

February 2024 report for the Martlesham Division

Public consultation on Suffolk County Council's proposed devolution deal starts on 18th March

A 10-week public consultation on our proposed devolution deal with the Government will start on 18th March and run through until 26th May. The consultation will be in two main parts – an open survey, hosted by Suffolk County Council, that any residents can complete and a sample survey of 1000 Suffolk residents conducted independently by Ipsos Mori. The consultation will be available through our website www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution and social media. There will also be media coverage highlighting the consultation.

Councils' loft insulation offer for Suffolk homes

Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders have launched a Suffolk Loft Insulation offer, teaming up with builders' merchant Travis Perkins to offer Suffolk residents a significant reduction on loft insulation.

There are four product options available, and residents will receive a 50% discount off their purchase (up to £200), with free delivery.

According to The Energy Saving Trust, it is estimated that an uninsulated home loses a quarter of its heat through its roof. An effective way to reduce this heat loss, and heating bills, is to insulate your loft, attic or flat roof. Correctly installed insulation should pay for itself many times over in its 40-year lifetime.

The offer is open to anyone and will close once the allocated funding has been spent. To find out more visit www.greensuffolk.org/at-home/grants/. Simply fill out the [online order form](#) and Travis Perkins will be in touch to arrange payment and delivery.

The Loft Insulation Grant is being funded by Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders and Travis Perkins and will help contribute to Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan and our vision for Suffolk to become Carbon Neutral by 2030.

Public views sought on active travel schemes in Woodbridge

Increased active travel has been shown to benefit mental and physical health and to improve air quality, road safety and quality of life.

As part of the Active Travel Woodbridge project, Suffolk County Council has secured more than £5million of Active Travel England funding to make Woodbridge's streets safer, better-connected and more people-friendly.

The council spoke to more than 500 people at a series of public engagement events over last summer and autumn about their existing travel behaviours and suggestions for possible enhancements to active travel infrastructure in the area.

This feedback, along with analysis of local traffic data, has been used to help develop a set of proposals that cover various locations within the town which will enable people to walk, wheel and cycle and promote cleaner travel options. These include footpath improvements, shared-use paths, modal filters, and a 20mph zone.

Residents, business owners, and community groups are now invited to formally have their say to ensure that the proposals align with their needs and preferences.

Detailed information about the proposals and a link to complete the survey can be found at <https://arcg.is/1vuqvz0>. A hard copy consultation form can be requested via email to atw@suffolk.gov.uk.

Have your say on Suffolk's local transport plan

Residents are invited to share their views on how they travel to help inform Suffolk's Local Transport Plan.

The plan sets out a long-term vision for transport in Suffolk and covers key themes such as decarbonisation of transport, strengthening the local economy, promoting health, wellbeing and social inclusion, and creating better-connected places that encourage a range of transport choices.

Suffolk County Council is asking for feedback on the key themes proposed for the fourth version of the plan, which will cover the period until 2040 and respond to long-term transport opportunities and challenges facing Suffolk and the UK as a whole.

A link to the survey can be found at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/ltp4>. The consultation will run for eight weeks until 8 April 2024.

Feedback from the consultation will be collated and inform the production of the draft local transport plan. The full draft document will then be subject to further consultation later in the year.

Your Suffolk Wedding website launched

Suffolk Registration Service has launched a new website for couples looking to book weddings or Civil Partnerships in the county.

The website is designed to help couples plan their perfect day, whether they are looking for a small and intimate ceremony at a Register Office, a bespoke ceremony at one of over 130 approved wedding venues or a bespoke ceremony at their own home or at an unlicensed venue.

Featuring a comprehensive guide to the different wedding options, the website also addresses the legal requirements and fees and includes a step-by-step guide on how to organise a wedding, if couples are unsure where to start.

The website showcases the more than 130 venues licensed by the Registration Service, where couples can get legally married, as well as the Register Service's own ceremony rooms.

Couples interested in booking a wedding can visit the website, www.weddings.suffolk.gov.uk and fill out an online enquiry form.

Alternatively, contact the Registration Service by phone or email:

Bury St Edmunds	0345 607 2060	bury.registrars@suffolk.gov.uk
Ipswich	0345 607 2050	ipswich.registrars@suffolk.gov.uk
Lowestoft	0345 607 2070	lowestoft.registrars@suffolk.gov.uk
Sudbury	0345 607 2080	stowmarketsudbury.registrars@suffolk.gov.uk
Stowmarket	0345 607 2080	stowmarketsudbury.registrars@suffolk.gov.uk
Woodbridge	0345 607 2090	woodbridge.registrars@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk's wettest ever winter breaks highway response records

Storm Babet saw nearly two months' worth of rain fall in 24 hours, the subsequent storms and severe weather events saw more sustained rainfall, leading up to what Met Office described as the fifth wettest February on record since 1836 with several days still to go.

As a result of the extreme weather, Suffolk Highways has seen an 82% increase in requests for action on the highway - 18,000 additional customer reports so far during the 2023/24 financial year.

The number of drainage and flooding issues have increased by a staggering 364% in the last five months when compared to the same period in 2022/23. Suffolk Highways has also responded to 2,117 emergency incidents in the same period, which represents a 64% increase on last year.

The increased wet weather coupled with occasional freezing temperatures this time of year results in a sharp rise in pothole breakouts. Despite these challenges, highways has completed 34% more repairs to potholes in 2023/24 when compared with the previous year.

To help keep up with this unparalleled increase in demand, Suffolk County Council is investing more resource and trialing new ways of working, including:

- Increased highway funding allocated to fix potholes, resurface roads and repair drainage
- 70% increase in highway crews to maintain and repair the roads

- Launching a trial of new ‘Dragon Patcher’ equipment – a pothole-repairing machine which can repair potholes up to five times faster than traditional methods
- Trailing a ‘Road Mender’ – a patching machine used in urban areas which will help boost productivity and present more environmental benefits

Applications open for new Suffolk Business Board

Inspirational and influential local businesspeople are sought to form the board, which will represent the local business community and will help steer the local economic strategy to create a stronger and higher-skilled economy for Suffolk.

The board will meet 4-6 times a year to help shape economic strategy and priorities for Suffolk, to oversee delivery of funded programmes such as business support and skills training for Suffolk, and to work closely with partners such as District councils, neighbouring counties, and national economic and trade bodies.

The county council is seeking candidates who represent the diversity of Suffolk’s people and economy, whether that be sector, geography, or business type.

Expressions of interest should be emailed to businessboard@suffolk.gov.uk by Friday 22 March, with a short biography or CV and a brief cover letter outlining your interest in the opportunity and what area(s) of expertise you feel you could bring.

Board membership is a voluntary position and terms are for up to three years from the date of appointment. The Business Board will be supported by a dedicated team of council officers.

The establishment of the Business Board follows the Government’s announcement in 2023 that Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) would be integrated into upper tier local authorities. The Suffolk Business Board will succeed the existing New Anglia LEP Board which ceases on 31 March 2024.