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# July 2022 Town and Parish Newsletter

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## Support our fire service and stay safe this summer

*A column written by Andrew Reid, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection*

According to the Met Office, Suffolk is one of the sunniest areas in the UK, and it's certainly felt that way over recent weeks when our county has been able to benefit from some glorious weather.

We're incredibly fortunate to have some fantastic places to enjoy when the sun starts to shine, including Southwold beach and Constable Country, but we must make sure that we do all we can to protect these open spaces from the risk of fire.


On a warm day, litter and grass can become very dry, leading to an increased likelihood of a fire catching and spreading. Sadly, we are not immune to this in Suffolk, with firefighters recently attending a large heath fire in Rushmere.

Please help our fire service this summer by following some simple steps to minimise the risk of fires in the open. You can make a real difference by:

- Putting your litter in the bin when out and about
- Avoiding barbecues and campfires in public open spaces
- Ensuring that any cigarettes are totally put out and disposed of properly
- Not leaving any glass items lying around after a picnic

Of course, the good weather may also tempt you to take a dip in a lake or river in the hope of cooling down, but before you take the plunge you should be aware that around 85% of drownings take place in open water. Many people don't realise the danger to life posed by the shock from cold water temperatures, strong currents and uneven banks and riverbeds, and I'd urge everyone to follow [guidance from the Royal Life Saving Society](#) to help prevent death or serious injury.

Hopefully, with your assistance, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service won't need to attend as many water rescues and fires in the open this summer – but responding to incidents is just part of their invaluable role. A lot of the service's work involves preventing fires from happening in the first place by educating people on what they can do to stay safe, including testing their smoke alarms weekly and taking care when cooking. They are also on hand to provide fire guidance to local businesses and organisations to ensure the safety of customers, those attending events, and residents of shared buildings such as apartment blocks.




Whilst Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service always looks to work with companies in the first instance – offering them the opportunity to make necessary adjustments to comply with fire regulations – sometimes we are left with no option but to prosecute. There have already been two significant prosecutions this year because of the service’s tireless efforts to protect Suffolk. Recently, the company responsible for Worlingham Hall – a popular wedding and events venue in Beccles – [pleaded guilty to a string of serious fire offences and will face sentencing later this year](#). Their blatant disregard for safety put hundreds of people at risk and the intervention of our Protection team will have doubtlessly prevented injury, or even death, in the event of a fire at the property.


Officers also successfully secured the sentencing of Ipaxis – an Ipswich property management company – back in March, [resulting in a £20,000 fine after they failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment for their premises](#). This is a fantastic outcome and sends a clear message to Suffolk businesses that fire enforcement breaches will not be tolerated in our county.

Despite being incredibly busy with responding to incidents and their prevention and protection work, staff from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service continue to raise much needed funds for charity. Earlier this year, the service donated over £8,000 to Ukraine and The Firefighters Charity following a day of car washes held at stations across the county. They are now hoping to build on this success at the 2022 Fire Ride, which will be held at Ipswich East Fire Station this Sunday, July 10.

The ride is open to all cyclists, including seasoned pros and those looking to get back into the saddle, and a large proportion of the entrance fee – £20 in advance, or £30 on the day – will go directly to The Firefighters Charity, which helps both serving and former fire service staff with their health and wellbeing. Places are still available - find out more [www.suffolkfireride.co.uk](http://www.suffolkfireride.co.uk)

Please do support Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service this summer, be it signing up for the Fire Ride, or doing all you can to protect yourself and our county’s places during the good weather.





## **Hundreds of local businesses show sustainability is achievable and profitable**

462 businesses are leading the way across Suffolk and Norfolk, actively reducing their carbon emissions.

All of these companies are holders of a Carbon Charter award, a scheme which recognises businesses across Suffolk and Norfolk which are actively reducing their impact on the environment.

These businesses were acknowledged at the annual Carbon Charter event (6 July 2022), organised by Suffolk County Council, and held at Anglia Car Charging's base in Broome - themselves a recent recipient of a Silver Carbon Charter Award.

**Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Environment, said:**

"The Carbon Charter has proved an incredibly successful scheme, which Suffolk County Council set up 12 years ago, in partnership with the Environment Agency. It highlights the hundreds of enterprises across Suffolk and Norfolk who understand how important it is to tackle climate change.

"These businesses are changing the way they operate, influencing their supply chain and educating their staff – all of which shows a business can be sustainable and successful.


"The council and all authorities across Suffolk are actively investing in reducing carbon emissions, through the work of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan with the aim of being a Net Zero county by 2030. We are proud to lead by example in Suffolk, and are nationally recognised for doing so.


"But this isn't something that the council, or Suffolk's local authorities can do alone. The key players are the businesses like the ones recognised here today." Denny Brothers Printers, based in Bury St Edmunds, were presented with their Gold Carbon Charter award at the event. They have long been a vocal advocate of the low carbon technologies that all printers should utilise to stay competitive in an increasingly green-conscious market.

Beckett Invest Management Group received a Silver Carbon Charter award, which was presented to Director, Samantha Owen.

The hosts, Anglia Car Charging, also received their Silver award.

The event was funded by the BEE Anglia project, which has provided free consultancy and £1.6 million in grants to over 1,000 businesses across Suffolk





and Norfolk, to support them in leading the way towards a Zero Carbon economy.

For more information on the Carbon Charter scheme, visit [www.carboncharter.org](http://www.carboncharter.org)





## Unpaid family carers urged to have their say on a new All Age Carer Strategy for Suffolk

On July 14<sup>th</sup>, Suffolk's Health and Wellbeing Board received a report outlining progress of a new All Age Carers Strategy for Suffolk.

There are an estimated 98,000 carers across Suffolk who provide unpaid care for their loved ones. In the UK, according to research from Carers UK conducted in 2020, this figure rises to 13.6 million. Their contribution is believed to have saved the country somewhere in the region of £193billion during the Covid-19 pandemic alone – during a time when many have faced unprecedented pressure, taking on new caring responsibilities for some of the most vulnerable in our society.


These carers give up their time, money, education, careers and relationships to support those they care for, often impacting their own health too. The All Age Carers' strategy will also help support young carers in their current roles and through transition to adulthood, so they can continue their education, employment and goals in life.

A consultation on the draft strategy has been launched and it is hoped carers of all ages will have their say on the strategy and its five priorities which focus around; early identification of unpaid or family carers, improved information and advice for carers of all ages, ensuring younger carers have the same priority as adult carers, creating systems which work to support carers and help to improve the health and wellbeing of carers.

**Speaking about the consultation Cllr. Beccy Hopfensperger, Cabinet member for Adult Social Care said:**

"The work of unpaid and family carers must be better understood and supported, and the new All Age Carers Strategy will certainly help to do that. I hope all carers across Suffolk take this opportunity to have their say and add their views to help build upon the co-production with carers which has already been fundamental in the strategy's development."

Details of the consultation, including a downloadable version of the draft strategy and both surveys (for adult or young carers) is available on [the County Council's website](#).



## What I want to achieve in the next year as Chairman of Suffolk County Council

### By Councillor Robert Everitt

When I entered local government in 1981, as a parish councillor in the village of Wickhambrook, I learned a very important lesson: you only get out of life what you put in. I spent over 20 years living in Wickhambrook with my family, getting involved in many aspects of village life, and enjoying every minute of it.


In 2000, we moved to Bury St Edmunds, and in 2003 I was elected on to St Edmundsbury Borough Council. I have spent the last 19 years trying my best to improve the environment and lives of my Minden Ward, Tower Division residents.

I also had the great privilege of becoming Mayor of St Edmundsbury Borough Council between 2014-15. While Mayor, I launched the Love to Read campaign, in which we invited grandparents and other people with free time to go into schools across the borough to read with pupils. Encouraging children and young people to take up reading from an early age is so important, not only because it can lead to greater opportunities, but also because it can be very enjoyable.

The next honour of my local government career is my appointment as Chairman of Suffolk County Council on 19 May 2022. This is a neutral, non-political, and non-executive role, which I will hold for one year, the main responsibility of which is the upholding of the council's constitution. I will do this by presiding over council meetings, ensuring business is carried out efficiently, and maintaining a proper forum to debate local matters. It is also an ambassadorial role.

As Chairman, I will represent the Council at civic and ceremonial events, encourage greater partnership working with various private, public, and voluntary agencies, and act as an ambassador and champion for Suffolk generally. It will be my pleasure to represent the council across the whole of Suffolk, meeting as many residents and businesses as time will allow and promoting public involvement in council activities.


I have already had many engagements since my appointment two months ago. I was pleased to take part in the Jubilee Parade at the Suffolk Show and to attend the lighting of the beacon to celebrate the Jubilee at the Abbey Gardens in Bury St Edmunds. On Suffolk Day, I attended the proclamation and Suffolk Medal Investiture at Framlingham Castle. In June, I put my sea legs to the test by joining one of the lifeboats in the Festival of the Sea flotilla, made up of more than 70 boats that set sail to cross the River Orwell and River Stour.



During their term of office, the Chairman chooses a charity to support, and I have chosen to support the Bury Deaf and Hard of Hearing Association. They offer support and advice for people with various levels of hearing impairment and help to put those who require specialist assistance in touch with the appropriate organisation. Please [visit their website](#) to find out more about the brilliant work they do.

I will also be looking for opportunities to support other worthy organisations and causes during the year. For example, I am also interested in promoting the universal dyslexia screening bill proposed by Matt Hancock. I have dyslexia myself and I know how important it is for children to have their dyslexia identified as early as possible so that they can get the support they need.

Finally, I want to encourage young adults to consider careers in local government. There are hundreds of paths available. Firefighters help to keep us safe, carers provide vital support to those who need it, and culture and library staff strengthen community life. There are careers available in public health, looking after our collective health and wellbeing; in town and county planning, shaping how local areas develop; and in our parks, protecting and enhancing our environment. A career in local government can be profoundly meaningful and rewarding.





## County Councils unanimously agree “no” to damaging new pylons

It was announced on July 20<sup>th</sup> that authorities in Essex and Suffolk have united to condemn the current proposals for a 180km network of 50m tall electricity pylons.

Essex County Council and Suffolk County Council have passed motions at their full council meetings in July, to oppose the East Anglia GREEN proposal put forward by National Grid for a 180km network of electricity pylons between Norwich, Bramford and Tilbury.

Norfolk County Council is expected to consider the motion at its next full council meeting, following a planned debate yesterday (19 July 2022) being postponed.

The councils agree that the plan for pylons is destructive and outdated, and will cause irreversible damage to the countryside, wildlife habitats and local communities.


A new electricity network is needed to transmit the ambitious 50 GW of offshore wind that the Government aims to be delivered by 2030, and to connect new projects like Sizewell C. So much of this ambition falls on East Anglia, to provide energy for much of the country.

The councils fully support the need to generate this renewable and low carbon electricity, to meet local and national Net Zero ambitions. However, they believe that more suitable, sustainable and modern alternatives for the network have not been properly investigated and presented, such as undersea cable routes around the coastline of East Anglia.


Formalising their long-standing positions on the East Anglia GREEN proposal, the two councils join a group of 13 MPs who recently signed a letter criticising the consultation, along with a growing public petition with thousands of signatures.

### **Councillor Matthew Hicks, leader of Suffolk County Council, said:**

“We are sending a strong message with the councils coming together to reject this completely unacceptable project to get electricity onshore. There is significant momentum against the pylon proposal from our residents, businesses, and our MPs. There has been no clear and detailed information presented on alternatives, particularly an offshore solution. In Suffolk, we have been lobbying for strategic electricity networks since 2011 and we will continue stand firm alongside our neighbours to ensure that Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex are not damaged by the serious shortcomings in these current plans.”



National Grid completed the East Anglia GREEN non-statutory consultation in June and later this year, it is anticipated they will publish a report outlining the key themes from the feedback received and explain the next steps. They expect the first statutory consultation to take place in early 2023, with an application to the Planning Inspectorate in late 2024.



## Council looks to protect Suffolk following Sizewell C decision

Suffolk County Council will now focus its attention on protecting Suffolk, ensuring that the county sees the maximum benefits from Sizewell C project.

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy granted the Development Consent Order to build and operate a new nuclear power station, Sizewell C.

The council remains disappointed that a number of key issues have not been fully resolved but is now looking ahead to the boosts for the local economy and protecting the local environment.

Whilst the council has been successful in securing many improvements to the scheme, it had raised several concerns where the impact on the natural environment could have been improved:

- The blight of the additional pylons at the main site
- Unnecessary and damaging outage car park at Goose Hill
- Sizewell Link Road should be removed after construction to prevent lasting damage to the environment.

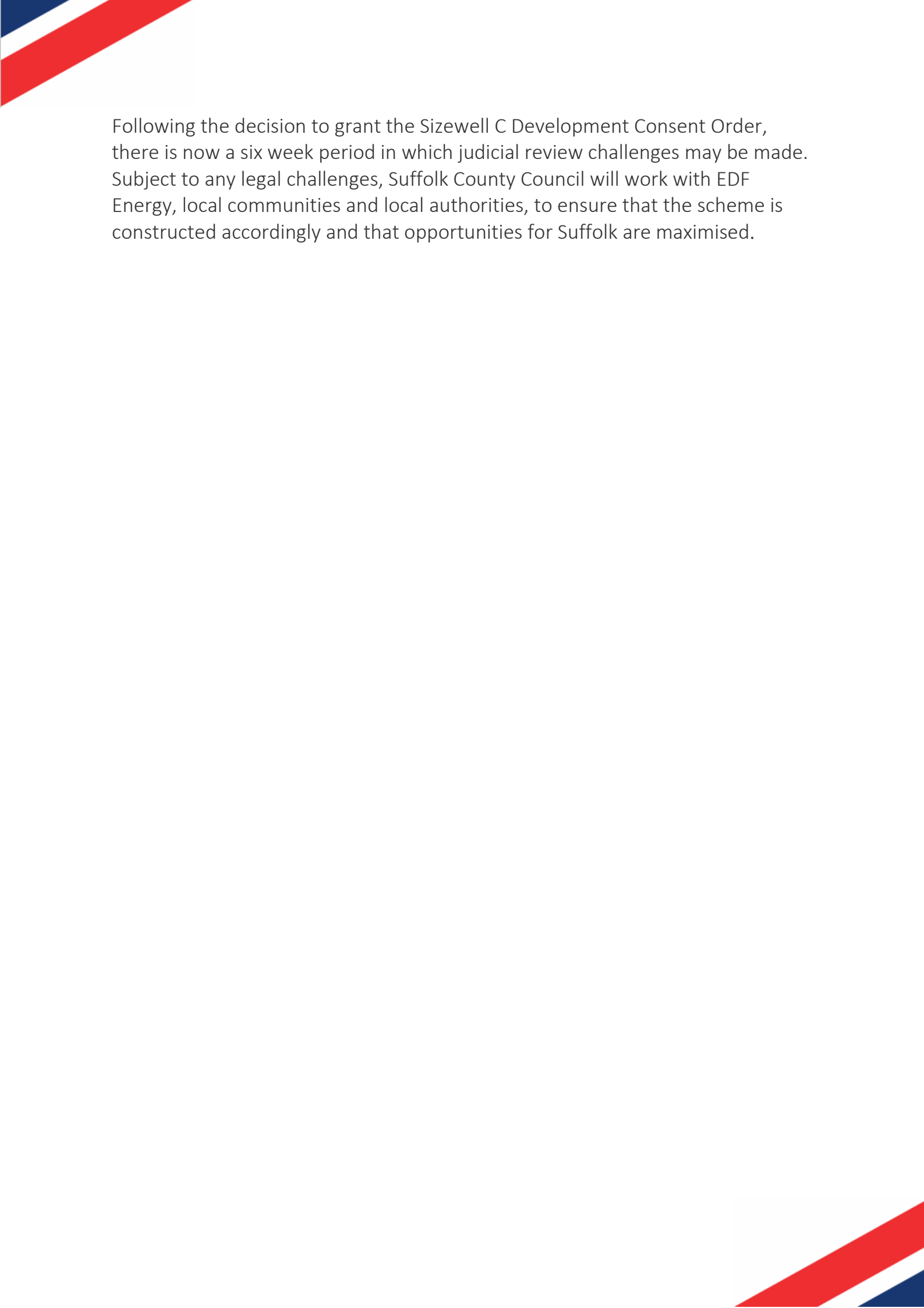
### **Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment, said:**

“During the process, the council’s voice has been strong, and our influence has resulted in a number of significant improvements to the proposals, to make them more acceptable for Suffolk.

“We have taken the concerns of Suffolk residents to the highest levels, from the Planning Inspectorate to the Secretary of State. We are disappointed that, in our opinion, some of these have not been listened to.

“It is now our role to ensure that as Sizewell C proceeds, it does so with the least possible impact on Suffolk’s residents and unique natural environment, whilst doing all we can to maximise the economic opportunities for our county.”

The council has been instrumental in recent changes made to the proposals, which will see Suffolk benefit from nearly £200m of investment to mitigate the impact on communities, the environment and infrastructure. Assurances have also been secured to see a far greater quantity of construction materials will be delivered by rail and sea, reducing the number of lorries on the county’s rural roads.



Following the decision to grant the Sizewell C Development Consent Order, there is now a six week period in which judicial review challenges may be made. Subject to any legal challenges, Suffolk County Council will work with EDF Energy, local communities and local authorities, to ensure that the scheme is constructed accordingly and that opportunities for Suffolk are maximised.

## New routes added as Suffolk County Council issues updated HGV map

A new map for hauliers plotting routes for journeys across Suffolk has been drawn up.

The Suffolk County Council Lorry Route Plan now incorporates new developments and roads, schemes such as Air Quality Management Areas, and changes in road safety on lorry routes.

Changes to the map include utilising new by-passes and link roads at Beccles, Eye and Haverhill to divert traffic away from town centres, and downgrading of routes at Leiston and Stowlangtoft. The new edition also features, for the first time, routes in Ipswich.

The map, compiled following a three-month consultation with all parish and town councils in Suffolk, was last updated in 2011 although a minor review was held in 2017.

While hauliers are not compelled to use the routes it does help them identify the best roads for their journey. It also discourages them from taking routes that can cause disruption, road safety concerns and environmental concerns to local communities.

**Councillor Richard Smith, Suffolk County Council Cabinet member for Economic Development, Transport Strategy and Waste, said:**

“We have consulted with town and parish councils across Suffolk to establish what changes they would like to see. Where possible and practical to do so we have made changes but, inevitably, some people are going to be disappointed that changes they proposed could not be implemented. Suffolk is a predominantly rural county and we can only work within the road network available to us to accommodate modern-day traffic requirements.”

Councillor Smith advised that parishes who feel that local HGV weight restriction traffic orders were not being adhered should sign up to the [Suffolk Lorry Watch](#) scheme. This is run by Trading Standards, in partnership with Suffolk Highways, who ensure weight restriction orders are enforced. These orders are in place to protect old or weak structures and minimise use of a route unless access is necessary.

[Read more about the review and view the new map here.](#)



## Recent hot weather and steps towards a net zero future

**By Councillor Richard Rout, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment**

Last week, we experienced some of the hottest temperatures that Suffolk has ever seen and, due to climate change, these record-breaking hot spells are likely to become more frequent and last longer.

It's not just hot days in the summer that we will experience - winters will become more severe, winds become stronger, rain becomes more intense and flash flooding becomes a greater risk. In short, we will see more extreme weather.


These extremes were witnessed first-hand last Wednesday at Carlton Marshes in Lowestoft, which saw a devastating fire take hold of 5 acres of grassland and hedgerow. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service firefighters joined colleagues from Norfolk to successfully tackle the blaze, and they were due to reinspect the site later in the evening to make sure it was safe. But they were denied from doing so due to heavy rain and thunderstorms just hours later, which caused flash flooding at the visitors centre, as the ground was so dry.


Fires and flooding affect so much more than the physical environment. There is potential disruption, damage and distress to those living nearby, businesses, schools, transport links and not least the firefighters who put themselves at risk to save people and property – as ever, we owe them a debt of thanks.

Of course, nature is also hugely affected, with habitats lost and animals suffering in these extreme weather events. Suffolk and the UK has lost so much of its biodiversity in the last century, whether habitats like grasslands, pollinating insects like bees, or animals like hedgehogs. If nature is not allowed to thrive, our way of life will be drastically affected. Sir David Attenborough said:

“If we and the rest of the back-boned animals were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well. But if the invertebrates were to disappear, the land's ecosystems would collapse.”

But beyond the natural world, it is important to acknowledge that it is the poorest and most vulnerable who are most at risk from our changing climate. Whether that's people living in areas with poor air quality and poor health outcomes due to a lack of access to green space, those who struggle to heat their homes in winter and keep them cool in summer, the rising cost of energy, installing flood prevention, or living with health conditions that are exacerbated by extreme temperatures. Not tackling and adapting to climate change would





be a failure felt most acutely by those most in need. It is not separate to the cost of living challenges we face but a fundamental part of it.

### **So what can we do?**

The vast majority of us now acknowledge that the Earth is warming up because we all emit too much carbon into the atmosphere.

We all have a responsibility to look at our energy use, and try to be more efficient. There are so many ways we can do this, from the food choices we make, the clothes we wear, the cars we drive, the journeys and vacations we choose to take, through to switching off electrical items when we don't need them.

These may sound like drops in the ocean, but if we all make small changes, it soon adds up to something which has a big, positive impact.


The council, of course, has its part to play and I'm proud that there is a lot we're doing – and we are constantly working to do more.

Together with other local authorities and organisations in the county, we have the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan, which helps us all work together to achieve our ambitions of being Net Zero in Suffolk. This means that in Suffolk we have a co-ordinated approach to reduce emissions, on everything from transport to homes.

As Suffolk County Council, we are investing £12.8m to decarbonise our buildings, improving the biodiversity on at least 30% of our estate, moving our vehicles over to electric, installing rural charging points, supporting businesses on their Net Zero journey, generating our own energy from solar panels, planting trees and hedgerows, and so much more.

Suffolk is often highly regarded for how it is leading the way with its Net Zero ambitions, and as a council [we were recently ranked as a Gold Tier authority in Uswitch's Green Council Report 2022](#).

I hope that the recent hot weather hasn't affected you too much. It does go to show that we are now experiencing the very real effects of climate change and it is impacting us all, in one way or another. But we all have the gift to do something about this, so no matter how small, let's all play our part in striving for a Net Zero future for Suffolk.





## UK's leading digital care technology sees huge results for social care and the NHS

The data, released on July 25<sup>th</sup> by the Cassius service, highlights the benefits of a digital care technology service, which is the most advanced in the country.

Launched in July 2021, Suffolk County Council's Cassius service has:

- Changed the lives of 1,600 people with over 2,600 pieces of digital technology installed
- Avoided 118 ambulance call-outs at a time when pressure on the NHS is at an all-time high\*
- Prevented hospital admissions saving 170 hospital days, freeing up beds for those most in need\*
- Estimated saving to social care of £4.2 million and cashable savings of £430,000 and £160,000 to the local NHS

One resident said: "The technology literally saved my mother's life"

**Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, said:**

"Cassius has exceeded all our expectations and our social work practitioners are quickly becoming the most digitally advanced in the country. We have developed this service from scratch and this data is a testament to how you can transform services and continue to provide positive experiences and benefits to all. We are very pleased to see the added value to the wider health system too.

"Most importantly, however, is the impact on people's lives which has been wonderful to see, and we are getting some fantastic feedback from people using the technology."

Cassius provides digital care technology to people in Suffolk to help them to remain independent for longer and to support them to live safe and well at home. The types of technology includes movement sensors, smart watches, wearables, falls prevention devices and technology to address specialised needs.


One of the success factors is that the technology is customised to a person's individual circumstances ensuring that addresses specific requirements.

For example, Phil, who has Parkinson's, has been in hospital for two months. The hospital team felt he needed to be in a care home due to his poor mobility; however, Phil really wanted to be at home with his wife.

The Cassius service was able to provide him with digital care technology to keep him safe, including sensor mats, a falls button and Video Carephone should he







wish to raise the alarm if he needed help. This meant Phil could safely be discharged into his own home, saved longer-term care requirements, and meant he didn't need to remain in hospital longer than he needed to.



## Suffolk school reaches for the STARS

On July 27<sup>th</sup>, Exning Primary School was named Modeshift STARS Local Primary School of the Year in recognition of its excellence in promoting sustainable travel.

Exning Primary School Junior Road Safety Officers Carrick Needham, left, Eva Szkic, Annabelle James, and Troy Cole with the school's Modeshift STARS award. (Picture: Exning Primary School).

The national awards scheme encourages schools to consider how their pupils can use alternative transport modes to help to reduce congestion, pollution and the risk to pedestrians and cyclists posed by cars.

This benefits not only the local community but also the pupils themselves, as studies show that the way children travel to school can have an enormous impact on their health and wellbeing.

Exning Primary School, in Exning, near Newmarket, has a team of Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs), aged between 9 to 11 years old, who promote local and national road safety messaging to fellow pupils.

Pupils have promoted the anti-engine idling message for car users as well as updating parents on recent changes to the Highway Code.

They also took part in the Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel campaign, the UK's largest inter-school walking, wheeling, scooting, and cycling challenge.


Exning Primary School was previously awarded a Silver Modeshift STARS Award in 2021, having scooped Bronze in 2020.

**Councillor Richard Smith, cabinet member for Economic Development, Transport Strategy and Waste, said:**

“Congratulations to Exning Primary School for its hard work in earning this impressive accolade.

“The Modeshift STARS initiative is an ideal way for schools, pupils, parents, and the local community to join forces and reduce the impact of the school run, and I would encourage any schools who haven't yet signed up to the scheme to consider doing so.

“Together we can make active travel an attractive alternative to using the car – saving both fuel bills and the environment.”



Further information on Modeshift STARS can be found on [Suffolk County Council's website](#) and officers from its Travel Plans team are on hand to help schools apply for their accreditation.