

County Councillor Report



Parish Councils, September 2024

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Bus Service Changes – Due to a change in management of Simonds, many bus services have changed as of the beginning of September. The contract covering the 110/113/114 was retendered this summer but no changes to the timetable were proposed and it is staying with Simonds as the operator. The County Council has stepped in and supported an interim service for routes experiencing loss of service until the end of 2024, with the intention that longer term services can be set up for 2025. Problems in delivering interim services on the Route 70 and 73 are recognised. Please get in touch with me if you have comments or questions.

Retro-fit Conference – Suffolk Preservation Society is holding a one-day workshop at Haughley Park Barn, Haughley Park, Stowmarket, IP14 3JY on Tuesday 12 November. 10am – 4pm. The workshop will deliver practical advice and examples of successful Retrofit projects of different building types, and will provide 6 hours of CPD. [DETAILS OF SPEAKERS AND HOW TO BOOK](#)

Battery Disposal - A fire at Sackers in Great Blakenham on August 8 resulted in a major response by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service with 14 appliances sent out. The likely cause was a battery in a pile of scrap metal. The National Fire Chiefs Council said that lithium-ion batteries in household rubbish bins had caused more than 1,200 fires in the UK over the last 12 months, compared to 700 in 2022.

Goods containing batteries include items such as toothbrushes, shavers, chargers, and toys. These should be recycled at any of Suffolk's 11 Recycling Centres, recycling banks, or most supermarkets.

Back to School - While many children and young people will be looking forward to going back to school some families may be feeling anxious. There is a lot of support out there to help children manage the transition back into school, including a suite of top tips for families on the Suffolk County Council website: www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/wellbeing-in-education.

'Simpler Recycling' - Suffolk County Council is preparing for changes to national statutory recycling and waste collection which will come into effect by the end of March 2026. "Simpler Recycling" requires plastic, metal, paper and card plus glass (new) to be collected from homes, flats, workplaces and schools across England along with separate kerbside food waste collection which will be a new programme. Major infrastructure and service changes are needed at the County Council which is responsible for disposal, these include alterations to waste transfer stations to enable the separate collection of food waste, glass and enhanced recycling as well as treatment facilities for food waste which do not exist in Suffolk at present. Refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/simpler-bin-collections-for-england-to-boost-recycling>

Sunnica Solar Farm Approval - Suffolk County Council has expressed its disappointment that a very large solar farm has been approved in West Suffolk by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, Ed Miliband MP. The DCO was approved despite recommendations for refusal by the

planning inspector. The project includes 2,792 acres of solar panels and battery storage installed in West Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. Additional applications for major solar arrays are anticipated.

The judicial review planned by four local councils (including Suffolk) against the Sunnica solar farm project will not now be pursued following withdrawal of West Suffolk Council and Cambridgeshire County Council from the process.

Flood Investigation Reports Suffolk County Council has published a detailed report into Framlingham and Needham Market during Storm Babet in late 2023. Refer to <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/two-suffolk-flood-investigation-reports-published-in-latest-response-to-storm-babet>

Longer term recommendations emphasise improvements to drainage infrastructure and creating new natural flood management features to reduce catchment flood risk. Measures would require external funding and collaboration with landowners and communities to implement.

Anyone who suffered internal flooding as a result of Storm Babet can still apply for the £5k resilience grant until April 2025, and anyone interested should make contact with floodgrants@suffolk.gov.uk.

Major Planning – the MSDC planning committee voted on August 28th to defer a major petrol station and lorry park proposal DC/22/00416 on the A140 north roundabout pending further study into water management, cumulative impacts and flood risk.

Norwich to Tilbury Pylons – National Grid is reviewing the results of its recent survey, and has stated *‘Over the next 12 months we will prepare an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO). When we submit our application, we will publish a Consultation Report which will set out how we have considered the feedback we received during statutory consultation.’* This presumes that the overground option will be taken forward without consideration of other options, as Grid previously committed to do. Preliminary investigative work to support the DCO application continues.

The Offshore Coordination Group which was overseeing the various energy projects’ infrastructure requirements will no longer operate as its funds have been removed.

Some good news, Rosie Pearson (Pylon Group) has been accepted as a speaker on 18th September at the **Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum policy conference: Next steps for grid infrastructure in the UK**. Follow this group on:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/pylonseastanglia/?multi_permaLinks=1235491340824452

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