



## September 2020

Welcome to my monthly newsletter

### **New name as Leisure Centre gets ready to re-open**

Work to complete the £3.4m refurbishment of the former Bungay Pool & Gym was completed last week and the facility, which will be renamed 'Waveney Valley Leisure Centre' will be re-opening in October. Initially estimated to take around 10 months to complete, Covid-19 meant that work was slightly delayed.

As well as renewing the mechanical and electrical systems, the work included new changing rooms, showers and toilet, including improved disabled facilities; a new café area with a pool view area, WiFi and air conditioning; new, modern gym equipment and a refurbished studio; a purpose-built spin studio; a new sauna; new tiling in and around the pool and refurbishment of the flume; and improvements to the car parking area.

This is the third centre to undergo a full refurbishment as part of the Council's commitment to improve its leisure facilities and to encourage more people to exercise regularly. This follows Deben and Leiston leisure centres, both of which have undergone major and hugely successful improvements in the past three years.

Places Leisure, who operate the Council's leisure centres in the south of the district, have been awarded an interim operational contract for Waveney Valley and will also manage Waterlane Leisure Centre, following the end of Sentinel Leisure Trust's operational contract at both centres. Delays to the contractual/procurement process caused by Covid-19 means that it has not been possible to appoint a permanent operator yet, however, a decision is expected to be taken in December.

Meanwhile, as part of the Council's ongoing improvement programme for its leisure centres, essential specialised work, which has been unable to proceed until now due to Covid-19, will also be undertaken at Waterlane this Autumn.

The work will include replacing the equipment and flooring in the gym, upgrading the lighting and adding new flooring in the sports hall as well as repairing showers and decoration throughout. The pool area will also see improvements with plans to empty the pool to repair the teaching pool moveable floor and the pool tiles.

Waterlane will close on 15 October and the work is expected to take around 3 months to complete. Members will be kept fully informed during the works and will be encouraged to use other facilities such as the Waveney Valley during the period of closure.

### **Simplified parking tariffs being rolled out**

Following a delay caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, East Suffolk Council has now begun rolling out new parking tariffs across the district – including a simplified pricing structure and free half hour parking across a number of sites.

Reducing over 50 different price points to just three or four main ticket types across the district, the new price structure will see prices reduced or frozen in over 70% of cases.

Additionally, the Council has introduced 30 minutes free parking in a number of car parks to support people who have told us that they make regular short visits. This will also support local businesses who will benefit from drivers making quick turnarounds in car parks.

The staggered roll out started in Bungay on 24 August and will continue throughout the district over the next few weeks.

East Suffolk Council is also continuing to make the best use of technology to improve services by making them more efficient, and has seen an increase of 129% on contactless payments in its car parks as visitors take advantage of the simple RingGo app to park with ease and confidence.

Available in all East Suffolk's car parks, RingGo is a quick and easy to use mobile phone service which lets people pay for their parking with a credit or debit card, via an app, rather than using cash at the machine. This means that drivers no longer need to queue at the machine or handle cash to pay for their parking.

Parking management moved from the police to East Suffolk Council in April 2020, to improve parking locally and tackle nuisance and unlawful parking, enabling the Council to address the parking problems that are affecting communities the most.

Alongside this, the Council also reviewed how it administered on-street parking permits, exemptions and dispensations. As a result of this, a new online parking portal has been put in place, enabling residents and others to apply for and manage permits online. This is a new system which is separate to 'My East Suffolk', and people will need to register before using. The system also recognises valid permits from a vehicle's registration number, meaning that permit holders will no longer need to remember to display their permits.

### **Council considers Sizewell C plans**

Early September we called an extraordinary meeting of the full council to discuss Sizewell .

The Council's priority is to ensure, should Sizewell C new nuclear power station be granted consent by the Secretary of State, that the best possible outcome is achieved for local communities, by virtue of maximising benefits, minimising adverse impacts, and achieving mitigation and compensatory measures for the district.

I spoke at length on environmental impact and in particular highlighted the pollution caused by a predominantly road orientated transport solution and negative effects from increased sea defences – both issues may cause concern for the Deben Peninsula .

You can view my speech :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cZQgjlQ2Zs>

I start at 22 mins

### **Work on new seafront eatery has started**

Work on a new café/restaurant in the heart of Felixstowe's South Seafront started last month, bringing a new exciting resort experience to the area.

Local building company, Barnes Construction, is carrying out the work on the new landmark building, with the development estimated to be completed in summer 2021.

The Dedham Boathouse Group will be taking on the running of the new eatery once it is ready to open, offering indoor and outdoor dining with unspoilt views of the sea.

The development is part of a bigger project of ongoing investments in the South Seafront area, where the Martello Park has already delivered new homes, a play area and new car parking facilities. The Council has also invested in the refurbishing the two public shelters on the South Seafront and the long-term maintenance of its historic Martello, which forms the centrepiece of the park.

The £1.5 million project is funded by East Suffolk Council and the Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) which was launched in 2012 to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs in coastal areas. CCF awarded the Council £950,000 grant funding which enabled the project to go ahead. Additional funding of £30,000 was also awarded from the Coastal Revival Fund.

### **Celebrating East Suffolk's beaches**

Three of East Suffolk's beautiful beaches have been awarded 'Seaside Awards', placing them amongst the best in the country.

Each year, the country's best beaches are awarded Blue Flags and Seaside Awards by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy. This year, Seaside Awards have been awarded to

the beaches at Lowestoft South of Claremont Pier (bathing / resort), Southwold (bathing / resort) and Kessingland (non-bathing).

Additionally, Felixstowe Town Council and Felixstowe Forward, supported by East Suffolk Council, have successfully secured both a Blue Flag and a Seaside Award for Felixstowe beach (Felixstowe South and Pier).

### **Council charges forward with new electric vehicles**



We are pleased to announce a number of new electric vehicles with our partners Norse. This is an important flagship initiative to meet our environment vision, policy implementation to meet the strategic plan and to implement practical measures to meet carbon neutrality by 2030 as a direct result of declaring a climate emergency.

### **Smart Towns project receives £450,000 boost**

As part of the Government's £900m Getting Building Fund, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership has been awarded £32.1m in funding to help deliver jobs, skills and infrastructure in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The East Suffolk Smart Towns scheme has been selected to benefit from this £32.1m and will receive £250,000 to cover the capital cost of installing digital town technology, such as free to use WiFi, footfall tracking sensors, analytics and retail apps in both Lowestoft and Felixstowe.

In addition, the project will receive £200,000 from New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's 'Innovative Projects Fund' to enable Smart Towns to be rolled out across 11 market towns in East Suffolk. This follows a successful trial of the scheme in Framlingham last year.

As well as free WiFi and footfall tracking, the Smart Towns project will deliver the digital business 'springboard'. This innovative business support initiative aims to deliver bespoke digital diagnostics and interventions according to business need. This will operate as a procured 'business ecosystem', developing creative digital adaptations, expert workshops and digital upskilling of businesses and towns.

I arranged for a letter to be sent to our Mps expressing concerns of lack of legislation in dealing with the environment . In particular in planning and dealing with recycling / waste issues

**James Mallinder**  
**Deben Ward**  
**Environment Portfolio holder**