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December 2022 Parish Newsletter

£2.5m saved on energy costs as LED streetlight project nears completion

A project with the aim of replacing all 43,400 streetlights across Suffolk with sustainable, longer-lasting, and cost-saving LED bulbs nears completion.

It has saved more than £2.5 million pounds so far.

The change to LED streetlights supports Suffolk County Council's aim to reduce carbon, light pollution, and bring down ongoing maintenance costs for the council, all whilst providing the best value to residents.

It was expected that the council would reduce costs by around 76%, however, the target was exceeded, with 77.64% savings made to date.

In June 2021, Bouygues Energies and Services were announced as the partner to deliver the project to upgrade 43,400 Suffolk streetlights with new, reduced energy LED lanterns. The total number of upgraded streetlights is currently at 40,692 excluding any of the Ipswich Borough Council, or Town/Parish council owned streetlights. There are approximately 1,700 upgrades outstanding, which includes any remaining heritage lantern upgrades. It is hoped that around 1200 of the remaining lanterns will be completed by the end of the year.

Prior to the commencement of the project, Suffolk Highways contacted towns and parishes to provide them with the opportunity to have their parish-council owned street-lighting upgraded at the same time. All heritage-style lanterns are also being upgraded as part of the project.

The upgrade of the lighting system will include a further rollout of SCC's central management system which will allow lights to be switched on or off and dim individual or groups of lights.

This smart technology will increase the control the council has over its power consumption which will further reduce costs. The system will also automatically flag any lights that are not working which reduces the need for night-time inspections.

Councillor Paul West, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding, said:

“It has been very exciting to see the incredible progress made on the LED streetlight replacement over the past 15 months. Our partner contractor, Bouygues has shown such resilience throughout which has resulted in a very well-managed programme and successful project.

“The shift over to these new LED lanterns has enabled the council to save a considerable amount on energy costs and supported our organisation’s ambition to become carbon-neutral organisation by 2030.

“I would like to extend my congratulations and thank you to all those working on this project and ensuring its resounding success. I look forward to seeing its continued positive impact in the coming years as we reap the benefits of stronger, cheaper and more environmentally friendly streetlights.”

Suffolk County Council adopts new Streets Guide for building more sustainable, people-first developments

It was announced on November 3rd that ground-breaking new guidelines for developers to help them design sustainable and low-carbon neighbourhoods have been launched by Suffolk County Council.

The [Suffolk Design: Streets Guide](#) is the first document of its kind to prioritise walking and cycling in the routes people will use - and the infrastructure required to make them safe and attractive - over the needs of private vehicles.

The guide can also be used by highway engineers, drainage engineers and Public Rights of Way officers in responding to planning applications and in the technical review and approval of new highways infrastructure.

While not compulsory, the guide has been prepared with Suffolk’s other authorities using [government policies, guidance and best practice](#).

It replaces the Suffolk Design Guide for Residential Areas, last updated in 2000, and has been drawn up with [Stantec – a global leader in sustainable design and engineering](#).

In 2019, every local authority in Suffolk declared or acknowledged a climate emergency.

The design of streets has a significant role to play in the reduction of carbon emissions by prioritising walking, wheeling, cycling and access to public transport, as well as managing the effects of flooding through effective sustainable drainage systems.

By placing greater priority on designing for people as pedestrians - whether wheeled or walkers - and cyclists, the council is contributing to its ambitions for reducing carbon.

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

that as the authority responsible for public rights of way the council has an important role in helping the planning system support transition to a low-carbon future.

“Streets are more than just routes to travel or park, they provide places to enjoy, where people meet and socialise, they define the character of our towns and villages and support how our utilities are provided underground to our homes and businesses.”

“All these different elements need careful consideration as we look forward to a low carbon future and adapt to climate change, so in this context, a street design guide needs to be much more than a prescriptive guidance document.

“It needs to provide a basis for designers to interpret and deliver streets and places that reflect much broader objectives such as increasing social value, better accessibility, helping to achieve a low carbon future, ensuring better air quality and enhanced biodiversity.”

New scheme ‘multiply Suffolk’ to offer adults a chance to improve their numeracy skills

On November 15th, new initiative named Multiply Suffolk, which will offer adults an opportunity to improve their numeracy skills, was launched in Suffolk.

The scheme is for those who do not already have a GCSE grade C/4 or higher in Maths or equivalent.

Adults can sign up for free courses and activities including Money Management and Numeracy for Parents/Carers. Unaccredited, informal learning as well as Level 1 and Level 2 accredited learning is available to residents on either a part-time or intensive basis and are offered in flexible settings to fit around people’s lives.

Multiply Suffolk has been created thanks to a £3.7m government investment from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund aimed at boosting opportunities for more people to progress and secure well-paid jobs. SCC’s Multiply Suffolk Team will work with subcontractors Realise Futures and Menta to deliver the scheme.

Councillor Rachel Hood, Cabinet Member for Education, SEND and Skills said:

“This is an exciting new initiative that will help adult learners across the county. The scheme is aimed at improving numeracy skills, and it has been widely shown that people who improve their numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages and have better mental well-being.

“We are pleased to be delivering Multiply Suffolk alongside Realise Futures and MENTA and I hope that adults in Suffolk take full advantage of the scheme.”

Multiply Suffolk was officially launched during the adult learning engagement event at Trinity Park, Ipswich on 9 November 2022.

For more information and/or to sign up for the scheme visit: <https://learnsuffolk.org/multiply-coming-soon/>

Suffolk County Council and Ipswich Software Business IJYI win National Technology Award

On November 16th, Suffolk County Council (SCC) and IJYI, an Ipswich-based software business, won one of the UK's most important national IT awards.

This is for the development of a critical data gathering and reporting tool used during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In winning the award for Data Science Project of the Year at the 2022 [UK IT Industry Awards](#), IJYI and SCC triumphed in a tough category that also included the likes of Thames Water and Openreach.

The [CoronaWatch Dashboard](#) was designed and developed by Suffolk County Council and IJYI to provide not only public access to critical COVID-19 information, but also in greater depth privately for key stakeholders, partners and decision-makers.

The award judges looked for the most outstanding IT project to deliver real value from data in terms of organisational performance, describing the Coronawatch project as an “agent for change”.

In addition to winning Data Science Project of the Year, IJYI and SCC were also finalists for the Public Sector Project of the Year award for their work on the [Analysis of Additional Needs Tool \(AANT\)](#) project.

The AANT process is designed to support the inclusion of children and young people across the county through cloud technology enabling access to consultation with an Educational Psychologist (EP).

This project highlights the level of innovation being undertaken within local councils and SCC specifically.

The AANT is being recognised as best practice with other Local Authorities who are now training their EPs to use this system too.

The UK IT Industry Awards are the largest and most well-known event in the technology industry calendar. Owned and operated by BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT and Computing, the awards enjoy a level of professionalism and industry knowledge not seen at other shows. As a result, winners are celebrated for genuine success.

Commenting on the award, IJYI CEO, Kevin Linsell said:

“We are absolutely delighted for the Suffolk County Council and IJYI teams who worked together so effectively to deliver this pioneering public health technology tool. It also underlines the vital role that effective data collection, management and analysis play in modern society, and this is great recognition for a project effectively delivered at an important time.”

Councillor Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Public Health and Protection, said:



“Being able to share data effectively was of the utmost importance in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic locally. I’m so pleased that the extraordinary efforts of IJYI and Suffolk County Council in bringing together this innovative platform, at speed, and the impact this had on Suffolk’s response to the pandemic, has been recognised.”

Suffolk County Council launch All Age Carers’ Strategy

Suffolk County Council has launched its All-Age Carers’ Strategy at today’s Health and Wellbeing Board.

The strategy which has been developed with young carers and adult carers across Suffolk aims to support carers across Suffolk in their roles and will lead to the development of an action plan in the coming months.

This will help SCC to provide carers with the right kind of quality support at the right time, in the right place, and in the right way.

Many carers do not identify themselves as carers for approaching 2 years - they are reluctant to do so - therefore a key goal within this strategy is to reduce this timeframe and help them access the support they need. The five key priorities are;

1. Early identification of carers
2. Improved information and advice
3. Young carers to have the same priority as adult carers
4. Systems and services that work for and support all carers
5. Improved health and well-being for carer

An action plan will be developed in the coming months which will provide more detail how the priorities will be delivered and raise the profile of carers in Suffolk.

Councillor Rebecca 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.

“Unpaid family carers play an essential role in our society. Their compassion, dedication, and selfless commitment to those they care for is both humbling and in many ways essential to the wider care market.”

Councillor James Reeder, Cabinet member for Children and Young People’s Services said:

“It is a source of great pride for me that for the first time Suffolk has an All Age Carers’ Strategy which includes the incredible contribution of young people and children who care regularly for family members.

“I have no doubt that this strategy will help to support young people in their caring roles. They will be seen as children first and carers second and I am hopeful that with early recognition of their caring roles through schools, and other institutions, they will be able to access the support they need to continue to care safely, whilst also reaching their full potential and aspirations.”

In 2020, research from Carers UK indicated that there were 13.6 million unpaid carers in the UK, which is estimated to have saved the country in the region of £193 Billion during the





COVID-19 pandemic alone. In the 2011 census, 17,194 carers in Suffolk said they provided 50+ hours of care per week.

Currently, about 1 in 5 people living in Suffolk are aged 65 or over. It is estimated that over the next 20 years, this is forecast to change, with 1 in 3 Suffolk residents being aged 65 or over, compared to 1 in 4 for England.

Projections also suggest that the number of people aged 65 and over who provide unpaid care in Suffolk will increase between 2019 and 2035, from 25,300 to 33,700 (an increase of 33%).

[Read the Suffolk All Age Carer's Strategy 2022-2027.](#)

Statement following chancellor announcing a devolution deal for Suffolk

By Leader of the Council, Matthew Hicks.

“We welcome the Chancellor’s announcement that the Government has committed to agreeing a truly historic deal for Suffolk – the first county deal of its kind in the country. This deal will be a significant step on our county’s journey towards devolution and more control over our future.

“If agreed, this provisional deal would deliver decades of significant additional investment into local priorities that will improve the lives and outcomes of Suffolk’s residents; secure greater decision-making powers around transport, infrastructure and skills; and give us the powers we need to achieve our net zero ambitions and create the Greenest County.

“The powers and funding on offer have changed since we made our initial bid in August 2021. The Government is actively progressing only the most ambitious devolution deals but, in return, is seeking greater changes to the way local government is led. Therefore, in exchange for the greatest freedoms and funding, we are now minded to pursue a model whereby the Leader of Suffolk County Council is directly elected by the people of Suffolk. This proposed change would not add any new levels of bureaucracy nor create any new offices.

“In keeping with Suffolk’s collaborative way of working, we have developed this deal in partnership with our district and borough colleagues, the Police and Crime Commissioner and our MPs. It will now be taken forward to public consultation with Suffolk’s communities and businesses.”



Celebrating Suffolk's environmental champions

Creating the Greenest County Awards 2023 launched

The Creating the Greenest County Awards return for a 12th time to celebrate the achievements of Suffolk's residents, businesses, schools, communities and organisations who are protecting our environment and reducing their carbon emissions.

Nominations are now open online and close on 1 February 2023, with an environmentally-friendly ceremony to be held in March.

As Suffolk continues to work together in pursuit of being net zero by 2030, the Awards recognise those who are connecting with people, sharing best practice and collaborating to help make Suffolk the greenest county.

To go alongside awards such as Greenest Business, Greenest School and Enhancing Biodiversity and Landscape, this year a new category has been introduced - The Greenest Tourism Award.

This Award recognises the good work being done across the county by the numerous organisations in this vital sector, from visitor attractions to accommodation providers.

Suffolk County Council organises the Awards, Councillor Richard Rout, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment, said:

"The Awards celebrate those doing amazing things to protect our environment in Suffolk. Following COP27, the challenge posed by climate change is in sharp focus but it's also the financial climate that is a concern for us all.

"We must continue making significant changes to the way we live, by protecting our natural environment, reducing carbon emissions, making homes more efficient, and reducing our energy and water use. By doing this, we save money on our bills – it's the right thing to do for our planet and for our pockets.

"Our Award winners will be inspiring people who are reducing their energy costs and reducing their impact on the environment. No individual can solve the challenge of climate change on their own, but together we can make a real difference and avert a crisis which poses the biggest risk to the least well-off, both here at home and across the world.

"If you, your community or business are working hard towards net zero, please put yourself forward for an Award. Or if you know someone who is making a real difference, nominate them for an Award, so Suffolk can celebrate them and inspire others to follow their lead." One of the most popular categories, the Green Hero, will be returning; turning the spotlight on those individuals who have taken it upon themselves to lead the way in working for the environment. It's the only award for which both the nominees and the winners are chosen by the public.

Nominations can be submitted online at www.greensuffolk.org/awards



Thousands more new trees for Suffolk

It was announced on November 23rd that 7,526 trees will be planted across the county this winter by Suffolk's councils.

Suffolk County Council successfully submitted a joint bid on behalf of itself, Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council and West Suffolk Council.

£138,219 will come into the county as one of 100 grants under the government's Local Authority Treescapes Fund, directly contributing to achieving the country's ambitious tree planting targets. The funding is for the planting of the trees and three years' maintenance.

The trees are to be planted in non-woodland areas, including those that have been neglected in the past, ecologically damaged or affected by tree diseases like ash dieback.

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

"This is the second year that we have been successful with this funding, a true testament to how Suffolk is committed to working together for a net zero future and reversing the decline in our biodiversity.

"The county council has been instrumental in securing new trees for Suffolk, itself planting 200,000 trees and 20 kilometres of hedgerow over just the last couple of years, along with the creation of healing woods.

"Establishing thousands of new trees in Suffolk is a team effort, and I'd like to thank colleagues at our borough and district councils for their commitment to making this happen. Of course, trees must be planted in the right places, and we cannot just leave them. It's thanks to the extraordinary work of volunteers such as the Suffolk Tree Warden Network, that will help to make these programs a success."

More green spaces around Suffolk will support wildlife and offer the chance for people to get in touch with nature and support their health and wellbeing.

One of the projects will see the creation of a second 'Miyawaki' tiny forest in Sudbury, Suffolk, following Ipswich Borough Council using previous funds to create a number of these across the town last year.

Named after the renowned Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, this form of woodland management sees local species of trees densely planted in small urban plots of land. This enables them to create biodiversity-rich habitats quickly and absorb more carbon than a traditional forest.

All planting schemes will be delivered by borough and district councils and will continue to contribute to Suffolk's commitment to support the Queen's Green Canopy project. This announcement comes on the eve of National Tree Week (26 November to 4 December).

Winter Gritting

Column by Councillor Paul West, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for Ipswich, operational highways and flooding.

Despite experiencing what feels like the mildest winters we have had in very long time, our highways teams have been carefully planning our winter gritting operation for months to ensure we are prepared for whatever the weather throws our way.

On Sunday evening, 36 gritters including the public-named Father Gritmas, Gritty Gritty Bang Bang and Spread Sheeran went on their first run of the season, a county-wide treatment of priority 1 roads which took place as the road surface temperatures were forecast to drop below 0°C.

The gritting treatment of our roads in Suffolk is vital to ensure people can continue to travel and do so safely during the wintry weather. During the 2021/2022 winter season, Suffolk used around 9,388 tonnes of salt to treat a total distance of 129,367 miles – which equates to travelling the circumference of Earth over five times! Suffolk Highways currently has a stock of around 24,000 tonnes of salt across the county for the season ahead and is well prepared for any further drop in temperatures.

Our highway teams are responsible for gritting 36 Priority 1 (P1) routes, which amounts to around 1,259 miles, including all A and B roads, roads to fire stations, hospitals, main bus routes and rail stations. They also have 34 Priority 2 (P2) routes, which amounts to around 843 miles of the network, this includes other bus routes, roads leading to rural villages and access to schools. The P1 routes are completed when road surface temperatures are forecast to drop below 1°C and P2 routes are carried out when the forecast predicts there to be a longer period of hazardous conditions.

This entire operation is one which requires extremely careful pre-planning and running throughout, every single decision to grit or not is based upon forecasted road surface temperatures, whilst also considering the impact of other factors, such as wind and heavy rain.

But gritting the priority network isn't all that the teams do to prepare our county for wintry weather; Suffolk Highways has also refilled the 2,100 grit bins across the county at registered locations, such as the bottom of hills, or on junctions of minor roads. Grit bins are owned by parish and town councils and to ensure that the contents of grit bins are used to make roads safer, our communities are encouraged to monitor how and where the grit is used and if more is required to contact Suffolk Highways.

Suffolk's residents can also do their part to support us with our gritting efforts by parking considerately and leaving enough room so that our vehicles can grit the road – if we can't fit, we can't grit!

Anyone who would like to know when and where we are gritting over the coming months, all gritting activities will be posted to Suffolk Highways' Twitter and Facebook accounts – so I encourage you to give us a follow and keep abreast of all our teams movements this winter season.

To find out more about which roads are gritted, how we deal with the network in the event of snow, or grit bins, please visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/gritting.

Suffolk Highways' winter gritting efforts forms part of the county council's wider 'Winter Matters' campaign, to provide Suffolk's residents with tips and advice on how to help look after their money, health, wellbeing and safety during the colder months. More information can be found by visiting www.suffolk.gov.uk/wintermatters.

Suffolk Public Sector Leaders pledge another £913,000 to tackle climate emergency

Suffolk's ambition to be net-zero by 2030 has been bolstered by an almost £1million pledge for more initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and tackle the effects of climate change.

Suffolk Public Sector Leaders today agreed £913,458 funding for the next phase of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan.

New projects include making more homes energy-efficient, development of Suffolk's EV charging infrastructure to support taxis, energy audits for businesses and developing sustainable itineraries for the visitor economy.

Councillor Suzie Morley, leader of Mid Suffolk District Council and chair of Suffolk Public Sector Leaders, said: "This investment is another clear statement of our ambitions to tackle climate change and reduce carbon emissions in the county.

"The next phase of projects will help residents, communities, businesses and visitors. Nobody is under any illusions about the challenges we all face around climate change, and we must work collaboratively to tackle them."

Nearly £600,000 has previously been pledged by Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders, while the creation of a new Fuel Poverty Retrofit Team was agreed in October to make thousands more homes energy efficient. A dashboard has also been developed to track Suffolk's environmental performance metrics and can be seen on the [Suffolk Observatory website](#).

Councillor Andy Drummond, chair of the Suffolk Environment Portfolio Holders' Group, said: "Achieving a net zero Suffolk by 2030 is a complex challenge that requires collaboration, and big ambitions, which is why this funding is going to make a huge difference across the county."

New projects in the pipeline include:

- Development of Suffolk's EV charging infrastructure, including support for rapid charging for taxis in strategic locations.
- Making more homes energy-efficient with retrofitting of measures like loft insulation and draught excluders. This could also link with Suffolk Climate Change Partnership's thermal imaging cameras project, which uses the cameras to carry out heat loss surveys, and also signpost people to schemes like Warm Homes Suffolk.

- Targeted support for Suffolk firms, including energy audits and advice, with 5 to 10 exemplar projects funded.
- Further improvements to the greensuffolk.org website; evolving it into a green Suffolk hub and offering more useful information on how people can reduce their carbon footprint.
- Develop sustainable itineraries for the visitor economy, reducing demand for car use.

Suffolk supports significant scams settlement

Suffolk Trading Standards is helping to compensate victims across the county who lost thousands of pounds to an online fraudulent sweepstake scheme discovered by the United States Government.

The Next-Gen sweepstake sent tens of millions of personalised documents to unsuspecting recipients across the world promising prizes of up to \$2 million in exchange for a fee of between \$9 to \$140.

Many victims made several payments before realising they had been scammed, and it is estimated that consumers collectively lost more than \$110 million since Next-Gen began its operation in 2013.

Upon discovering the fraudulent activity, the US Federal Trade Commission worked with international partners, including the UK's National Trading Standards Scams Team, to enable them to obtain the evidence needed to take Next-Gen to court.

Almost \$25 million will be returned to victims of the scam, with over \$631,000 (£523,075) paid out via prepaid Mastercard debit cards to those in the UK.

These payments include \$10,000 (£8,291) for Suffolk residents who were scammed, and Suffolk Trading Standards has recently hand-delivered refunds ranging from £30 to £1,000.

Graham Crisp, Head of Suffolk Trading Standards, said:

"In my 30 years with Suffolk Trading Standards, I have never seen a scam of such a large scale.

"The criminals behind this fraud callously preyed on some of society's most vulnerable people, promising life-changing prizes to tempt their victims into parting with their hard-earned cash.

"I am pleased that justice was sought, enabling us to assist our colleagues from the National Trading Standards Scams Team in distributing refunds to those in Suffolk who have suffered considerable losses."

Councillor Andrew Reid, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, added:

“Consumers in over 50 countries were lured in by this sophisticated sweepstake scheme, which included personalised emails to help the competition seem legitimate.

“Many people may think themselves too savvy to fall for scams, but fraudsters are using increasingly clever techniques to make correspondence appear genuine and anyone can be a victim.

“It is important for us all to remain vigilant and not make payments to unknown companies, however attractive the reward on offer may appear to be. If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.”

Next-Gen conducted its fraud via email and letters, with postal scams on the rise, but only around 5% of these crimes ever being reported.

To help tackle this, the Friends Against Scams Team is running a [SCAMnesty campaign](#) to encourage everyone in the UK to send any unwanted scam and nuisance mail they receive to the National Trading Standards Scams Team free of charge.

Postal and email scams can also be reported to Suffolk Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on **0808 223 1133**.