by the end of this month.

Suffolk Coastal offers capital grants, to pay or help pay for an expensive piece of equipment or building improvement, or revenue grants that are for more routine running or day-to-day costs. Any organisation wanting more information about community grants made by the Council can find out more by calling 01394 444626 or emailing [committee.section@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:committee.section@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)





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## Council to review its green targets



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18 May 2006

### Archived press release.

A special task group of councillors is being set up to take a fresh look at how Suffolk Coastal is tackling environmental issues and help set some new additional green targets for the organisation.

The Green Issues Task Group will be made up of nine councillors, including two Cabinet members, and will, if necessary, strengthen the importance given to the environment by the Council.

“One of this Council’s six key corporate objectives is to protect, improve and make sustainable use of our environment for the people who live, work and visit the area, leaving a rich and diverse legacy for future generations,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

“We signed up to the LA21 Charter which was the international initiative that grew out of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 but it is probably time to review that strategy and, if need be, update it with perhaps some more challenging targets for this organisation to meet.

“The Council’s role has also fundamentally changed in recent years with us now having clear community leadership responsibilities. We need to check if there is more we can be doing to help protect our environment that could act as an example for other local organisations to follow,” added Cllr Nunn.

A new policy on energy and renewable energy is set to be drawn up and the task group will try to identify new future environmental priorities for the Council taking into account a new campaign launched by the national Local Government Association (LGA).

The LGA’s Greening Communities campaign is based on the recognition of how important a role local councils can and do play in managing and protecting the environment. It pinpoints energy and climate control, waste and material resources, street scene and public space, air, soil, biodiversity and water as the areas that councils are already involved in.

“With the increasing impact of climate change, the impact of coastal erosion, the ever-rising cost of fuel, and queues of traffic on our roads, we are all becoming more concerned about our environment and protecting it and our quality of life.

“This Council has concentrated its energies in recent times on encouraging recycling and minimising waste while protecting our coastline, air quality and our important areas of countryside. I think we have achieved some real successes but I do not doubt that there could be some room for improvement.

“We want to share best practice with the rest of the country and see if there are lessons that can be learnt and implemented. It would help if the Government recognised that councils like ours are pivotal to improving our environment and backed our efforts to make a real difference,” added Cllr Nunn.



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## Vandalism of paper bank could result in its removal



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18 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Vandals have recently targeted the recycling paper bank sited at the Haven Health Centre in Felixstowe as well as a nearby dog bin sited in Grange Road.

“Both the paper bank and the dog bin were set on fire and this mindless action could have a long term impact on local residents,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

“This paper bank, which was only installed in January, is owned by Bolton Brothers and they could decide to withdraw this particular facility if it proves to be a target for vandalism.

“The dog bin that was destroyed has been replaced at a cost to the Council of £300. It is located at the junction of Grange Road and the footpath that runs alongside Grange School and is an important facility as it is close to the playing field and children’s playground,” continued Councillor Nunn.

Over the last two years there have been several incidents of recycling banks being targeted by arsonists resulting in the permanent withdrawal of one of these, and there have been 29 instances of dog bins and 38 instances of litter bins being set on fire, stolen, demolished or otherwise deliberately damaged by vandals.

“The cost to this Council to repair or replace the dog and litter bins has been £20,000 and this is money that could have been otherwise invested in improving our service,” added Councillor Nunn.

Residents across the district are urged to report to the community police, telephone number 0800 783 9112 and Suffolk Coastal if they see anyone vandalising any of the Council’s recycling facilities, litter or dog bins.

Details of recycling facilities in Felixstowe or anywhere in Suffolk Coastal are available on the Council’s website [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or telephone the Recycling Team on 01394 444000.

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## Council's fears borne out as sea wall breaks



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

22 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal's repeated pleas for Government funding took on fresh urgency this weekend when part of the sea wall at Felixstowe failed, and four other sections showed signs of damage.

Around 50 metres of sea wall by the Shore Break café was most affected by the strong seas on Saturday. The wall has bowed outwards in two sections and the materials behind it that support the promenade have been washed out leaving a stretch of the prom about one metre wide without any support.

"Our pleas for £5 million funding from the Government has so far failed to be successful, despite our warnings that the sea wall was in grave danger. This weekend's events have proved that we were not crying wolf and that defence works are urgently required," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"We have taken immediate action to cordon off 90 metres of the promenade where it is dangerous for pedestrians. Concrete blocks have been placed against the bowed sea wall to try and stave off any further damage and we will monitor the situation after every high tide.

"The Council has already had plant and equipment on site to shore up the sea wall and we will be looking this week at bringing in rocks to help build up the defences. However, these are only stopgap measures that at best will provide temporary relief. We must get the Government's funding to proceed with the planned permanent defence works as only they will safeguard Felixstowe's sea front, and over 1,600 local homes and the internationally important Port," added Cllr Smith.

A detailed case sent by the Council to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) warned that major damage could be caused to commercial, residential and tourist areas if this summer's planned flood and coast protection works were not funded by the Government as previously expected.

The Council, with the support of the Environment Agency (EA) and regional DEFRA staff, had been planning a scheme for the southern end of Felixstowe to replace the derelict defences with work originally due to start this month. However, in December the Government made a bombshell announcement that its budgets were fully committed so for the first year ever there would be no funding for new schemes in 2006/07.

"The Council and Suffolk Coastal's MP John Gummer have been urging the Government to treat our scheme on its merits and recognise it is an urgent special case. Indeed, I understand that Mr Gummer has this weekend spoken to DEFRA's top engineer to further press Felixstowe's needs.

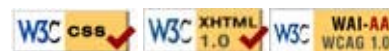
"We warned that the current state of the sea defences is such that there was a major risk that they could not withstand a serious storm without damage and that could also threaten the flood wall.

"We gave them a strong case for why £5m must be made available now. The joint scheme with the EA would have protected over £400m worth of property, which remains in peril because of the Government's failure to increase its budget," added Cllr Smith.

The Council's report warned the low beach levels are resulting in more stress on the sea wall, and that parts of the sea wall were at severe risk of at least partial collapse, most likely around the Shore Break café. This could then threaten the foundations, and so the stability, of the vital floodwall maintained by the EA, which protects the low-lying parts of the town from flooding.

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## Council spells out what SPS meeting is about



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

24 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The Suffolk Preservation Society has been sent a letter setting out in clear terms what Suffolk Coastal is prepared to discuss at a meeting being held next month about the planned Felixstowe South Seafront development.

The ambitious multi-million pound scheme to regenerate a derelict part of the resort was given the go-ahead by councillors last December and the Government has since then waived its right to review the decision.

“The SPS has voiced its concerns about our decision and our plans, which largely appeared to focus on the intention to demolish the Herman de Stern building. As the Society was talking about taking legal action, we offered on March 1 to meet with them so we could clear up any misunderstandings in the hope that it would save both organisations time and unnecessary legal costs in the future,” said Cllr Ray Herring, Leader of the Council.

Officers at Suffolk Coastal have unsuccessfully been attempting to get the Society to confirm what the key points for discussion would be at the meeting, so that the appropriate Council officers would be present.

“I have been surprised that it has taken so long for the Society to agree a date, but I am now astonished by their comments in local newspapers about what they want to raise with us as their agenda seems to be ever changing.

“From their reported comments, it appears that the Society is now expecting to present some form of alternative plans for the site at the meeting. We have written to them explaining that this is completely unacceptable to us – the planning decision on this site has been made, and we are happy to explain and discuss it.

“Like anybody, they are completely at liberty to draw up plans for the site and formally submit them as a planning application, with of course the relevant fees, and they can meet if they want with our planning officers to discuss that, but it would be completely inappropriate for our June meeting. I would reiterate that this Council is more than happy with its approved plans and we, and I believe the majority of people in Felixstowe, are now just waiting to get on with them,” added Cllr Herring.

The revised plans for the South Seafront development approved in December will result in a maritime park, car parking and other leisure facilities being built, funded by 158 new homes. The revised application included more leisure and green space, with a bigger and better choice of play equipment, a refreshment kiosk, and new modern toilets. There will also be 261 additional car-parking spaces that surveys show will be sufficient to meet demand.

Play equipment will be at the heart of the scheme, which is aimed at all the family, with a wide range of entertainment including an adventure trail, slides and climbing rocks for juniors and toddlers, an infant play area including see-saws, and springing items, plus a more adventurous ‘spacenet’ for more active play. There will also be an eight pad water splash feature to help build on the maritime theme of the park.

“The refurbished Martello Tower will be the centrepiece of the development, but we have been upfront about the fact that the empty Herman de Stern building would be demolished.

“Our meeting with the SPS on June 19 is an opportunity for the Society to once again be given the full facts behind the decision-making process on this important development to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and to clear up any misunderstandings that they may have,” added Cllr Herring.

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## Rock defences being installed to save Felixstowe



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

24 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Work on installing a further phase of emergency sea defences is being started tomorrow (Thursday) at Felixstowe by Suffolk Coastal to try and protect a 400-metre stretch of the sea wall that has started collapsing.

Two thousand tonnes of rocks will be delivered to the resort over the next few days and will be used to shore up the sea wall, and prevent the further erosion of the beach that has dropped so drastically and undermined the sea wall.

"We took urgent measures over the weekend to put some of the broken concrete groyne up against a 50 metre stretch of the most battered part of the sea wall but we now have to put in place something stronger that will hopefully see us through the summer," said Cllr Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"Despite our best efforts since Saturday the original cracks on the prom have increased because the sea wall is continuing to move, and there are now clear signs that the prom and sea wall south of the cafe are also suffering and that drastic action must be taken.

"We have already announced that the Shore Break café must close for safety reasons, and we will now be lengthening the cordoned off area of the promenade. I would ask people to please keep out of the cordoned off areas for their own personal safety and apologise for any inconvenience but I am sure people can understand why we have to take these measures," added Cllr Smith.

Large quantities of rock will start being delivered tomorrow and stored by the nearby Martello Tower. This rock will then be transferred to the beach by dumper trucks which will have to use a fenced off stretch of the prom. Pedestrians will still be able to stroll down the whole length of the prom, although the width of it will be restricted.

As well as closing the Shore Break for public safety reasons, the Council has also ordered its removal by next Friday (June 2) as it needs to place rock against the sea wall beneath the café, and also have more access to the beach north of it.

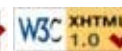
"There will be noise and disruption, and there can be no pretending that the final results will be particularly attractive. However, because there is no Government funding for any new coastal defence work this year, we have no option but to try and protect the sea wall, and with it the 1,600 homes and countless businesses that are under threat of flooding if it fails.

"This work will be expensive but we should be able to claim the cost back from the Government under our 'emergency powers'. However, these works will almost certainly not get us through the autumn and winter which is why we are desperately lobbying the Government for funding for a revised version of our permanent plan.

"It would have been so much better if we could have been doing the permanent scheme, with the proper DEFRA grant of £5m. To put the £5m figure in context, this Council raises just over £6m a year from its Council Taxpayers, while the total public spending bill of the Government for this year is £552,000,000,000. We are asking for just 0.0009 per cent of that to be spent on

making Felixstowe safe," added Cllr Smith.

The Council has written to all beach hut owners that are likely to be affected by the emergency work. They should still be able to gain access to their huts but the width of the promenade will be restricted, while some parts may be completely closed to the public.



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## Sea wall problems force closure of Shore Break cafe



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

24 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Felixstowe's Shore Break café has been told to close its doors because of doubts about its safety for the public following the recent damage to the promenade and also the need to carry out emergency works to protect the sea wall underneath the cafe.

The Shore Break rests on girders which are supported at the rear by the promenade and at the front on stilts down to the beach. It is now the expert view that the structure is no longer safe, despite the recent addition of scaffolding underneath the café.

"The Council has worked closely with the Shore Break over the last few weeks to try to keep this important facility open but we must now admit that we have been defeated by the weather and the failure of the Government to fund our sea defence plans," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"Council officers have informed the owner of the café and its tenant manager that in the interests of public safety the café must close now and that the structure needs to be removed by Friday, June 2 to enable the works to proceed.

"Our temporary works to shore up the beach wall mean that we will need to put in rocks along probably a 400 metre stretch of the sea wall, including that under the Shore Break. We must therefore get it out of the way so we can safeguard the promenade, the sea wall and the 1,600 homes and countless businesses in south Felixstowe," added Cllr Smith.

Experts took a fresh look at the Shore Break after the damage caused to the sea wall on Saturday by the weather. The engineer working for the café's owner agreed with the Council's view that public access to the café should be prohibited.

"The engineers tell us that as the café is supported on the wall it is possible that a collapse of the café could damage the wall or vice versa.

"There can sadly be no doubt that the café must now close. We have held off taking this action until we have been left with no choice as we did not want to see the closure of a local business and the loss of a facility well liked and used by residents and tourists alike. However we must now act to protect public safety," added Cllr Smith.

The café site is licenced by the Council to Andy Mexome, who owns the structure, and who has rented the café to Steve Bloomfield.



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## Curtains Openwide on new managers of Spa Pavilion

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25 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Monday, June 5 will see a new management company take centre stage at Suffolk Coastal's Spa Pavilion Theatre with Openwide International taking over the running of the Council-owned facility from Live Nation.

Openwide was granted a ten-year contract by Suffolk Coastal to take over from the current management team of Live Nation after an exhaustive and lengthy process to agree who should run the Felixstowe venue.

"I am delighted to welcome Openwide into the spotlight to take on the exciting challenge of developing the Spa. The company came through a tough selection contest thanks to its track record of proven experience and financial clout, and a programme that will develop the Spa as both a performance venue and a place to meet and eat," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member responsible for theatre and the arts.

"The Spa is an asset that helps makes this district, and in particular Felixstowe, as a visitor destination and with Openwide on board I expect it to go from strength to strength, building on the success of the last 10 years, and putting our theatre even more firmly centre-stage as a regional arts venue.

"Tribute should be paid to Live Nation who did a splendid job during its stewardship of the Spa, and has continued to manage the facility in the professional way we have come to expect even after it decided to withdraw from the contest to run it for the next 10 years," added Cllr Leighton.

Openwide has run the Pavilion Pier in Cromer since 2001 where it has developed a series of successful summer shows, plus boosted the catering opportunities as an added attraction to the theatre. The agreement with Suffolk Coastal has protected the terms and conditions of current Live Nation employees at the Spa.

"Openwide International believes that the community is at the heart of the theatre and we want to work with the community and increase their involvement in the Spa. We are already developing plans to offer drama/plays, youth drama, children's shows, classical/orchestral music, dance, comedy and light entertainment, plus summer seasons aimed at attracting residents and tourists," said Rory Holburn, Commercial and Operations Director for Openwide.

"I would emphasise that we are committed to showcasing amateur performances, and it will be a pleasure to host the annual Felixstowe Drama Festival. We were delighted to win the backing of Suffolk Coastal to take on the management of the Spa and look forward to a close working relationship with the Council over the coming years.

"We are also delighted to announce the appointment of Krystyna Smithers as General Manager of the Spa Pavilion, who joins Openwide from her role as General Manager of the Reading Rooms in Ipswich. Krystyna has lived in Felixstowe for the past 12 years and has well established links within the local and surrounding community. We believe very strongly that Krystyna's local knowledge and standing within the community will help us at Openwide to

establish a very strong partnership with both existing and new patrons and supporters of the theatre,” added Rory Holburn.

The Council recognises that the Spa is a vital part of the arts provision in the district and it was therefore essential that someone with a proven theatrical and financial track record be appointed to take over its management.

“A ten-year partnership gives the new managers the necessary stability to plan and develop their programmes, backed with an annual subsidy of around £200,000. We think that is a worthwhile investment as the Spa plays such an important role in our district and our profit-sharing arrangement means our annual payment to the company will be off-set if it does really well in future years,” added Cllr Leighton.

In December, the current managers said: “Live Nation, who have enjoyed a positive and successful working relationship with Suffolk Coastal District Council during the ten years they have managed the Spa Pavilion on behalf of the Council, have not submitted a proposal to renew that contract. They wish the venue and its community well for the future.”

The Spa Pavilion will be closed on the 4 and 5 June while the transfer occurs.

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## Felixstowe drama festival takes centre stage at the Spa



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25 May 2006

### Archived press release.

This Saturday (May 27) the curtains will open wide on Felixstowe's 56th Drama Festival when once again the spotlight at the Spa Pavilion will shine on some of the best of the country's amateur theatre groups.

This year seven different productions take to the boards, all competing for the prestigious John Cobbold trophy that is awarded by the judges to the winner of the Festival. A variety of other trophies are awarded for such categories as best actress, best costumes and best set.

"This is a splendid event and I am really pleased it is going ahead this year. I expect the performances will be of the usual high standard," said Councillor Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"The festival has been very popular for many years, and this one should be no exception. Each play has been carefully short-listed and should be a big hit with the public.

"This is a great opportunity for a good night out and the chosen groups have a unique chance to show the audience and the judges what makes their drama so special. I would like to thank all the people involved who organised the event," added Councillor Rae Leighton.

Every year since 1951, the festival has given amateur drama groups across the country the opportunity to submit their plays for consideration. From those submitted a committee chooses a short-list who are then invited to perform. Although comedy is always popular the aim is to have plays that give a broad balance of high quality entertainment spread throughout the festival.

Starting on Saturday May 27, the program of plays will be as follows:

Saturday, May 27

Thurrock Courts Players

'Cash on Delivery' - comedy

Sunday, May 28

Sawston Players

'Ladies in Retirement' - mystery

Monday, May 29

Deben Players

'It Runs in the Family' - comedy

Tuesday, May 30

Parkside Players

'Jane Eyre' - classic

Wednesday, May 31

Rest day

Thursday, June 1

Cardiff Players

'A Fistful of Mondays' - light comedy

Friday, June 2

In Yer Space

'Hannah and Hanna' - drama

Saturday, June 3

Stowmarket Society

'When We are Married' - Yorkshire comedy

All seats in the theatre are the same price - adult (weekly) - £45.00, student (weekly) - £30.00, adult (nightly) - £7.50, student (nightly) - £6.50

For more information call the theatre Box Office on 01394 282126, open Monday - Saturday 10am - 5pm.

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## Courts give Council the go-ahead to evict travellers



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26 May 2006

### Archived press release.

The County Court in Ipswich today (Friday) gave Suffolk Coastal the official go-ahead to repossess the land that had been occupied by two groups of travellers.

At the start of this month a large party of travellers with around 40 vehicles moved onto a particularly sensitive part of Sutton Heath, while four family groups had set up camp at Upper Hollesley Common a few days earlier.

"I am delighted that the Courts have recognised the strength of our case and given us the backing by granting the Council with Possession Orders for both sites. Sutton Heath and Upper Hollesley Common are two of our district's most important areas for wildlife and as it is now the nesting season this was a particularly sensitive time," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"Sutton Heath and Hollesley Common are also key parts of the coast and heaths area that is officially an area of outstanding natural beauty. The travellers' presence in these areas has been putting at risk our natural environment.

"I had publicly asked both these groups to show their commitment to the environment by moving. However, this reasonable request has been ignored, and thanks to the speedy support of our colleagues at the County Council, we have been able to successfully gain the legal backing that means we can evict them," added Cllr Leighton.

Suffolk County Council responded rapidly to Suffolk Coastal's request for the necessary welfare audits for both camps to be carried out in order that any educational, health and social needs were considered and presented at today's court hearing.

The groups were given until Friday, June 9 to move off, on acceptance of the travellers' undertaking that they leave the sites voluntarily and ensure that the land is left in a neat and tidy condition.

As part of its ongoing campaign to keep trespassers off its land, particularly in environmentally important or sensitive sites, Suffolk Coastal has implemented a range of measures, but it is very difficult to prevent vehicles being driven onto open heathland and it is becoming an increasingly frustrating battle.

"I can, however, assure our residents that we will continue to be vigilant and proactive in protecting these special places. I hope this case will demonstrate how seriously we take the protection of our communities and the natural environment of Suffolk Coastal," added Cllr Leighton.

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## Dangers associated with car park barriers highlighted



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26 May 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal is asking local businesses, clubs and those responsible for the control of horizontal swing car park barriers in use at their premises, to be aware of the possible dangers associated with them.

Recently there have been accidents nationally, some of them fatal, as a result of incidents involving these barriers, which usually comprise of a horizontal bar or beam hinged at a vertical pillar and are manually moved to open or close off access to a car park exit/entrance.

“We are highlighting this potential hazard as accidents have happened when this type of barrier has partially swung open because it had not been secured adequately, possibly due to the wind, gravity or as a result of vandalism,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being.

“When the barrier swings open the end is not so visible and there have been cases of oncoming cars becoming impaled or the barrier swinging into the path of an oncoming vehicle,” continued Councillor Green.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced the following information to remind users of their duties in relation to the safe use of such barriers.

Duty holders include persons in charge of the entrances to industrial estates, retail premises, leisure premises, sporting complexes, parks, farms etc. In short any premise with a car park entrance or exit to which members of the public and workers have vehicular access, may utilise such barriers.

Vertically opening or lifting barriers can also present safety risks if they are not correctly controlled.

Duty holders are reminded of their responsibilities in relation to barriers. They include:

- Carrying out a suitable risk assessment so that potential dangers are identified and precautions are put in place to ensure they are removed or controlled.
- Reviewing existing risk assessments where horizontal swing barriers are in use to determine whether elimination of the risk is possible. Horizontal swing barriers rely on human intervention to ensure they are locked open or locked shut, they are also susceptible to vandalism which can leave them in an unsafe position. Vertical lifting gates are a lower risk alternative, as is the provision of lower height swing barriers so that any collision will result in damage to the vehicle without causing any part of the barrier to enter the vehicle with possible fatal consequences.
- Where horizontal barriers are used, making sure the barriers are adequately secured at all times whether open or shut (a padlock will suffice).

- Making sure the barriers are made visible by painting or marking with alternate red and white bands of adequate width to be clearly visible, so that persons do not inadvertently drive into them (additional local lighting may be required).
- Carrying out regular inspections to ensure that the methods of securing and visibility aspects have not deteriorated.
- Ensuring barriers are maintained in accordance with manufacturers instructions.
- Liaising with suppliers if a risk assessment reveals that securing and visibility requirements are inadequate.

For further information and advice on managing the risks associated with car park barriers contact Suffolk Coastal's Food & Safety team on 01394 444357.

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## Are you working from a height?



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31 May 2006

### Archived press release.

This week has seen the launch of the national Height Aware Campaign which aims to help people identify and prevent the risks of falling if they are working at a height.

A third of all reported fall-from-height incidents involve ladders and stepladders and account, on average, for 14 deaths and 1,200 major injuries to workers each year. Many of these injuries are caused by inappropriate or incorrect use of the equipment and inadequate planning of non-routine activities.

“Falls are the biggest cause of death in Britain’s workplaces with 53 fatalities in 2004/05. The campaign will emphasise that you don’t have to fall far to be hurt, with a fall from below head height causing seven of the deaths in 2004/05 and 2,247 major injuries,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member Community Well-being.

“We want to ensure that employers know the risks, and what can be done to minimise falls from height, and members of our Food and Safety Team will be visiting trade stands at the Suffolk Show to advise employers of the need to take precautions,” continued Councillor Green.

Work at height means working in a place where a person could fall from one level to another and injure themselves. This could include working above ground level, near an edge or near an opening in a floor or hole in the ground.

Employees who use work platforms such as scaffolds, tower scaffolds, cherry pickers, scissor lifts and podium steps or work on a roof or piece of plant or equipment or use ladders or stepladders are at risk if precautions are not taken.

For more information on the Height Aware Campaign which is being run by the Health & Safety Executive, or advice on preventing falls from height contact Suffolk Coastal’s Food & Safety Team on 01394 444357.

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## Sea wall sightseers asked to follow safety rules



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31 May 2006

### Archived press release.

A plea has been made to visitors to Felixstowe's troubled south seafront asking them to respect the safety fencing that has been erected around the resort's crumbling sea wall, as well as the contractors' compound and access route.

Over the weekend there were many people who went to see where the promenade had been affected by the partial collapse of the sea wall, but some of them clambered over or through the safety fencing.

"I can understand that this has become a bit of a tourist attraction because of the great interest in exactly what is happening, but I would ask everyone to please use their common sense and stay behind the safety barriers," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"The barriers are there to both keep people a safe distance away from the crumbling part of the promenade and also to give our contractors enough room to carry out their vital emergency works safely, and as quickly as possible.

"On Sunday crowds of people broke through the fencing for a better view and our contractors had to waste valuable time getting them back out and making the area safe again, as well as contacting the local police," added Cllr Smith.

Time was also lost rescuing cones that had been removed from the prom and thrown out onto the beach, while the crowds had also trampled down the garden next to the prom.

"Over the next fortnight or so, around 2,750 tonnes of rocks are going to be delivered to an area by the Martello Tower and then used to provide some temporary support for a 400 metre stretch of the sea wall.

"This work means that the dumper trucks need to travel up and down the prom, without the fear that people might come over a fence into a cordoned off area.

"Please respect the safety fencing and keep to those areas that are there for the public so that we can get on with the works as quickly as possible. The work can only be done for about three hours either side of low tide, in daylight, so time is critical during those periods. We are working as fast as possible during those limited hours to get these emergency defences in place that should get us through the summer without further damage to the sea wall and prom," added Cllr Smith.

The Council is continuing to hold talks with the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to see if it can get the necessary Government funding for the planned £5 million scheme that would offer south Felixstowe permanent protection against the risk of 1,600 homes and businesses being flooded.





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## Council extends deadline on Shore Break cafe



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01 Jun 2006

The owner of Felixstowe's Shore Break café has been given another four days in which to remove the structure before emergency work is carried out underneath it to stop the break up of the sea wall and promenade.

Legal representatives of Andy Mexome, the owner of the café, and the Council have been in regular communications over the last few days following the announcement last Tuesday (May 23) that the Shore Break would have to immediately close, and also be moved by Friday, June 2.

"With the co-operation of our contractors I am pleased to say that we can now give Mr Mexome a further four days until Tuesday, June 6 to take out the fixtures and fittings and arrange for the removal of the café from its current site," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"We have negotiated this extra time for Mr Mexome because we recognise the incredibly short notice that we have been forced to give him has inevitably left him with very limited time to sort things out properly.

"The fact remains that the state of the sea wall means we must get access to the beach beneath the café and beyond it as soon as possible. However, while our contractors have been working every minute they can on the emergency works, they have now been able to reassess their situation. They will not now need the café removed until the middle of next week and I hope this is a long enough delay for Mr Mexome as this deadline cannot be extended," added Cllr Smith.

Work should now have been underway on a £10 million partnership scheme between the Environment Agency and the Council to put in place permanent defences for south Felixstowe but this was postponed when the Government announced last December that there would be no funding for any new projects in 2006/07. Suffolk Coastal was relying on £5 million from the Government to proceed this year.

The bad weather of two weekends ago saw part of the sea wall collapse, as the Council had warned might happen if the permanent scheme did not occur. Contractors working for the Council are now putting around 2,750 tonnes of rocks along a 400-metre stretch of the sea wall to prevent any further damage to it and the promenade above it that has been cracking.

"We did spend weeks working with Mr Mexome and his representatives trying to keep this important tourist facility open but the bad weather has defeated us and we were left with no choice but to demand its immediate closure for safety reasons, and its removal so we could carry out vital emergency works.

"I want us to be as reasonable as we can in these extremely trying times and I am pleased that we can offer a few days respite for Mr Mexome. However, I must stress that for the sake of the 1,600 homes and the countless businesses whose safety is threatened by the state of the sea wall, our contractors must be able to get on site by the middle of next week," added Cllr Smith.

Suffolk Coastal is arranging a meeting with Mr Mexome, plus Steve and Sue Bloomfield who ran the café, to see if there is any way that the Council can find a suitable alternative location where they can continue to provide their valued service.



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## Public drinking ban for Felixstowe



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

02 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

From next week, the police will have extra powers to tackle anti-social drinking in parts of Felixstowe that will be clearly indicated by specially erected signs.

Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet and Felixstowe North's Suffolk County Councillor John Goodwin have backed a Felixstowe Town Council-led initiative to bring in designation orders to tackle the problem of alcohol-related incidents in its town and the ban will take effect on Monday (June 5) when signs go up in the designated areas.

"I would emphasise that this is not a ban on everyone drinking in these places, but it gives the police the authority to take action against those who are acting in an anti-social manner.

"This is something which those people living in Felixstowe have wanted, and I hope it will improve the quality of life of those who live there and also those who visit the town," said Councillor Sherrie Green, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

In the designated areas the police will have the power to require someone whose behaviour is deemed to be anti-social to stop drinking the alcohol and, if requested, hand over the drink. Failure to comply is an arrestable offence, with a potential fine of up to £500.

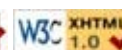
"A substantial proportion of crime and disorder is linked to alcohol abuse and, although Felixstowe is relatively safe when compared to many similar areas, this measure will give the police additional powers to tackle the minority who act in an anti-social manner after having too much to drink.

"This Council supports designation orders like these and partnership campaigns like Operation Nightsafe which are aimed at encouraging sensible drinking and better behaviour," added Councillor Green.

The proposed designated areas in Felixstowe are:

- a) The Gardens, Promenade, Seafront and foreshore from Orford Road to Cobbolds Point and bordered by and including Sea Road, Undercliff Road West, Hamilton Gardens, Bath Hill and Undercliff Road East, the Convalescent Hill, Pier Bight, Spa Pavilion Car Parks and Wolsey Steps.
- b) Hamilton Road from Bent Hill up to St Andrews Road including the area around the Triangle.
- c) Undercliff Road West from Sea Road to Ordnance Roundabout including Snow Hill Steps and Pram Hill Walk.
- d) Cavendish Park North and South including the proposed Orwell Green Skatepark.
- e) Orwell High School All Weather Sports Area (to be constructed) and surrounding playing fields and parking areas.

- f) Felixstowe Cemetery, including the proposed Cemetery extension on the adjacent allotment land and Cemetery Path.
- g) The car parks at Crescent Road, The Grove, Ranelagh Road, Garrison Lane, Golf Road, Brackenbury Fort, Highfield Road, Manor Terrace, and Arwela Road.
- h) The following open spaces; Adastral Close, Langer Park, Allenby Park, Coronation Playing Field, Dellwood Avenue Recreation Ground, Brackenbury Cliff known as "the Dip", Gosford Way and The Grove.
- i) High Road West and High Street, Walton between Garrison Lane and the bridge over Port of Felixstowe Road.
- j) Brackenbury Sports Centre.



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## Thumbs-up to Suffolk Coastal's leisure centres partner



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02 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal has given DC Leisure, the company that has been in charge of the day to day management of the Council's leisure centres for the last two years, a big thumbs-up for the way they have run and improved the facilities since taking over.

Suffolk Coastal continues to have an involvement in the development and improvement of the service through a Partnership Board and any development of the programmes offered by the sports centres, or changes to pricing are subject to the agreement of the Council.

"When the Council was looking for a partner to run its leisure centres at Woodbridge, Felixstowe and Leiston, seven companies went through a rigorous evaluation process with DC Leisure coming through as a company that we felt would meet our tough criteria," said Councillor Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member with responsibility for sport and leisure.

"We had been investing heavily in improving our leisure centres and DC Leisure, one of the country's leading leisure companies who runs Leisure Facilities on behalf of 30 councils, has continued this investment by spending £182,000 mainly on upgrading fitness equipment," continued Councillor Leighton.

Since their appointment DC Leisure has also gained the prestigious Sport England recognised Quest registration for the four Leisure Centres, and last year introduced 'Coastal Card' which enables frequent users of the centres to receive a discount. This has been a very successful initiative with 8,488 cards sold in its first year. DC Leisure will now look to further develop the services at all four leisure sites over the remaining eight years of the partnership agreement.

"Joining forces with DC Leisure has proved to be another excellent example of partnership working that has given our residents access to improved facilities and has provided much needed savings for this Council," added Councillor Leighton.

The partnership with DC Leisure, which saw it set up the Suffolk Coastal Community Leisure Association Ltd as its local arm, resulted in immediate savings to the Council of nearly £250,000 per year.



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## Early drama as Sir Peter Batho becomes new Chairman



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

06 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The district has a new first citizen who has already begun his civic and ceremonial duties by officially opening the Felixstowe Drama Festival after being elected as Chairman of Suffolk Coastal District Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council on May 25, 2006.

Councillor Sir Peter Batho will be Chairman for the next 12 months, and was elected to the Council three years ago representing the Saxmundham ward. He has been a Chairman of one of Suffolk Coastal's Overview & Scrutiny Committees and has been a member of Saxmundham Town Council since 1987.

Born in Hertfordshire, Councillor Batho came to live in Suffolk in the early 1950s. He has been farming in Saxmundham since 1962 and has, in the past been Chairman of the Saxmundham branch of the National Farmers' Union and a Director of Framlingham Farmers Ltd (a farmers' co-operative).

Councillor Batho is married to Lucille and has three sons and three grandchildren, with a further grandchild expected later this year. He succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father in 1990. The baronetcy was created in 1928 for his grandfather who was Lord Mayor of London 1927-1928.

Involvement in his local community has seen Councillor Batho a County Councillor for the Clayhills division between 1989–1993 and a past Governor of Saxmundham Primary School, Saxmundham Middle School and Leiston High School. He is also president of the Saxmundham Sports & Recreational Club and a past chairman of Suffolk Coastal Conservative Association.

"It is a great honour to have been elected as Chairman of the Council for the coming year. I look forward to fostering good relationships between the Council and other organisations who work for the wellbeing of all who live within the Council's area," said Councillor Batho.

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.

Councillor Clifford Cocker of Woodbridge Riverside was elected Vice-Chairman and the outgoing Chairman, who served for one year, was Councillor Malcolm Minns.

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## Further deadline extension for Shore Break



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06 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The on-going legal discussions between Suffolk Coastal and the owners of the troubled Shore Break café has seen the Council extend its deadline on when the structure must be removed.

Andrew Mexome, the owner of Felixstowe's Shore Break café, has been given another 48 hours in which to remove the structure before emergency work is carried out underneath it to stop the break up of the sea wall and promenade.

"Mr Mexome and the Council have been in regular contact and met yesterday to try to finalise a mutually acceptable agreement. We are giving these talks a further 48 hours so that all the issues can be resolved," said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"As these are detailed legal discussions, neither party can really publicly discuss the situation but I can confirm that we are continuing to negotiate about possible compensation and an alternative site.

"Ideally our contractors carrying out the emergency works to protect the sea wall would want to get on site as soon as possible, but they can cope with the site not being clear until Friday. We will be doing all we can to ensure that the legal discussions have been concluded by then so that this important work can proceed," added Cllr Smith.

Mr Mexome was given a four-day extension last Thursday because the Council recognised the short notice that circumstances had forced it to give him to clear out and remove his property.

The café was closed last month for public safety reasons, and the Council asked for its removal because it needs access to the beach beneath the café and beyond it as soon as possible to carry out emergency work to shore up the sea wall.

Work should now have been underway on a £10 million partnership scheme between the Environment Agency and the Council to put in place permanent defences for south Felixstowe but this was postponed when the Government announced last December that there would be no funding for any new projects in 2006/07. Suffolk Coastal was relying on £5 million from the Government to proceed this year.

The bad weather of three weekends ago saw part of the sea wall collapse, as the Council had warned might happen if the permanent scheme did not occur. Contractors working for the Council are now putting around 2,750 tonnes of rocks along a 400-metre stretch of the sea wall to prevent any further damage to it and the promenade above it that has been cracking.





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## Council committed to even better customer services



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07 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Putting the customer first will remain at the heart of Suffolk Coastal's services following an in-depth review of the way it provides its services and how these can be made even more accessible to its residents.

The focus in the future will be to ensure an even better service is provided to those calling the Council, with the introduction of a customer contact centre that will be able to deal fully with more of the calls, plus the chance to serve yourself via the Council's website.

"Our surveys have shown that there is already a high level of satisfaction among our customers in the way that we deal with their calls but they have also shown that there are further improvements we can make," said Cllr Doreen Savage, Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners.

"Councillors have committed themselves to keeping the human touch we think is so important to a satisfied customer. There will be no push button options with our new system, even if on paper that is more efficient, because we would rather keep that all-important human contact.

"Instead, we aim to have a committed team who are armed with as much information as possible so they can deal with the vast majority of calls received by this Council in a speedy but effective way. This should really be a win-win situation as it will mean an even better service for customers and should deliver more efficiencies and savings for the Council," added Cllr Savage.

Suffolk Coastal has adopted a new Customer Services vision which aims to manage contact efficiently, deliver a more consistent service backed up with accurate measurement of its performance.

The Council will encourage the use of self-service channels such as the website for information and basic transactions, while still delivering as many of its services as possible over the phone or email, its two most accessible channels. It recognises that face-to-face contact with customers is still the most effective way of helping those with complex issues or particular needs.

"Our goal is to provide a customer service contact centre for all our services, with a recognised brand that will also be used by our partners who provide some of the more key functions.

"We will start the new process by September, with the ultimate aim of incorporating all of our services. However, we will first need to invest in a better telephone system and also a customer relationship management programme that will help our contact centre staff keep a detailed record of callers so that way they can provide our customers with a more informed service.

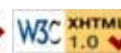
"We intend to link together all the computer based information we have at Suffolk Coastal in order to provide an improved more business-like service but still with the human touch that people expect and want from their local Council," added Cllr Savage.

Suffolk Coastal has used funding from the Government and the Improvement and Development Agency to carry out research into finding the option that would best suit both its customers and the Council's goals.

Among the findings was the fact that 75 per cent of dealings with the Council are by phone, and that customers prefer to have their call dealt with instantly, rather than being passed on to someone else. Face-to-face contact is the most effective way of dealing with a customer but is proving a less popular method, with more people wanting to do things via the internet.

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## DEFRA visit raises hopes on Felixstowe's sea wall



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07 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

A leading engineer from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has inspected Felixstowe's battered sea wall in a special visit with Suffolk Coastal.

The decision by John Horne, DEFRA's Governance and Delivery Programme Manager, to visit Felixstowe follows last month's partial collapse of the sea wall and Suffolk Coastal's frustration that there was no Government funding available for new schemes this year.

"We had a very constructive site visit and discussion with Mr Horne on Monday. I am sure he is now much better informed about the exact scale of the problems facing the town and about our plans to safeguard over 1,600 homes and countless businesses from the very real threat of flooding," said Cllr Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"We understand that DEFRA's funds are fully committed for 2006/07 but it is clear that the Government needs to allocate a larger budget to coastal defence. The Government may well be spending a 'record amount' on coast defence this year, but at £74.4 million in the context of overall Government expenditure of £552,000,000,000 it is still a small sum in relation to the scale of the problem. Worse still, none of it is for new projects which like ours had been ready after a great deal of detailed planning.

"We are ready to work with and support DEFRA to try and find the funding for our vital project. The cost of our scheme is minuscule in the context of overall Government expenditure, but huge in relation to Suffolk Coastal's finances, and critical for South Felixstowe," added Cllr Smith.

The Council has now submitted to DEFRA an updated version of its scheme that had been drawn up in partnership with the Environment Agency to provide permanent protection for South Felixstowe. This work could get underway this September, if funding can be found.

"Our original scheme was planned to start last month but the final document was not submitted to DEFRA because of the Government's announcement that there was no cash available for this financial year. We hope that Felixstowe will now be recognised as a special case, and that the £6 million needed for the project will be found," added Cllr Smith.

Suffolk Coastal has been working closely with the Environment Agency and regional DEFRA staff to draw up a permanent replacement plan for the current defences that in April 2002 were expected to survive until 2007. However, in the last 18 months and particularly since Christmas the beach in this part of Felixstowe has experienced an unexpected and severe drop in level that has exposed and undermined the sea wall. Normally the beach levels increase during the summer but this has not happened over the last two years.

Everything was in progress for work to begin in May on the partnership scheme that would have meant permanent protection for 1,600 existing homes, countless businesses and the Port of Felixstowe. All of this was stopped in its tracks after the Government's announcement in December that there would be no funding for new schemes in 2006/07.

"By using special powers, we are able to carry out the immediate emergency work to shore up

the sea wall that will see nearly 3,000 tonnes of rock being used as a temporary measure. The cost of this we can claim back from the Government.

“More work would be needed to provide even a basic level of confidence in the defences for the forthcoming winter, but what we really want is the funding go-ahead for the full scheme that will provide permanent protection for South Felixstowe, which would mean that defences are in place for the forthcoming storms of autumn and winter and avoid wasting public money on stop-gap measures. I hope that this visit and the submission of our updated scheme will help us and DEFRA find a way forward,” added Cllr Smith.



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## Giving towns and parishes an even stronger role



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07 Jun 2006

A package of measures to build better working relationships between Suffolk Coastal and the town and parish councils that make up its district has been given the go-ahead last night (Tuesday).

Suffolk Coastal's Cabinet backed proposals that have been drawn up after a survey of more than 100 town and parish councils in the district and which will build on the existing positive foundations.

"We recognise that as the tier of government nearest to local communities, our town and parishes have an important role to play in improving quality of life in our district, a goal which I am sure we all share," said Cllr Ray Herring, Council Leader.

"These local councils are well placed to give their communities a chance to become directly involved in the decisions that affect them and to help shape the future developments in their areas.

"There is an increasing opportunity for towns and parishes to take over responsibility for delivering services at a local level tailored to their specific needs. We are ready to respond positively to those who are looking at a fresh or partnership approach to delivering quality services," added Cllr Herring.

Suffolk Coastal is set to formalise its liaison meetings with town and parishes, introducing an annual meeting with the larger towns of Felixstowe, Kesgrave, Woodbridge, Leiston, Aldeburgh, Saxmundham and Framlingham to look at the issues facing the district's main urban centres. Suffolk Coastal's Chief Executive has also begun holding quarterly meetings with the clerks of town councils.

There would also be three additional annual meetings on a geographical basis of all parishes on a north, central and southwest basis with two representatives from each council being invited to a meeting with relevant Suffolk Coastal councillors.

"This Council is also directly backing initiatives that will help town and parishes draw up their own local plans that will identify their development needs and the potential for delivering them. These plans will be important documents that feed into the district's new Local Development Framework and influence the work of the Local Strategic Partnership," said Cllr Stephen Burroughes, Cabinet Member for Rural Issues.

"We have been directly supporting the work at this local level by supplying surplus IT equipment to the clerks, with 46 computers issued this way. We are now looking to give a one-off grant to those councils not yet linked to broadband to help them meet the cost of becoming better connected with us and other organisations.

"I would like to thank the town and parish councils who have helped us shape these proposals, plus our district councillors who carried out useful research identifying how others have approached these same issues. I look forward to a closer, more successful working relationship between this Council and our town and parish partners," added Cllr Burroughes.



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## The BIG recycle kicks off in time for the big game



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07 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The national 'BIG Recycle 2006' recycling campaign has been launched this week in time for the first England World Cup match against Paraguay on Saturday (June 10).

Backed by a host of stars the aim of the campaign is to encourage football fans to get into the recycling habit this summer, starting with those extra cans and bottles that will be generated during the World Cup.

"The household waste we produce increases noticeably during major sporting events, so the start of the World Cup is an ideal time to remind everyone in our district to make recycling their goal this summer," said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for waste management.

"Watching football can be thirsty work, and we would encourage our residents to recycle all those extra empty cans and bottles at their nearest recycling banks.

"All those special souvenir supplements produced by the press can be recycled at the doorstep through our green crate facility and, when lawns have been cut to perfection for that all important kick-around before the match, the grass cuttings can be put out for composting in the brown wheelie bin the Council provides for garden waste," continued Councillor Nunn.

To encourage even more recycling and cut down on the amount of waste going into landfill residents of Suffolk Coastal from next week will be able to recycle all types of food waste with their garden waste in their brown bin.

Suffolk Coastal will also be collecting not only paper, but cardboard, foil, cans, tins and some plastics from 5,000 properties in the district when it introduces its twin bin collection on June 12.

"We are continually looking at ways to encourage our residents to get into the recycling habit and although we are currently well above the national average, with 34 per cent of our rubbish being recycled, the cost of dealing with domestic waste will rise to £9 million a year if we do not increase our recycling rate.

"Residents who generate a lot of recyclable waste or those not covered by the new service which comes into operation in June, can take it to the numerous bring sites across the district, many of which help to raise funds for local community groups or to one of the three County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres at Foxhall, Leiston or Felixstowe," added Councillor Nunn.

Anyone wanting further information on recycling or where they can recycle, can contact Suffolk Coastal's recycling team on 01394 444000.

The BIG recycle kicks off in time for the big game

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## Agreement will allow emergency works to proceed



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08 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal has successfully concluded negotiations with the owner of the Shore Break café in Felixstowe that means it can now proceed with the vital emergency works to shore up the beach wall and the promenade.

Today (Thursday) was the final deadline issued by the Council to reach a conclusion without the work being delayed and at the end of the day an agreement was reached that proved satisfactory to both parties.

"I cannot go into details about the compensation package as it is confidential but I am pleased that Andrew Mexome has accepted it. It means that we are both able to avoid the potentially long-winded and expensive route of going to the Courts which might have meant serious delays for our vital works," said Cllr Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"We did offer Mr Mexome alternative sites, but he declined, perhaps because of his personal attachment to the Shore Break café which I can understand. I am personally very disappointed that it won't be possible to have a café facility in this part of Felixstowe for the time being.

"It does mean that we can now press ahead with completing the task of putting nearly 3,000 tonnes of rock along a 400 metre stretch of the sea wall. At this stage we believe we can start some of the removal works on the Shore Break tomorrow (Friday). Like many people, I will be sad to see this landmark go, but we have no choice in order to protect over 1,600 local homes," added Cllr Smith.

Suffolk Coastal had to close the Shore Break café on May 24 because of the danger to public safety caused by damage to the sea wall and the promenade. Mr Mexome was initially given until June 2 to remove the structure, a deadline that has been extended twice until today in order to give him more time to remove his assets and come to an agreement regarding possible compensation with the Council.

"These are serious times for Felixstowe because of the Government's failure to provide any funding for new coast defence schemes this year. The problems with the sea wall are not our fault and we have been open and honest in our dealings with Mr Mexome.

"We recognises the difficulties he has been facing which is why we have given him more time. It is a great relief that we have been able to reach an agreement that means we can get on with protecting the public and can fully focus our efforts on getting the necessary Government funding to put in place our scheme to provide permanent protection for South Felixstowe," added Cllr Smith.



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## Council begins to review its assets



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08 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The on-going modernisation programme at Suffolk Coastal that has seen it adopt a more business-like approach to ensure it is delivering effective and efficient services is now being extended to the management of its assets.

The Council is following the best practice approach of other councils, most notably Hertfordshire County Council, to the way it manages its various assets across the district.

“Suffolk Coastal has over the years acquired a wide range of strategic and local assets in a rather ad-hoc way. It is high time that we thoroughly reviewed our portfolio of properties to see what we need to keep, what is more appropriate for other organisations to hold, and what we should consider for disposal in order to generate some additional income,” said Cllr Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member for Fiscal and Democratic Services.

“What we need to do is review everything to see whether it is really something we can afford to keep and invest in at a time when there are severe pressures on our finances from central Government.

“If our assets are not contributing to our current objectives and in turn are not providing good benefit to the community, and are just a drain on our resources because of their ongoing maintenance costs, then we should dispose of them, either to other local organisations that can use them positively or to attract income that can be invested in our services,” added Cllr Whiting.

The local government watchdog, the Audit Commission, has placed an increasing importance on monitoring the way that councils carry out their asset management responsibilities.

“One of the driving forces behind our new policy is the recognition that this Council is not always best placed to respond to meet the aspirations of local residents and that town or parish councils, and other partner organisations have an increasingly vital role.

“We will be looking closely at where it would be appropriate to transfer our assets to the local town or parish council, and other partner organisations so that they are in a better position to provide the services that people want.

“Although it is no secret that this Council is battling through financially challenging times, I would stress that this is not about selling off the family silver. We have a thorough consultation process that is used before any asset disposal, and our central goal is to ensure that services are provided more effectively as much as it is about ensuring efficient use of our resources,” added Cllr Whiting.





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## Council ready to support whistleblowing



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08 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal has reinforced its commitment to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability by adopting a new whistleblowers policy that will guarantee support to anyone raising genuine concerns.

The new policy aims to ensure that anyone working for the Council feels that they can raise concerns about an alleged injustice, malpractice or serious wrongdoing within the organisation in complete confidence.

“We want to make it clear that if anyone has a serious concern that they need to raise, that they want to blow the whistle on the organisation, that they can do so without any fear of any victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage to their career,” said Cllr Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member for Fiscal and Democratic Services.

“I am confident that there is no climate of fear that would currently prevent anyone coming forward but we feel that it is appropriate to enshrine that blatantly in our policies so there can be no doubt among our employees.

“We want to make sure that everyone feels confident enough to voice any fears or concerns they have and that these will be taken seriously and investigated fully and speedily,” added Cllr Whiting.

The new policy will make it easier for an employee to raise a concern internally so that it can be resolved to their satisfaction, with the opportunity for the individual to take it further or to go public if necessary if they are not satisfied. It ensures that the Council is fully compliant with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which offers full protection to workers who raise issues responsibly, with legal penalties on any employer who subsequently harasses or victimises a whistleblower.

“We want to make our services as efficient and effective as possible and if there is anything blocking that progress we owe it to our residents to ensure that we can put things right.

“Our employees have a key role in making sure that we are doing things right and if this policy helps them feel more willing to come forward and highlight any problems then it will be an important step forward in our goal to create as business-like an organisation as possible,” added Cllr Whiting.



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## All Suffolk Coastal residents can turn their food green



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09 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

From Monday, June 12 an exciting new service is being offered to Suffolk Coastal residents that will turn the food that they normally throw away into a compost that will help refresh our soil.

Every home with a brown wheelie bin for garden waste can now use it for much, much more thanks to the recent opening of a special composting facility at Parham by Biogonix.

“Our brown bin has proved very popular with residents, with record amounts of grass cuttings and other garden waste in recent weeks. However, it can now be used for so much more,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

“All manner of kitchen waste can now be put into the brown bin, along with cardboard boxes, cereal packets, and paper towels. It is also the right place to get rid of shredded paper.

“I am sure this will be a big hit with residents across the district and will help us increase our current recycling rates. It is more important than ever to recycle as it will literally cost us the earth if we don't with not only the environmental impacts but also the soaring financial cost of disposing of rubbish into landfill sites,” added Cllr Nunn.

From Monday, as well as being home to grass cuttings, weeds, dead flowers, leaves and light shrub cuttings, the brown bins can also take fruit and vegetables, meat and fish, eggs and dairy products, bread, rice and pasta, tea bags and coffee grounds. The brown bin will gobble up all of these whether they are cooked or raw, with the suggestion that any food is wrapped in newspaper first. It is also okay to put in cardboard boxes, paper or cardboard-based food packaging, paper towels, and shredded paper.

“This new service will be unique to the residents of our district, and is one of the first of its kind in the whole country. This improved service, and the fact that this summer 10,000 homes will get a new fortnightly collection of cardboard, tins, plastics and foil, shows how committed this Council is to making it easier than ever for residents to recycle.

“Although we are currently well above the national average, with 34 per cent of our rubbish being recycled, the cost of dealing with domestic waste will rise to £9 million a year if we do not increase our recycling rate. We all need to make a bigger effort to get into the recycling habit and use the fortnightly collection services that we offer, or one of the hundreds of mini-recycling centres across the district,” added Cllr Nunn.

Residents from other local authority areas should not include food materials in their brown bins unless they are advised to do so by their local authority. Not all composting facilities within the county are able to handle the range of materials that the new Parham facility can compost, and authorities will not be able to collect bins containing the wrong materials.



## 2006 news archive

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## Council keeping close tabs on travellers



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

09 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The vast majority of two groups of travellers who had been given until today (Friday) to vacate land at Sutton Heath and Upper Hollesley Common have now moved on.

The County Court in Ipswich had given Suffolk Coastal the official go-ahead to repossess the land at a particularly sensitive part of Sutton Heath where there was travellers with around 40 vehicles, and also at Upper Hollesley Common where four family groups had set up camp.

"I now understand that all but three or so vehicles have left which is excellent news as Sutton Heath and Upper Hollesley Common are two of our district's most important areas for wildlife and it is a particularly sensitive time for the local wildlife," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"These incidents again show our commitment to protecting our district, and we have also now taken action to get one traveller's vehicle removed from what appears to be a completely unconnected illegal use of our car park at the Grove in Felixstowe," added Cllr Leighton.

The groups at Sutton Heath and Upper Hollesley Common were given until Friday, June 9 to move off, on acceptance of the travellers' undertaking that they would leave the sites voluntarily and ensure that the land is left in a neat and tidy condition. An initial inspection suggests that they have met their undertaking made in the court.

The Council has also notified local landowners of the results of the court case and the impending exodus of the travellers. As part of its ongoing campaign to keep trespassers off its land, particularly in environmentally important or sensitive sites, Suffolk Coastal has implemented a range of measures, but it is very difficult to prevent vehicles being driven onto open heathland and it is becoming an increasingly frustrating battle.

"I can, however, assure our residents that we will continue to be vigilant and proactive in protecting our district. I hope these cases demonstrate how seriously we take the protection of our communities and the natural environment of Suffolk Coastal," added Cllr Leighton.

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## Twin bins begin rolling out across the district



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

09 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Five thousand homes across the district will next week be the first to get an even better recycling service from Suffolk Coastal as part of the Council's commitment to make it easier to get into the recycling habit.

From Monday, June 12 the first collections will be made from homes who have been given special blue-lidded bins which for the first time means people can have cans, cardboard and plastics recycled from their own kerbside.

"This is a big step forward for us. Thanks to our residents, we saw around 34 per cent of all household waste being recycled but we know we must do better as the environmental and financial impact of still throwing away two-thirds of local rubbish into landfill is enormous," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

"All homes in the district can already have their garden waste or newspapers collected every fortnight, and next week we will start the gradual rolling out of our even better service, with the first 5,000 having their initial collections over the next fortnight, and a further 5,000 joining in September.

"This is a major investment by the Council at a time when our resources are very limited, which is why it will take us a further four years to achieve our goal of offering this deluxe service to every home. I know there will be many out there wishing they were part of the first group, but sadly they will have to wait their turn," added Cllr Nunn.

The homes receiving the new service have already been delivered two new wheelie bins – one with a blue lid for recycling paper, foil, cans, cardboard and plastics, and one with a grey lid for domestic waste that cannot be recycled.

Each home has been given a calendar confirming what day and which week to put out the different bins. Basically the recycling bins will be emptied one week, and the domestic rubbish one the other.

"We know from the experience of other councils that introducing a fortnightly collection can cause a few grumbles to start off with, but we know from consultation that this new service is what our residents want.

"From next week everyone across the district can also start recycling their kitchen waste as well – all their food, whether cooked or uncooked, can now go in our brown garden waste bins to be turned into compost at a special new facility at Parham.

"I am sure that these latest initiatives to boost recycling will be supported by our residents. It will literally cost us the earth if we do not recycle more as the cost of throwing away our rubbish is set to rise to a staggering £9 million a year by 2019. This Council is committed to protecting the environment and recycling is one of the best ways we can work in partnership with our residents," added Cllr Nunn.

Full information on the new service was delivered to every home with the new twin bins but any

of those residents who still need more helpful advice can call a special hotline on 01394 444050. There is also more information on the Council's website [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

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## Expert advice on offer for landlords



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13 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

More people are thinking of becoming landlords as an investment opportunity and Suffolk Coastal is keen to keep them as informed as possible about the legal obligations that face them and their tenants.

Next month offers a free chance for some expert advice and information at Suffolk Coastal's seminar for landlords and agents which is being held on Tuesday, July 11 in the Council Chamber at the Council's Melton Hill offices.

"These seminars have proved extremely popular over recent years with landlords finding out all the latest news. Landlords have an increasingly important role to play in providing quality rented accommodation for the people of the district and this Council is ready to help them," said Cllr Chris Slemmings, Cabinet Member for Housing.

"The evening offers landlords a chance to learn something new and also to meet and quiz our officers and some local experts in an informal environment.

"We would like to see more rented accommodation being made available to local people and landlords may not be aware of the assistance we can offer, particularly if they are willing to rent to those in receipt of housing benefit. This is probably an ideal chance for anyone thinking about letting their property privately to come along and find out more," added Cllr Slemmings.

The event should be useful to both individual and corporate landlords as well as owners of single properties and properties in multiple occupation. A representative from Ipswich Building Society will talk about the housing market and mortgages for buying property to let. PFK (Accountants & Business Advisers) will discuss tax and the capital value and income from property and a Letting Agent will speak about managing property.

A senior officer from Suffolk Coastal will give the results of the latest survey on housing in the district.

The seminar is being held in Suffolk Coastal's Council Chamber at its Melton Hill Offices, and runs from 4.30pm when tea and coffee will be available through to 6.15pm. Places are limited so advance bookings can be made by calling 01394 444838, by emailing [benefits@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or faxing 01394 444554.



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## Information events will show the way to a healthier life



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

14 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The call has gone out to local groups to join a series of information events that will be touring the district this summer offering information and advice on where and how people can improve their quality of life.

Organised by a partnership of the Suffolk Coastal Local Strategic Partnership and the Suffolk Strategic Partnership, these events aim to put people in touch with the local organisations that can help them and also promote healthy living.

“Although this district is officially one of the healthiest in the country, we know that there are still many people who experience poor health or stress-related problems without knowing who they can turn to,” said Councillor Sherrie Green, Suffolk Coastal’s Cabinet Member for Community & Well-being.

“These events will help people get in touch with the large local network of organisations that can help, with lots of information on what our hardworking voluntary sector and organisations such as the Council can offer. There will also be lots of information on how a healthy lifestyle may contribute to a feeling of well-being.

“We now want to hear from as many local groups as possible that want to join the events and get their message across to our residents,” continued Councillor Green.

Also available will be information on clubs and groups that offer physical activity and recreation and activities that young people can become involved in to keep them occupied in their spare time.

There will be activities for young people put on by the Council’s Active Leisure team and health promotion activities for people of all ages.

“People who want to get more active in their community by giving up some of their spare time to support the efforts of the voluntary sector, can also visit the events to find out how they can become involved,” added Councillor Green.

The Quality of Life information events will be from 10am to 3pm and will be held at:

Kingston Fields, Woodbridge on Saturday, July 29  
Coronation Sports Ground, Felixstowe, on Sunday, August 20  
Victory Road Park, Leiston on Saturday, September, 2

If a local community or voluntary group would like to take part in one or all of the events or have their information displayed, they should contact Sharon Jarrett at Suffolk Coastal on 01394 444697 or email [sharon.jarrett@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.jarrett@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) by the end of June.

Information events will show the way to a healthier life



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## Middleton leading the way to be green



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

14 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The mantra of think global, act local takes on an extra meaning this Saturday (June 17) when Middleton Village Hall will be host to a special Energy Information Day.

This free event offers local residents the opportunity to find out about how they can take positive green steps to change the way they use power, and so cut down the amount of damaging carbon emissions, in a pioneering local project.

“This is an excellent event which has been organised by the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre Anglia, CRed and Middleton Parish Council, which Suffolk Coastal has been pleased to support,” said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

“Our own energy efficiency team has backed the work of Middleton’s ambitious carbon footprint project, the first of its type in the county, by offering energy saving advice and information to those attending the day, along with a chance to win a solar water heating system, free cavity wall or loft insulation.

“Everyone is becoming more aware of the importance of green issues and climate change in particular. This Saturday is giving residents of Middleton the chance to learn how they can make a few changes in their daily lives that can make a real difference to the environment. I hope their example, and this event, will be repeated both across this district and beyond because working together we can make a real green impact on our futures,” added Cllr Nunn.

There will be feedback at the event on the Middleton carbon footprint project that is aiming to firstly identify how much carbon the parish is responsible for and then look at how it can reduce it. This initiative, sparked by the village’s parish plan action group, is unique in Suffolk and could be a trailblazer for others to follow.

The event starts at 10am and runs until 1pm and includes exhibitions and presentations on climate change, solar water heating, ground source heat pumps, and home and community wind power. It is open to all.

Anyone who can not attend the event on Saturday can find out about energy efficiency by contacting the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre Anglia, the region’s leading provider of energy saving advice which helped over 30,000 households last year. The organisation is funded by the Government to encourage and help householders save energy at home, by providing up to date information about energy efficiency, renewable technologies and transport. For further information contact Suffolk County Operations Manager, Suzanne Lacey on 07725 702539 or visit [www.est.org.uk/anglia](http://www.est.org.uk/anglia)

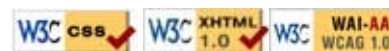
CRed is the Community Carbon Reduction Project based in the East of England and is building a community of partners who are deciding how they want to cut their emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) to meet a target of 60% reduction by 2025. For more information visit [www.cred-uk.org](http://www.cred-uk.org)

Suffolk Energy Action Link (SEAL) promotes domestic energy efficiency and encourages a reduction in energy use within the home and is currently promoting solar power, energy efficient boilers and insulation. For more information call freephone 0800 0288 938, email

[seal@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:seal@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/energy/seal/](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourhome/energy/seal/)

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## More sea defence work at Felixstowe



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14 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Contractors working for Suffolk Coastal will be on site next week carrying out emergency protection work to the sea defences along Undercliffe Road East in Felixstowe.

The loss of the beach in this area has now undermined the rock revetment which protects and supports the sea wall, and was put in place in 2001 to forestall any damage to the sea wall and promenade.

“We need to urgently rebuild the rock support for the sea wall. This unfortunately will mean some noise and disruption to local residents and visitors alike but our contractors will clearly try to minimise any problems,” said Cllr Andy Smith, Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Coast Protection.

“This work will involve the use of heavy machinery, and lorries delivering rock. Access to the site is also only possible at low tide and there will be times when the contractors are there early in the morning and late into the evening.

“We are writing to those homes most likely to be affected by the inevitable noise, and to those beach hut owners affected, to warn them that work will begin next Thursday (June 22) and should be completed within a few days. I would apologise publicly for any problems that occur but I would stress that this is vital work that will help protect the sea defences in this part of Felixstowe,” added Cllr Smith.

Residents who want more information about the work can contact Keith Tyrrell of Terry Oakes Associates Ltd on 07900 218099 who will be supervising the contractors.

The work is completely independent of the ongoing emergency works at South Felixstowe where nearly 3,000 tonnes of rocks are being used to shore up a 400 metre stretch of the sea wall that have been left vulnerable after the failure of the Government to fund any new coastal protection works this year.



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## If you are planning an event, get it licensed!



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16 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Suffolk Coastal District Council and Suffolk Police are advising anyone considering organising a music event in Aldeburgh around the carnival festivities this year to ensure the event is fully licensed.

For a number of years, at the end of the carnival in Aldeburgh an unofficial musical event has taken place. Last year this attracted record numbers and continued until the following morning.

However, concerns over the safety of those attending has prompted officials to urge anyone considering organising such an event to approach Suffolk Coastal District Council.

"It is quite clear that any such event this year could only take place if it was sanctioned under the new rules laid out in the Licensing Act 2003 which came into force in November last year. The objectives of the Act are to ensure the public safety for those attending the event and prevent nuisance to those who may be affected by it," said Cllr Norman Bugg, Chairman of Suffolk Coastal's Licensing and Health Sub-Committee.

Chief Inspector Terry Byford, of Suffolk Police, said; "We realise that the event started for all the right reasons. However because the numbers have grown, there are now real concerns for the safety of those attending. That's why we are asking anyone who is thinking of organising an event to get in touch with the relevant authorities now so that a formal application can be made and consideration given to the issues around licensing it.

"We have, above all, to think about public safety and police and council representatives have already been in talks with landowners and one of those involved with last year's event to see if there was support for a licensed event. Our message is if you want to have an event it has to be run properly," added CI Byford.

For information on the licensing laws and how they could affect any event that you are planning, or that you are aware is being organised, contact Suffolk Coastal's licensing team on 01394 444802, or visit the Council's website on <http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourbusiness/licensing/>



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## Get rid of your ants at half the normal cost



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21 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

It's not only people who like the summer, when the ground warms up garden ants come out in force looking to feed and nest.

Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd, the company that manages Suffolk Coastal's pest control service, is offering residents a cut-price solution to those having problems with ants in their home.

"With the warmer weather, there is the opportunity for ants to invade our homes through open doors and windows and although not dangerous to our health, they can become a nuisance," said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

"Ants tend to come indoors looking for available food and liquids, and uncovered food, including pet food and packaging in waste bins are the most likely targets.

"Where ants are becoming a real problem, particularly if nesting in the home, Suffolk Coastal Services is offering a special price of £20 per house to get rid of them, which is half their normal price as a special summertime offer," added Councillor Nunn.

If any resident would like to take up the offer on this service they should call 01394 444000 or email [scsLtd@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](mailto:scsLtd@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

Other pest control services offered by Suffolk Coastal Services to both households and businesses are the extermination of rats and mice, wasps, hornets and bed bugs, fleas and flies. For further information call 01394 444000.



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## Please consider your neighbours this summer



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21 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

With the arrival of warm sunny days and evenings and the chance to be outside more and have the windows open, Suffolk Coastal is asking local residents to be considerate of their neighbours.

The summer months traditionally always lead to more neighbourly disputes caused by noise or smoke because more people are outside enjoying their gardens at a time when doors and windows are open because of the heat.

“After the long winter months the chance to light the barbecue and have a drink in the garden with friends is very appealing, but we would ask our residents to think of their neighbours when planning an outdoor party or get-together,” said Councillor Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment, natural and built.

“Noise can travel surprisingly long distances, especially at night, and although we do not want to spoil anyone’s fun, other people’s partying with loud chatter and music can be very annoying for those who are relaxing in their own gardens or are trying to sleep. Your neighbours will probably be more understanding if they are given advance notice or even invited to join in.

“Another potential for annoyance for those living nearby is the sound of a loud radio or music coming through open windows, so turning the volume down could keep the peace and perhaps prevent people getting hot under the collar this summer,” continued Councillor Nunn.

There always seems to be an increase in upset neighbours during the summer typically caused by loud music and late night parties, and smoke from bonfires and barbecues.

“With every household receiving a green waste kerbside collection, there really is little justification these days for the need to have a bonfire. If you do have a bonfire tell your neighbours when you intend to light up. Do not start a bonfire if your neighbours have washing out to dry or on Bank Holidays or other times when they might be enjoying their own gardens, and be prepared to alter the time you light your fire to suit those who will be affected by it.

“Another way to be thoughtful to your neighbours is that when having a barbecue try to position it in such a way that surrounding properties will not be sharing the smoke and smell,” added Councillor Nunn.

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## Performance report shows Council is delivering success



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23 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The newly published Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) for Suffolk Coastal shows that the Council has been successful in its aim of improving its performance while delivering value for money for its residents.

The document explains how the Council performed across a wide range of services last year and includes targets for its performance in the current and future years.

"This is probably our best ever year as measured by the performance statistics that make up this report, and that is despite us achieving another £1 million worth of efficiencies and additional income," said Cllr Ray Herring, Council Leader.

"Praise is due to the hard efforts of staff backed by councillors over the last few years to put an increased emphasis on quality, to set new and clear targets and priorities, and also deliver major real budgetary savings.

"We are still faced with a tough financial situation thanks to the way the Government funds rural councils like us, but we remain committed to providing even better services and delivering value for money for all our residents," added Cllr Herring.

Among the achievements in 2005/06 highlighted in the BVPP are:

- Planning applications were decided quicker than ever before, with more than eight out of 10 householder applications determined within eight weeks
- A halving in the amount of time taken to deal with a change in housing benefit circumstances compared with four years ago
- Invoices are being paid more promptly than ever, which is good news for local small businesses and suppliers who do essential work for the Council
- Staff sickness rates are among the very lowest in the country
- Helped in the completion of 85 new affordable homes for local people, the second highest total achieved in the last 10 years
- New initiatives to prevent people becoming homeless meant that fewer homeless families had to be found temporary accommodation
- Over a third of household waste in the district was recycled
- Beat the Government target for putting new homes on land that had already been developed, rather than on new greenfield locations
- An improved website was launched with more helpful information and interactive services to help residents get a round the clock service
- There was an ongoing crackdown on possible benefit cheats thanks to better partnership working with Government agencies and targeted home visits
- Maintained our status as one of the safest districts in the country, with domestic burglaries and vehicle crimes at less than half the national average

"I think our residents recognise that we have a lot to be proud of locally, with a quality of life second to none, and a very good record of delivering services efficiently and effectively.

“We are working hard with our partners to deliver our goals that will ensure that this is a place where people want to live and invest, and where they care for others and the environment,” added Cllr Herring.

The BVPP also sets out the Council’s priority areas of developing a safe and healthy community with access to leisure opportunities, protecting and enhancing the environment, strengthening the economy, meeting local housing needs, inspiring the provision of services that matter most to rural communities, and consulting with communities on services and continuing to provide support to parish councils.

Each year the Council is required to produce a BVPP and its 2006/07 edition was agreed by all councillors at the Full Council meeting on Thursday, June 22. It can be seen in full on [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk)

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## Suffolk residents warned about Cadbury's chocolate



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23 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Environmental health teams across Suffolk are warning residents to take notice of the national food alert on some Cadbury chocolate products which may contain salmonella.

The national Food Standards Agency (FSA) has issued an alert today requesting all councils to contact food businesses in their area to ensure that the affected products are removed from shelves.

The named Cadbury's products are Dairy Milk Turkish 250g , Dairy Milk Caramel 250g, Dairy Milk Mint bars 250g, Dairy Milk 8 chunk, Dairy Milk 1kg bar, Dairy Milk Buttons Easter Egg 105g and 10p Freddo bar. All lots and best before date codes of these products are affected.

"We have been advised by the FSA that these products do not comply with the food safety requirements due to possible contamination with Salmonella montevideo," said John Rainer, Chairman of the Suffolk Food Liaison Group.

"As these products will be on sale in a variety of outlets dealing with confectionery goods, all councils are being asked to contact the relevant food business operators to ensure that they are removed from sale, if necessary using the powers under the Food Safety Act to ensure that this is achieved.

"Cadbury Schweppes Plc has made arrangements for return of these products through trade. We are asking local stores to heed the call from the FSA and Cadbury to remove these products from their shelves, and local environmental health teams will be carrying out spot checks to confirm that this has happened," added John Rainer.

The advice for any member of the public who has one of these affected products is that they can return it to Cadbury Recall, Freepost MID20061, Birmingham B30 2QZ for a full refund. For more details they can ring the Cadbury Schweppes helpline number on 0800 818181.

According to a press release issued by Cadbury, the withdrawal of these products 'is being done purely as a precautionary measure, as some of these products may contain minute traces of salmonella. Cadbury has identified the source of the problem and rectified it, and is taking steps to ensure these particular products are no longer available for sale.'



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## No excuse this week not to clear up after your dog



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26 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Dog owners across the district are being urged to mark National Poop Scoop Week by getting into the habit of clearing up after their pets.

There is little excuse for local residents not to, as Suffolk Coastal is selling rolls of 50 bags for 50 pence so that they can clear up any mess left by their pets.

"Suffolk Coastal has always been keen to encourage responsible dog ownership, and these bags do make it much easier for people to make sure that their beloved pet is not an unwanted pain for other residents," said Cllr Andrew Nunn, Cabinet Member for the Environment natural and built.

"Dog mess can contain worms that cause serious eye disorders in adults and children, although these worms can be controlled if the dog is regularly wormed. However, there is no argument that dog messes on a park, grass verge, pavement, heathland walk or beach is unpleasant.

"I hope as many people as possible take the chance of buying these bags at this bargain rate, and use this week to start helping to keep our district clean and pleasant. I know there are many local responsible dog owners but it is high time that all dog owners just followed the basic rule of bag it, tie it, bin it – clean up after your pet," added Cllr Nunn.

The bags can be bought from the Council's offices at Melton Hill, from the Tourist Information Centres in Aldeburgh, Felixstowe and Woodbridge, and at Suffolk Coastal Services' depot at Ufford. As well as the bags, there are over 2,400 dog bins and litter bins which can also be used to dispose of bagged dog waste throughout the district.

The National Poop Scoop Week is from Monday, June 26 through to Sunday, July 2 and is about explaining the problems of dog fouling and encouraging owners to clear up after their dog. For more information visit [www.dogtrust.org.uk](http://www.dogtrust.org.uk).



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## Reluctant Council falls into line on charging



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26 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The cost that banks impose on Suffolk Coastal and business generally for credit card payments is now to be passed onto customers in a move that brings the Council into line with most businesses and local authorities.

A review has been carried out because the Council is about to introduce a new and enhanced online payment service to residents available both on its website and via an automated telephony system that will accept both credit cards and debit cards. This will provide an enhanced payment service to residents, and meet the Council's ongoing need to keep its costs under control.

"We have reluctantly taken this step because the charge imposed on us for dealing with a credit card payment is about to increase to as high as 2.6 per cent and the total cost too is set to rise," said Councillor Robert Whiting, Cabinet Member for Fiscal and Democratic Services.

"Until now customers paying by credit card over the phone or in person have cost us about £11,000 a year, but this is set to soar as people switch to the convenience of our improved computerised payment services.

"We will now charge two per cent on any credit card payment made to the Council, except for those paying off car park tickets or housing benefit arrears. I would emphasise that we will not be making any profit from this move, it will just cover the banking charges that we are being levied and will end the situation whereby the vast majority of Council Taxpayers are subsidising those who pay by credit card," added Cllr Whiting.

Since April the Council has gradually introduced automated telephone systems which enable people to make payments both by credit and debit cards over the phone for all the Council's services. This switch has already been generating £100,000 of payments a month that would result in a cost to the Council of up to £2,600 a month in bank charges if everyone paid by credit card. This figure would soar when people are able to use the new enhanced payment services.

"As well as bringing us into line with other councils, this move is also similar to many businesses who routinely levy charges for using credit cards. Like them we would encourage the use of debit cards as we will not charge if people use a debit card rather than a credit card," added Cllr Whiting.

The final touches are being made to the online payments service that will enable people to make payments securely via the Council's website. For more information on this service and the other payment methods available visit [www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk) or call 01394 444541.

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## Blue flag flying high over Felixstowe again



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30 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

Felixstowe has once again won the Blue Flag for the quality of its beach and its resort management, and it will be officially unfurled on Thursday, July 6. The flag will be hoist on the flagpole on the seafront close to Arwela Road at 11.30am after invited guests have enjoyed a half-hour open-top bus ride around the resort.

Visitors to Felixstowe can enjoy two award-winning beaches that have met the tough requirements of cleanliness and good management set by ENCAMS.

The Dip at Felixstowe once again recently won a Rural Seaside Award while the main resort beach at Felixstowe South was honoured with its Blue Flag. The Seaside Awards given by ENCAMS recognise clean, well-managed resort and rural beaches that comply with the legal minimum standards of water quality as laid down by the European Union. All bathing water is tested and only those beaches that meet the strict European guidelines are eligible for an award.

Both beaches are clearly indicated by the flags flying by them and if anyone is unsure where they are they should contact the Felixstowe Tourist Information Centre on 01394 276770. Sticking to these beaches does guarantee swimmers or beach strollers the official stamp of approval that does not exist with most beaches. Only 200 or so beaches in the country have met the standard of Felixstowe South and the Dip, with the rural ones at Aldeburgh, Thorpeness and Sizewell being the others in this district.

Anyone can enjoy the open top bus experience around Felixstowe, as the bus will be running from July 23 to September 3 every Wednesday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday.

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## Felixstowe's coastal defence works update



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30 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The southern part of Felixstowe's sea front is getting back to normal with the emergency work now completed to place nearly 3,000 tonnes of rocks along a 400 metre stretch of damaged sea wall.

The sight of large machines on the beach and dumper trucks moving rocks along the promenade has been a daily feature of Felixstowe following the partial collapse of the sea wall at the end of May, and the cracking of the promenade.

"Ipswich-based contractors Brooks and Wood have done a really good job in trying circumstances, making the most of the short-time periods allowed at low tides, to get this vital task completed of putting up temporary protection for the sea wall," said Cllr Andy Smith, Council Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for coast protection.

"Teams have started this week to repair the damage to the promenade which collapsed in many place and had a series of bad cracks in it as a result of the supporting materials underneath seeping out through the broken sea wall.

"By the end of next week the promenade should be back to normal, and this whole stretch will once again be completely open to the public and we will be able to remove the barriers that run along that length. As the summer seems to be returning with a vengeance, Felixstowe will start looking nearer its best," added Cllr Smith.

The Council will continue to keep a close eye on the situation around south Felixstowe, and it has already been agreed to reinforce one of the groynes by using rocks which should help protect the beach levels in the area.

"We are also at the moment getting some new timber steps designed which I expect to be in place in a couple of weeks. These will give people safe access to the beach over the piles of rocks that we have had to use to shore up the sea wall.

"Clearly these rocks are there to serve a purpose and are not a playground so I would ask people to please not attempt to climb over them. However, we do want to encourage as many people to still use our beach and enjoy the seaside experience, and these steps that will act as bridges over the rocks down to the beach," added Cllr Smith.

Contractors working for Suffolk Coastal also started this week carrying out emergency protection work to the sea defences along Undercliffe Road East in Felixstowe.

The loss of the beach in this area undermined the rock revetment that protects and supports the sea wall, and was put in place in 2001 to forestall any damage to the sea wall and promenade. This emergency project should be finished in the next fortnight.

The total cost for both sets of work will be around £400,000 but the Council expects to claim it back from the Government, as it is emergency works.

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## Our young people are real jewels



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30 Jun 2006

### Archived press release.

The decorative efforts of nearly 100 local young people are on show this summer as part of a Festival of Craft Design which has seen them gain expert advice on how to make eye-catching jewellery and body adornment.

The exhibition can be seen free until July 7 at the Long Shop Museum, Leiston from 10am until 5pm (except on Sundays when it opens at 11am). Admission is free to the exhibition although normal entrance prices apply to the museum. From Friday, July 14 it moves to the Britten-Pears Library of the Red House, Aldeburgh every day except Sunday between 10am and 1pm.

"Some of the work is based on ideas drawn from the Anglo-Saxon jewellery and weaponry at Sutton Hoo and the industrial artefacts at the Long Shop Museum at Leiston," said Cllr Rae Leighton, Cabinet Member for Community Well-being.

"The student designers have used a variety of materials such as silver wire, beads and stones. Recycling has also play a major part with sweet papers, crisp packets and drinks cans all coming in handy.

"I would thank the Society for initiating such an innovative programme which has inspired local young people to produce some exciting work and may have unearthed some real jewels of talent," added Cllr Leighton.

Students from Leiston Middle School, Middleton with Peasenhall, Coldfair Green, Earl Soham and Charsfield Primary Schools have been given helpful tips by Society members Valerie Armstrong, Jenny Nutbeem and Sarah Tate.

The John Jacobs Young Makers's Programme 2006 has been run by the Suffolk Craft Society and is named after its first chairman whose sons have contributed generously to the scheme. It has also been supported by the Society, its Friends, Suffolk Coastal, Suffolk Extended Schools, and Awards for All, which gave it a £5,000 grant.