

TUNSTALL PARISH COUNCIL

SCC OCTOBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Trading Standards seize 2,500 illegal vapes in Ipswich

Devices that supplied hundreds more puffs than the legal limit are found in a shop storeroom.

Suffolk Trading Standards has seized more than 2,000 illegal vapes from a shop in Ipswich.

Approximately 2,500 vapes were found in a storeroom when officers visited the premises following a successful test purchase of illegal tobacco.

Used properly, vapes and e-cigarettes can be a successful way of helping people to stop smoking. But criminals are capitalising on this, leading to a rise in illegal vapes. In addition, some retailers are increasingly selling vapes to underage children, who are often enticed by the colourful packaging and sweet flavours.

The seized vapes are illegal because they supply over the number of puffs allowed under the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016.

The regulations state that vapes should provide a maximum of 600 puffs, but these devices indicate between 3,500 puffs to up to more than 10,000.

Consumers can ensure the vape that they are purchasing is legal by checking the following:

- That the tank of a vape is a maximum size of 2ml, and the largest refill bottle is 10ml in size or less
- That all liquids come in childproof bottles displaying nicotine warnings and have an accompanying safety leaflet
- That vapes have a nicotine strength of no more than 20mg/ml, or 2%
- That a maximum number of around 600 puffs is offered

Anyone who suspects that a business is inappropriately selling vaping materials can report this in confidence to Suffolk Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133**.

More LINK foster carers are urgently needed in Suffolk

A column by Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Deputy Cabinet Member for Children & Young Peoples Services with responsibility for Fostering and Adoption.

Suffolk County Council urgently needs to recruit more LINK foster carers for children with additional needs and disabilities. LINK foster carers serve as a lifeline for parents and carers of children with disabilities, providing essential breaks in their caregiving responsibilities.

Unlike some other types of foster care, LINK care is a voluntary arrangement, often suggested to families as a means of supporting the family unit. It is designed to be a long-term commitment, with the goal of the LINK carer becoming an extension of the family. They resemble a reliable family friend, trusted and equipped with the skills to offer practical short break care to these children. Some of the most successful LINK arrangements in Suffolk have lasted well into the child's teenage years.

LINK care offers flexibility, ranging from a few hours per month on a weekend to several nights per month. It provides children with disabilities the chance to explore new environments and form close relationships with trusted adults and their families. It also gives parents a much-needed break from their caregiving responsibilities, allowing them to get a good night's sleep, have a night away, or spend quality time with their other children.

LINK carers are particularly in demand for Suffolk's younger cohort of disabled children, typically between the ages of 3-8 years old. There is also a gap in the availability of those who use or are willing to learn British Sign Language to provide short break care for deaf children in Suffolk.

If you believe that you could become a LINK carer and make a positive difference in the lives of children, please do not hesitate to get in touch. The needs of children requiring LINK care can be diverse and varied, which is why LINK carers must possess qualities of kindness and empathy. They should be willing to learn about disabilities and open to training that equips them with the skills and knowledge needed to provide compassionate care to these children.

To find out more about this rewarding journey and how you can become a Link carer, we encourage you to visit our website www.fosterandadopt.suffolk.gov.uk/link-care, get in contact with us at fosterandadopt@suffolk.gov.uk or call 01473 264800. Your commitment can truly make a lasting impact on the lives of children in need.

Council urges communities to respond to Sea Link consultation

Suffolk County Council is preparing its response to proposals for a significant off-shore electricity connection which could affect Saxmundham and Aldeburgh. It is encouraging local residents and businesses to do the same.

Sea Link is a proposal for a new 2 gigawatt subsea high voltage direct current electricity connection developed by National Grid Electricity Transmission. It is approximately 140km in length and predominately offshore.

A [statutory consultation](#) opened to the public on 24 October, and closes on 18 December 2023.

The council remains concerned about the lack of coordination with this, and other offshore energy projects such as Nautilus and Lionlink. It also fears for the impact on local coastal communities and the environment.

Plans for Sea Link include:

- a connection from the existing transmission network via the consented, but as yet unbuilt, Friston Substation
- landfall on the Suffolk coast between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness
- a 2 GW high voltage direct current (HVDC) converter station up to 26 metres high plus external equipment (such as lightning protection & railings for walkways) near Saxmundham
- a high voltage alternating current (HVAC) underground cable of approximately 1.7 km in length between the proposed Friston Substation and the proposed converter station
- 10 km of HVDC underground cable between Saxmundham, and a transition joint bay (TJB) approximately 900 m inshore from a landfall point between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness

In December 2022, the council submitted [a 58-page response](#) to NGET's non-statutory consultation, outlining its concerns to the initial Sea Link proposals. It will continue to engage with National Grid to achieve best possible outcomes for the communities and the environment.

For more information, see below:

Sea Link information on National Grid website:

<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/sealink>

Suffolk County Council's responses to Sea Link:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/major-infrastructure-projects/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-nsips/national-grid-electricity-generation-sea-link>

[More than 200 properties flooded by Storm Babet](#)

True number could be much higher as councils urge people to report all flooded premises and government funding available to those who report flooding.

Interim figures show more than 200 properties in Suffolk were flooded by Storm Babet.

The number of flooded premises, including businesses and homes, is expected to be higher as Suffolk councils and emergency planners work together to compile a full list.

Councillor Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, said:

“It is absolutely key that all residents who suffered flood damage report the incident. I understand that the pressures of finding somewhere to live or work, or stripping out damaged belongings may have dominated people’s lives since Friday, but I would urge them to take the time to fill in a flood report online. We know that this financial support is urgently needed, and we will do everything in our power to get it out to home and business owners as soon as possible.”

On Wednesday, Communities Secretary Michael Gove and Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey announced a number of financial measures to support those who have experienced exceptional localised flooding.

Under the measures announced:

- Flooded households in affected areas can apply for up to £500 to give cash quickly to help with immediate costs.
- Households and businesses significantly affected by recent flooding will be eligible for 100% council tax and business rates relief for at least three months.
- Small-to-medium-sized businesses in affected areas will be eligible for up to £2,500 from the Business Recovery Grant to help them return quickly to business as usual.
- Eligible flood-hit property owners will be able to apply for up to £5,000 to help make their homes and businesses more resilient to future flooding via the Property Flood Resilience Repair Grant Scheme.

The support will be made available through a scheme known as the Flood Recovery Framework, which is used in exceptional circumstances to support councils and communities following severe flooding.

The full details of the scheme are yet to be announced by the Government, including where residents can apply and who is eligible. Suffolk County Council will share updates once received.

To report a flood visit the [report a flood in Suffolk](#) page. Alternatively, you can call the customer service number on 0345 606 6171.

Suffolk Residents invited to help shape the future of library services

A public consultation was launched on Monday 30 October, encouraging Suffolk Residents to tell Suffolk County Council what they want from their library services in the future.

Suffolk County Council’s contract with Suffolk’s Libraries Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) Limited, the independent charity that runs the library service, comes to an end on 31 May 2025, with a new contract set to begin in June 2025. The Council is therefore seeking views from the public about what is important, ahead of awarding the new contract.

The 13-week consultation will be followed by a competitive Tender Process, before the new contract is awarded in November 2024. To inform the consultation, the council has undertaken engagement with over 30 organisations including Suffolk's Libraries IPS Limited staff, key service users, schools and partner organisations.

A key focus of the consultation is the council's Library outreach services, which include three mobile library vehicles, serving more than 500 stops across rural parts of the county each month, for the pickup and exchange of books. The mobile library vehicles are coming to the end of their life and the council therefore needs to consider the best way to continue to deliver these services to people in rural areas of the county going forward.

Library Outreach services also include Pop-up Libraries and a home library service, run by local volunteers, for Suffolk residents that find it difficult to access a library building or mobile library.

The consultation is made up of two parts. Part one gives residents an opportunity to tell the council what they value in their library service and what they would like to see more of. Part two seeks views on how Library Outreach services could be run in the future.

The council is keen to hear from people who currently use library services and those who do not, to better understand the needs across the county. This feedback will help to inform the requirements for the future contract.

The value of the new contract will be £6.8m per year, increased from the previous contract value of £5.9m. The increase takes into account increased service costs, management of the Library Outreach service, and to allow for innovation in future years. The term of the contract will be 6 years, with the option to extend for a further 6 years.

The consultation is open from today, Monday 30 October, until Friday 26 January.

Residents can have their say by visiting www.suffolk.gov.uk/LibraryConsultation

Alternative formats of the consultation are available on request, please email: Libraries.consultation@suffolk.gov.uk

Those who cannot access the consultation online can request a printed copy or assistance with completing the survey by calling 0345 603 1842.

Consultation results will be considered by the Council at its Cabinet meeting in March 2024.

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