

June 2023 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Daffodil Planting Campaign Blooms Success

Tens of thousands of daffodil bulbs are set to sprout across East Suffolk next spring after being distributed to communities as part of an annual planting programme.

East Suffolk Council received 120 applications from voluntary and community groups to join the scheme and receive a free bunch of around 500 bulbs to plant this winter. An East Suffolk Blooms selection panel met to decide where the available 82 sets of narcissus bulbs would eventually find a home.

GLI Cllr Rachel Smith-Lyte, East Suffolk Council's cabinet member for Environment, said: "We had such a promisingly high number of applications from all over the district – with some groups and organisations so keen that they requested up to five sets. In the end, we chose 82 groups to each receive a set and help boost biodiversity while spreading colour through their communities.

"I can't wait to see these vibrant pollinators flowering across East Suffolk next spring and would encourage groups and individuals to continue to plant in their areas, even if they didn't get the opportunity for free bulbs this year."

East Suffolk Council Environmental Commitment

The council's ambition to become a carbon neutral council, in terms of our assets and operations, and to reach carbon neutrality by 2030, also includes trialling alternatives to glyphosate sprays. No sprays or pesticides are used in council-owned cemeteries and closed churchyards, unless as a final resort to remove invasive species, and glyphosate spraying on East Suffolk Council land has reduced by 45%.

East Suffolk Council's annual 'Pardon the weeds, we're feeding the bees' campaign has, since 2020, allowed grass and wildflowers to grow in more than 100 spaces in order to help wildlife thrive.

Young people in Kelsale and Yoxford offered free transport to First Light

Young people living in the Kelsale and Yoxford ward were invited to take advantage of free bus travel to the First Light Festival.

Supported by GLI Cllr Julia Ewart, East Suffolk Council's ward member for Kelsale and Yoxford and working with Halesworth Area Community Transport, two minibuses were available to transport young people between 13 and 17 years old to the free festival in Lowestoft.

Cllr Ewart said: "Working with our Communities Team, we've arranged this free transport to ensure that young people in rural communities have an opportunity to experience the magic of the First Light Festival. It will ensure youngsters can safely travel to and from the event and enjoy the rich creative experience on offer. I'm thrilled that we have been able to arrange this and thank all those who have made it possible."

#ShakeItOut

The #ShakeItOut campaign has been launched by the Suffolk Waste Partnership to encourage households in Suffolk to help improve recycling rates across the county by making sure black bin bags and other plastic sacks are not thrown in with recyclable materials.

The Partnership, made up of the county, district and borough councils in Suffolk, says more than a quarter (26%) of the materials in Suffolk's recycling bins in 2022/23 were not able to be processed as they were spoiled.

Items that contributed to spoiled recycling collections included:

- Materials that were not clean and dry, or contained food and drink residue
- Rubbish sacks or plastic bags containing recycling
- Non-recyclable items, such as nappies and food waste

Plastic bags and rubbish sacks are a particular problem – recycling handlers can't see what's inside them and they are often full of rubbish or other non-recyclable items.

For more information, visit: www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/shake-it-out

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

East Suffolk Council has been allocated £2.75m to invest across two and a half years (2022/23 - 24/25) in initiatives that will address inequality and contribute to levelling up. This is in addition to the £3.75m Multiply element of the UKSPF, which Suffolk County Council can apply for to support adult numeracy across the county. The funding can only be unlocked upon submission of an Investment Plan which is signed off by both the council and the government. To develop the East Suffolk Investment Plan, the council gathered stakeholder input through a public survey to invite local stakeholders to give their views on what are the most pressing local challenges that need to be addressed, and the projects and initiatives that could best address them. This input was combined with data about the local area and existing funding, the Government criteria and wider strategic priorities to inform the development of the East Suffolk investment plan. East Suffolk Council received official approval from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for our UKSPF Investment Plan on 5 December 2022.

East Suffolk Council have launched a series of grant schemes as part of our eight key programmes, including: Events, Art and Culture Grant; East Suffolk Pantries Grant and the Move to Net Zero Grant. There are multiple rounds of applications for these grants; for example, the East Suffolk Events, Arts and Culture Grant scheme which is designed to increase footfall and visitor numbers to our high streets and diversify town centre uses. East Suffolk Council are particularly keen to see activities that build on or further develop the East Suffolk Town Celebrations concept and building and enhancing on existing events or activities but focusing on the town centre. This could be through photography, poetry and storytelling, gaming, theatre and education. The fund is available to community and voluntary groups, placed based associations, charities, social enterprises, community interest company's, town and parish councils and businesses associated with the culture and arts sector who are located within the geographical area of East Suffolk.

Following a successful first round, the second round of funding applications is now open. Grants of between £5,000 - £10,000 per application are available and applications close on 28th July.

For more information, visit: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/uk-shared-prosperity-fund

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:
www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

My work

I've been selected as the Deputy Cabinet Member for Resources, which is an exciting route straight to the heart of budget allocations at ESC. I'm also the Chairman of Licensing Committee. It's been a busy two months getting stuck into the role, and I'm pleased to say I've now been to all eight parish councils that make up the Rendlesham and Orford ward. What a lot of good work there is happening all across the ward, and what a lot of engaged and committed citizens giving their time to their communities. It's a heartening prospect to be able to work alongside them all for the next few years.

So far I've been surprised and pleased at how efficient the council seems to be. There are certainly frustrations already at the pace, which is predictably slow, and at the lack of flexibility for exceptions to any given rule. But I remain really energised about the work and about gripping the issues we all face in East Suffolk, from the local to the global.

I've been working hard on a handful of advocacy cases with Suffolk County Council on school bus places for people in Tunstall, Orford and Iken.

Along with the Officers in Licensing, I've been examining the possible policies for East Suffolk's Hackney Carriage License Criteria, to see if we are as environmentally friendly as we can be.

Of course, planning permissions being granted or denied is always a hot agenda item, in every village, and in each case I am trying to learn as much as possible about the area, and the sensitivities involved, and here more than anywhere else, trying to represent the people of the ward at council level, rather than impose any external views.

Lastly I've been pleased to join the rest of the Greens, Independents and Liberals in forming the administrations policy plans which will be announced in due course.