



March 2023

Welcome to my monthly newsletter

East Suffolk Council budget approved

East Suffolk Council reaffirmed its commitment to investment in local communities by approving a budget of over £30million to fund essential services in 2023/24.

The spending plan, to help improve the lives of residents over the coming financial year, was agreed by councillors at February's full council meeting.



Additionally, in the five years up to and including 2026/27, a forecast £410m will go towards major projects as part of the overall General Fund Capital Programme, and an additional £83m on housing development and new build schemes, and maintenance of existing housing stock.

More than £287m has been raised from external grants and contributions towards the cost of our General Fund capital project programme. This includes a £24.9m Towns Fund grant to regenerate Lowestoft, driving economic growth and acting as a catalyst for future investment, and rising to a potential £35.9m with the addition of matched funding, while UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Fund grants will support local business, people and skills throughout the district.

A General Fund Revenue Budget of £30.1m for 2023/24 includes £16.37million in council tax, which makes up just over 50% of the money we receive. However, the portion of council tax East Suffolk receives (around 10% of the total bill) will only increase by 2.81%, or £4.95 for the entire year on the annual bill of a Band D property.

Suffolk councils secure £2.2m to improve tenants' quality of life



Suffolk's district and borough councils have secured £2.2m of Government funding to improve the standard of private rented homes.

The successful joint bid, led by East Suffolk Council, with Babergh, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk and West Suffolk councils, will see funding awarded over two years by the Department of Housing, Levelling Up and Communities, from a share of its £14m Private Rented Sector (PRS) Pathfinder Programme.

The funding will be used to create and support additional roles, offering advice and support to tenants and landlords, and taking enforcement action against those who continue to let poor quality housing.

It will also enable the councils to continue working collaboratively, pooling resources to improve the standards of privately rented homes as part of the Suffolk PRS - Empower, Encourage, Enforce project.

Focusing on engagement, the project will give landlords, tenants and communities a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Eligible landlords and tenants will also be signposted to available grants to assist with the cost of improving properties.

New small electrical recycling



I am delighted to launch this month a trial recycling scheme to enable residents in East Suffolk to drop off small electrical appliances, such as toasters, kettles, hair dryers and electric toothbrushes. Known as e-waste, more than 155,000 tonnes of household electrical



waste is dumped across the UK each year, while 527 million electrical items are hoarded in UK homes.

But electrical and electronic items, including both mains and battery-powered devices, contain small quantities of hazardous materials which mean they can't be disposed of through general waste or recycling bins at home. Instead, homeowners are being encouraged to drop items in the pink bins or sell or donate them to charity, while they can also be taken to a local repair café to be repaired and donated, or to the nearest Suffolk Recycling Centre. The only thing we ask is NO batteries

The aim is to encourage residents to recycle more electrical items, removing clutter from their homes and enabling the valuable materials such as precious metals contained in electrical items to be reused in the manufacture of new items

The new bins are located at Tesco stores in Kesgrave and Martlesham, as well as in Market Place, Saxmundham.

Love East Suffolk litter picks

Residents are being called upon to get involved in community litter picking this spring to help improve the appearance of the area and benefit local wildlife.

East Suffolk Council is making the call as part of the Love East Suffolk scheme, which supports the national Great British Spring Clean being organised by Keep Britain Tidy. Litter picking equipment, including hi-vis vests, litter pickers and bags are available for participating groups to collect from Ufford or Lowestoft and arrangements can be made for collected litter to be removed by East Suffolk Norse.

Participating groups are invited to contribute photos of their litter pick by sending them to communications@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

To register a litter pick, visit <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/waste/litter/love-east-suffolk/>

'Pardon the Weeds' returns to create a buzz for third year



An annual scheme to promote biodiversity and cultivate East Suffolk's wildlife population is set to return for a third year.

Launched in 2020 as part of East Suffolk Council's commitment to the protecting the environment, the 'Pardon the Weeds, We're Feeding the Bees' campaign allows green spaces to grow and thrive with wildlife. The reduced mowing programme aims to improve habitat for a variety of flora, fauna, animals and insects, including our crucial bee population, by letting grass and flowers grow wild.

This year, the scheme has expanded in scale to encompass 135 sites, which will be left to grow until late August/September. Each site is marked with a bright yellow sign, asking passers-by to 'Pardon the Weeds, We're Feeding the Bees', making residents and visitors aware of the scheme.

Areas are selected based on being large enough to provide an environmental benefit without presenting any safety issues for local communities. Town and parish councils, supported by grounds and maintenance partners from East Suffolk Norse, will monitor the areas to remove litter and control any invasive plant species.

East Suffolk residents need photo ID to vote at elections in May



Residents in East Suffolk are being urged to make sure they are ready to vote in May by checking they have an accepted form of ID.

For the first time, voters will need to show photographic identification if they want to cast their ballot at this year's local elections. However, anyone currently without the correct ID can apply for free.

Accepted forms of ID include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK, EEA or Commonwealth drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes, such as an older person's bus pass or an Oyster 60+ card. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo.

Anyone who does not have one of the accepted forms of ID can apply for free ID online, or by completing a paper form.

You can find information about the new requirement and what to expect at the polling station on the Electoral Commission's website.

Misc

I held a number of successful surgeries first weekend of March across the ward.

Spoke to a number residents about various concerns from the closure of the doctor's surgery in Hollesley, lack of bus connection and supporting the Swan in Alderton.

I have been very concerned about the lack of community consultation on the closure of Hollesley's doctor's surgery. I have spoken to a number of residents and although I have no influence over NHS decisions I am helping residents to articulate their views. I recently contacted our Mp on behalf of my residents to ask for this decision to be urgently reviewed

James Mallinder
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