

## February 2023 report for the Martlesham Division

### Suffolk Information Partnership Celebrates 100 Partners

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The Suffolk Information Partnership is a network of organisations offering information, advice, and services to support people's health and wellbeing in Suffolk.

The partnership was formed in 2010 with five key voluntary sector organisations in Suffolk - Age UK Suffolk, Optua (now Avenues East), Suffolk Family Carers, Suffolk Libraries and Suffolk Mind - alongside Suffolk County Council's Adult Social Care services. Now we have more than 100 statutory, voluntary and independent sector organisations delivering services to support all groups across Suffolk.

The 100th partner to join the network was *Our Special Friends*, a Suffolk based charity that works to help people to benefit from animal companionship during illness, bereavement, or other crises.

The partnership meets regularly to share updates on its services and discuss topics of interest as well as providing peer support and informal mentoring. Being in the partnership also gives organisations access to a toolkit of resources and the Warm Handover referral scheme. The Warm Handover referral scheme allows partners to refer clients directly to another organisation, where they identify that the client would benefit from other support.

The process *supports vulnerable clients* and those who may struggle to contact another organisation if they are signposted to that organisation.

For more information about the Suffolk Information Partnership and Warm Handover, visit: <http://suffolkinformationpartnership.onesuffolk.net/>

The Suffolk Information Partnership is open to statutory, voluntary and independent sector organisations operating across or within local communities in Suffolk. If your organisation would like to join send a short paragraph about what your organisation does, your logo and contact details to [suffolkinformationpartnership@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:suffolkinformationpartnership@suffolk.gov.uk)

The Suffolk Information Partnership and Warm Handover Referral Scheme are free to join.

### New highways services arriving in Suffolk as multi-million-pound contract awarded

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Milestone Infrastructure, part of M Group Services, has been awarded Suffolk's new highways services contract, which will begin on 1 October 2023.

Following an extensive procurement exercise, Suffolk County Council has confirmed Milestone will be its new contract partner for up to 20 years. The new partnership, which is worth in the region of £800 million - £1 billion, will be delivering highway projects and improvements across Suffolk, including but not limited to maintaining roads, pavements and

rights of way, drainage, hedge trimming, construction of new road schemes, snow-clearing and gritting.

When searching for its new highways partner, the county council worked with leading industry analysts to understand the different types of arrangements that other local authorities have in place, to look at which specialist providers are in the marketplace, and to find out what aspects of contract agreement may work best for Suffolk.

The council wanted the new contract to focus on delivering greater social value, utilising local skills and talent, giving young people the opportunity to work in the sector as well as building on the council's commitment to carbon reduction and protecting the environment.

A rigorous procurement exercise was carried out over many months, with various stages of discussions with service providers, to evolve their solutions to meet the various contractual requirements and deliver an effective and efficient highway service for Suffolk. Final submissions were evaluated and extensively moderated before the final winning contract was awarded.

**Matthew Riches, Operations Director for Milestone, said:**

“Milestone is delighted to be partnering with Suffolk County Council to provide safer highways for all users of the county network. In this new partnership, we are committed to maintaining the safest possible network for local communities, businesses and the travelling public, all year round.

“Our commitment to exceptional delivery will also focus on working collaboratively with the council to meet their net-zero carbon targets and enhancing biodiversity.

“We are committed to creating local jobs for local people to support our delivery, in addition to local supply chain partners adding value to the Suffolk economy. We take pride in supporting our local community and look forward to meeting and working with the residents and businesses of Suffolk from October.”

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### [Fire service finalises plan to protect Suffolk's communities](#)

The plan details Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service's priorities until 2027, including:

- Updating how response times are reported to include from the time of call and focus on the areas of highest risk, such as dwelling fires
- Addressing climate change to support Suffolk County Council's ambition to be a carbon-neutral authority by 2030, with a view to introducing more non-fossil fuel vehicles in the fleet
- Developing preventative safe and well visits, including continued work with the National Farmers' Union to tailor advice to rural and farming communities
- Assessing how the service works with partner agencies, such as supporting the ambulance service when appropriate and if capacity and resources allow for this

- Reviewing the recruitment and retention of on-call firefighters and specialist support staff to ensure Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service remains a diverse employer of choice

These priorities were identified during extensive research and pre-consultation engagement with staff and stakeholders. In addition, hundreds of Suffolk residents helped to inform the final document by providing feedback on proposals during the CRMP public consultation, which ran from October to December 2022 and included a series of public events held at six supermarkets across the county.

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## Other Announcements

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### ***1. Volunteering at Suffolk Archives***

Suffolk Archives are looking for volunteers in their branches in Bury St Edmunds, Lowestoft and Ipswich.

‘Volunteers bring the archive to life for researchers and local communities, making more archives accessible and connecting people to the places they live. By volunteering you will develop new skills, make new friends and conserve Suffolk’s history for the next generation.’ – Suffolk Archives

There are a range of roles available from remote volunteering to in-person.

If you would like to join the remote volunteer team at Suffolk Archives visit the [Suffolk Archives website](#) for more information.

### ***2. Hosts for Ukraine***

It has been over a year since the start of the war in Ukraine. Suffolk County Council is still in need of a wide range of host homes for Ukrainian refugees.

Potential hosts can sign up directly with the County Council by [completing our online form](#) or emailing [refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk).

Learn more here: [Support for Ukraine - Suffolk County Council](#)

