

## **Bawdsey Parish Council**

### **SCC Newsletter – October 2021**

#### **Extra COVID-19 support heading to Suffolk**

Public health bosses in Suffolk have welcomed the Government's commitment to provide extra resources to help fight COVID-19 in the county. It comes as pressure on the county's hospitals is reaching critical levels due to more people needing treatment and some of the highest rates of infection in the country.

A request for additional support was submitted earlier this week by Public Health Suffolk - on behalf of public sector partners - and is intended to secure in additional support, funding and resources to help the NHS avoid unsustainable pressure. The additional support will include:

- Support for the vaccination efforts by extending opening hours and creating pop up vaccination clinic within our communities
- Help to coordinate on the ground door knocking campaigns
- Help to reduce transmission in schools with increased testing and additional temporary powers
- Funding for COVID-19 awareness raising communications and advertising.

From Monday 1 November, Suffolk has become an 'Enhanced Response Area' (ERA) for up to five weeks. This approach has already been used in other parts of the country to help reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission within the community and is also being taken in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough at the same time.

To help reduce the spread, residents in Suffolk are now being encouraged to:

- Get fully vaccinated and your booster when it's due
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water
- Always wear a face covering in crowded areas
- Ventilate indoor spaces
- Get tested regularly and stay at home if you feel unwell

It's the latest move to slow the spread of virus which has made a particular impact among Suffolk's school age children and, consequently, their parents and grandparents. Earlier this month, additional measures, including siblings of children with COVID self-isolating, restrictions on visits to schools and older children and adults wearing face masks, were reintroduced. The face mask policy starts on Monday 1 November.

Any such support does not mean any additional restrictions on people's movements or actions. It is not a lockdown or like the tiering system that was trialled in England in 2020. Instead, it will boost the county's ability to raise awareness, tackle outbreaks and encourage people to get vaccinated.

#### **Cabinet to study £50 million plan to boost Suffolk bus services**

On October 7<sup>th</sup> it was announced that wider coverage, cheaper fares, improved ticketing, and better evening and weekend services are among proposals forming part of a £50 million plan. Subject to approval by the Suffolk County Council Cabinet, the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) will be submitted to the Government by the end of the month. Following on from the submission of the BSIP, the council, bus operators and other stakeholders will be working together to establish a countywide

Enhanced Partnership. This will enable the BSIP proposals to be delivered, building on experience gained from the existing Ipswich Quality Bus Partnership.

The funding bid is being made to the government's £3 billion fund under its Bus Back Better national bus strategy for England. Suffolk County Council will be asking for a minimum of £50m over three years - £15m each for the first two years and £20m for the third.

**A report to Cabinet members said:**

"The Bus Back Better National Bus Strategy provides a real opportunity to be ambitious in delivering a bus service for Suffolk that will support sustainable transport and the Council's carbon reduction ambitions."

Other proposed features include:

- Reviewing service frequency on Suffolk's key corridors, including evenings and weekend services
- Simplified services - including regular timetabled buses and 'demand-responsive' services
- Expanding the experimental Katch electric demand-responsive bus, which is currently being piloted between Framlingham and Campsea Ashe for Wickham Market station to other rural areas
- Identify and implement bus priority opportunities and changes to parking on key corridors, with particular focus on the 'last mile' where buses are delayed by congestion approaching key destinations
- Lower fares for those aged up to 25
- Contactless touch-on and touch-off ticketing and daily fare caps
- Multi-operator ticketing o Expanding rail and bus ticket options (PlusBus)
- Develop existing park and ride sites as mobility hubs and identify new ones to serve rural areas or new development sites o Explore merging Ipswich's two bus stations into one main hub

The Cabinet agreed this approach at its meeting on Tuesday 12 October.

Read the:

- [agenda containing the full report](#)
- [Bus Back Better strategy for England](#) (GOV.UK)

## **New discoveries of Suffolk's Anglo-Saxon past unearthed in the Deben Valley**

It was announced on October 11<sup>th</sup> that archaeologists had uncovered evidence of settlement and community 1,400 years ago at the time of the earliest East Anglian kings.

Archaeological excavation near Rendlesham is adding to Suffolk's rich history, with archaeologists uncovering evidence of settlement and community 1,400 years ago at the time of the earliest East Anglian kings.

The discoveries have come as part of the community archaeology project Rendlesham Revealed: Anglo-Saxon Life in South-East Suffolk, run by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, who awarded a grant of £517,300 for the four-year project.

Summer 2021 saw the first season of archaeological excavation, which uncovered the remains of buildings and pits over a wide area indicating an extensive settlement whose inhabitants were

engaged in farming and craft working. Evidence that helps build up a picture of everyday life over 14 centuries ago includes:

- bones from butchered cattle, sheep and pigs, indicating the types of livestock that were kept and the meat that was eaten
- items associated with spinning and weaving, including spindle whorls and loomweights
- melted metal fragments and slag which indicate iron smithing and the manufacture of copper-alloy objects
- pottery vessels for cooking and storage
- items of dress, including a copper-alloy brooch and buckle

Soil samples were also taken which will give evidence of crop farming and the local environment of the past.

Discoveries of other periods of history were also made:

- field boundary ditches and pits pointing to agriculture and activity in the Bronze Age
- a settlement enclosure of the Iron Age
- a First World War training trench, probably dug by a battalion of the Territorial Force in 1914 or early 1915

The excavation was undertaken by local volunteers under the guidance of a small expert team co-ordinated by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and staff from the Suffolk Office of Cotswold Archaeology. More than 150 volunteers from the local community contributed to the summer's fieldwork, including from Suffolk Family Carers, Suffolk Mind and the local Rendlesham and Eyke primary schools.

## **MPs from Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex and County Councillors, unite to protect the countryside and communities from worst impacts of new pylons**

It was announced on October 12<sup>th</sup> that the Off Shore Electricity Grid Task Force (OffSET) has been set up to review and respond to the Government's Offshore Network Transmission Review (OTNR).

A new group of MPs from across the region, under the chairmanship of Sir Bernard Jenkin, and including County Councillors from the region, has been set up to ensure that the emerging proposals of the Government's Offshore Network Transmission Review (OTNR), and proposals to change the Nationally Significant infrastructure Planning regime, are effectively scrutinised.

The Off Shore Electricity Grid Task Force (OffSET) supports the government's commitment to meet the target of Net Zero by 2050, and the aspiration to deliver 40GW of Offshore Wind, by 2030. However, this will result in a succession of electricity generation and connection projects in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, over the coming decades, which will have significant impacts on the environment and communities of the region.

The group believes that these ambitions and targets cannot be met, on an "at any cost" basis. Therefore, the further development of the onshore transmission system, and the connection of offshore wind farms, and interconnectors, will require a new deal for communities and the environment. It remains a key priority that we speed up the Government's timetable to transition to the offshore transmission system, in order to protect our communities from the damaging effects of multiple cable corridors.

As well as scrutinising and responding to new policies and initiatives, the group will be a contact point for Ministers and senior officials, as well as for the National Grid, Crown Estate, and Ofgem, to engage

with Regional Leaders. The group will also be inviting key stakeholders and community groups to meet with them, to better understand the impacts, and opportunities, of Net Zero transmission and generation infrastructure in the region.

**OffSET's mission statement:**

"OffSET exists to promote strategic leadership of the development of a coordinated offshore electricity grid, to address the need for increased grid capacity which off-shore wind, coastal new nuclear, and international interconnectors will demand, while standing up for the countryside of East Anglia so that the welcome transition to net zero electricity generation does not do unnecessary damage to our communities or the environment."

**James Cartlidge MP, South Suffolk, said:**

"OffSET will play a vital role in ensuring that our region's voice is heard in the national conversation about how we boost the output of renewable energy. I am proud of the huge contribution that our region is making to reaching our net zero targets, but this cannot come at a disproportionate cost to our beautiful countryside. It is vital that at all times we balance the need to reinforce the electricity grid against minimising detriment to our landscape, e.g. by using undersea cables and undergrounding through sensitive landscapes."

**The Rt Hon Therese Coffey MP, Suffolk Coastal, said:**

"Whilst integrating multiple projects is undoubtedly the right thing to do, rather than having separate connections, it's essential our precious landscapes and communities are protected by placing the infrastructure in the appropriate place, preferably on brownfield land, like Bradwell."

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

"The County Council has long stated its support for renewable energy generation and the Government has quite rightly set ambitious targets in this area. However, to deliver on these it is essential that public support is maintained for the necessary transformation of the energy system. This means a much more coordinated approach is needed, with more transmission being delivered offshore. We must also see full engagement with our communities so that they and our unique natural environment are protected."

## **Suffolk County Council pledges to take its outstanding Sizewell concerns to the Secretary of State and the Government**

As the Sizewell C Examination draws to a close, Suffolk County Council has set out in its final response.

The council has raised a number of important concerns that it now feels must be taken up directly with the Government's Secretary of State on behalf of the communities of Suffolk.

Throughout the many rounds of consultation and examination of EDF Energy's plans and proposals for a new nuclear plant on the Suffolk coast under the name SZC Co, the county council has used every opportunity to promote the community's response, influencing and moving many aspects of the initial proposal into a much more considered proposition.

The latest proposals include a promise of a great deal of new investment from the energy supplier into local infrastructure, upskilling local people and compensating the local economy and environmental impacts that the project would pose if it went ahead.

In its final response, submitted to the Examining Authority on Tuesday 12 October 2021, Suffolk County Council has made its position clear that while much has been achieved during the last 12

months, the additional pylons around the site continue to pose significant blight to the natural landscape and character of the area. This comes after alternative options were rejected by EDF Energy. There remains concern that EDF Energy's current surface water drainage strategy is not fit for purpose which is very important given the scale of the development. The county council is therefore saying there is still more work to be done.

The council wants to see the removal of the planned Sizewell Link Road after the power station is built to avoid a lasting impact on the environment.

At present, an auxiliary car park used during station maintenance outages is planned for land which is classed as part of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at Goose Hill, this would damage natural habitats unnecessarily.

The other area of concern is the design of the planned road crossing through the local Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI). Although the design has moved in the right direction through positive stakeholder discussion, it does not represent the desired 'Three-Span' Bridge which the council has pushed for to provide greater protection to local wildlife and natural habitat.

Read the county council's response in full on the [Sizewell C nuclear power plant page](#).

## Face masks back as additional measures brought in to reduce Covid-19 transmission in Suffolk schools and education settings

From October 20<sup>th</sup> face masks and restrictions on visitors are to be reintroduced to Suffolk schools to help slow the current rate of transmission in education settings.

SCC are advising that the following measures be implemented from the 1 November 2021.

- **Staff** in all education settings (primary, secondary, and higher education) to wear face coverings in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons.
- **Students** in all secondary and higher education settings to wear face coverings in communal areas outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons.
- All education settings to restrict entry to their site to essential visitors only.
- Any visitors to wear a face covering while on-site, this includes adults collecting children in the playground.

On October 6, SCC introduced a new sibling policy, which advised children and young people aged between 4 and 18 years to stay at home when a sibling they live with tests positive for COVID-19. This applies to schools with an outbreak of Covid-19 and is still in place.

The number of cases within children and young people aged 10-14 has increased by almost 15% and cases amongst 15–19-year-olds has increased by 32% in the past week of data. This means that in October alone school children in Suffolk have lost 26,264 days of education due to positive cases of Covid-19. There has also been an increase in cases amongst other age ranges across Suffolk, which may be due in part, to family transmission.

These measures will be reviewed during the week commencing Monday 15 November 2021.

## Lorry Route Plan review in Suffolk

The Lorry Route Plan for the county was last updated in 2011. Hence the Transport Strategy Team at the County Council has launched a technical and community-led review of lorry routes that considers changes to the highway network, which may include:

- new strategic roads
- new Lorry Watch areas
- Air Quality Management Areas in Suffolk

The review involves two parts and will update and validate the County Council's existing lorry route network plan.

#### 1) Technical Review

The technical review is currently taking place. It is looking at a range of evidence including:

- Collision records and traffic data
- Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for weight, width and height restrictions
- The resilient road network and its strategic road network diversions as well as GPS data – showing the origin and destination of trips, routes taken and the locations of building strikes
- Public complaints
- Data from Lorry Watch schemes.

#### 2) Community Led Review

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The community led review runs from **22 October 2021** to **17 December 2021**.

Suffolk County Council is seeking the views of Parish and Town Councils about their local issues.

Information is being gathered by a survey sent to all of Suffolk's Parish and Town Councils and their County Councillor will then be asked to endorse the key issues for their area. Each local council will be limited to three issues within their community to ensure fair and equal representation across the county.

The assessment of the results will be completed in Spring **2022** when the County Council plans to publish a new interactive Lorry Route map.

For more information click here: [Lorry Route Plan review in Suffolk | Suffolk County Council](#)

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