



## November 2021

Welcome to my monthly newsletter

[East Suffolk magazine](#) – out now and online!



The latest East Suffolk Magazine - with news and a wide range of information about Council projects, activities and services - is out now - and guess who is on the cover .....

Produced by the Communications & Marketing team, with contributions from colleagues around the council, it is delivered to every household in the district, twice a year.

You can also read it online at <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Your-Council/East-Suffolk-Magazine/011-East-Suffolk-Magazine-October-2021.pdf>

This edition is not only packed with information, it also contains a survey which anyone who lives or works in East Suffolk is welcome and encouraged to complete. Turn to page 8 for the details or go to [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/survey](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/survey).

### **Culture still the focus in East Suffolk**

Our joint bid with Great Yarmouth did not make the longlist for the UK City of Culture 2025 competition. Whilst this is obviously disappointing news, our ambition to shine a light on the wealth of amazing arts and cultural groups and activities in East Suffolk firmly remains. Our bid has brought people together to talk about the potential of the area and we fully intend to keep that momentum going. The key focus for our joint bid was to offer and promote cultural activities which our communities could get involved with and we will continue to do that wherever possible.

### **Free event focuses on eco-friendly agriculture**

A free online event is taking place next month to explore examples of eco-friendly agriculture in East Suffolk and how others can follow.

Titled 'Farming Today, Fit for Tomorrow', attendees can learn more about sustainable farming and how we can all help to fight climate change by thinking about how our food is grown.

Organised by the East Suffolk Greenprint Forum, the event will include guest speakers from Suffolk Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, Oak Tree Community Farm, Maple Farm Kelsale, Peach and Pippin, Wakelyns Agroforestry and Fobbing Farm.

The event is taking place on Friday 19 November at 2pm – 4pm on Zoom and is open to everyone, however, registration is required at [https://my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/service/Greenprint\\_Forum\\_event\\_registration](https://my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/service/Greenprint_Forum_event_registration)

### **Bringing empty properties back into use**

We're continuing work to reduce the number of long-term empty properties in East Suffolk as they are a wasted resource, often becoming a target for vandalism, arson, squatters, fly-tipping and other criminal behaviour.

As part of this, we review properties which Council Tax data reveals have stood empty for more than 6 months on an annual basis. Properties which have been empty for more than 2 years but would provide good quality housing that would benefit the community, are priorities during these reviews.

The last review, which was carried out in October 2021, showed that the number of long-term empty properties in East Suffolk has fallen dramatically over the past 12 months, with a 23% decline in properties standing empty for more than 2 years and a 50% decline in properties standing empty for more than 6 months.

Some long-term empty properties may become part of our housing stock to provide much-needed affordable housing, whilst also address regeneration, such as 87 The High Street in Lowestoft which stood empty within the Heritage Action Zone, in a very poor condition, for

more than 6 years. We purchased the property and plans are now being prepared to convert the whole building into flats which may be retained to provide homes for council tenants.

We will continue to work with, and support, owners to help them return long-term empty properties to a positive use, providing much-needed good quality housing in East Suffolk.

More information on what help is available if you own a long-term empty property and how to report a property is available at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/housing/empty-properties/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/housing/empty-properties/)

### **Lowestoft resident charged over nuisance noise offences**

A Lowestoft man has been fined over £2,000 for continuing to play loud music, despite being given a notice to stop.

At a hearing at Suffolk Magistrates' Court on Friday 15 October, David Learmonth from Burnham Way in Lowestoft was found guilty of breaching Section 80(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and failing to comply with an abatement notice served under Section 80(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, contrary to Sections 80(4) and 80(5) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Mr Learmonth attended the court but was denied attendance to the hearing due to threatening behaviour towards staff earlier in the day. Permission was granted to proceed in his absence.

The court fined Mr Learmonth a total of £2,040 for the offences, comprising £500 for two charges of breaching the abatement notice, £940 in costs and £100 for the victim surcharge.

Under the Noise Act 1996, the court also ordered the forfeiture of Mr Learmonth's sound equipment, including a bass box, CDs, a sound bar and several sets of speakers.

### **Funding boost for innovative new youth project**

Earlier this week, cabinet agreed to allocate £101,650 for a two-year pilot project which aims to support young people in rural parts of East Suffolk as they face ongoing challenges from the pandemic.

Delivered by Community Action Suffolk, the Rural Youth Support Project will initially focus on the four most rural Community Partnership areas in East Suffolk, which are within the Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and villages Community Partnership, the Carlton Colville, Kessingland and villages Community Partnership, the Framlingham, Wickham Market and villages Community Partnership and Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsula Community Partnership.

The aim of the project is to provide support tailored to each community, which will be based on engagement with its young people about their needs. This could include providing more social opportunities with a youth café or youth club, supporting a healthier lifestyle with activity sessions or making services more accessible with carpools.

Youth Voice is a district wide youth forum, which enables young people to share their views directly with East Suffolk Council. Initially, this was done via our 'Youth Voice collection boxes', however, it has now been made even easier and more accessible with an online form. For more details, go to [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/youthvoice/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/youthvoice/)

### Surveys and consultations

We are currently running a number of surveys but I just want to highlight two that are importance to us -

- The Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document Consultation on draft document which will provide guidance on our planning policies on sustainable construction, including guidance on a range of topics relating to the construction of environmentally sustainable buildings. People have until 13 December to comment: <https://eastsuffolk.inconsult.uk/SUSCONSPDDRAFT/consultationHome>
- The draft East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy Consultation on draft document which provides a district-wide shortlist of cycling and walking infrastructure opportunities. The strategy aims to encourage greater use of sustainable forms of transport, reduce contributions to climate change, support the growth of the tourism industry, and to improve the health and wellbeing of residents by ensuring more trips to work, school, leisure, day-to-day errands, or public transport hubs, such as train stations or park and ride sites, are accessible by bike or on foot. Once adopted, this strategy will replace the Waveney Cycle Strategy (2016) and will cover the whole of the district. People can have their say on the consultation until 10 January at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/cbc57e4a9cc24e4a7d174fb34b1bf0e>

### Community Partnership Grant

The Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsula Community Partnership has launched a third round of its Small Grant Scheme which offers funding to voluntary and community groups within the Partnership.

The Youth Engagement Grant Scheme offers funding to projects aimed at improving the opportunities and services available to young people. This could include providing new activities centred around life skills, fun or leisure or improving or creating new outdoor spaces or play equipment.

The Village Hubs Grant Scheme offers funding to projects aimed at creating or improving village hubs to the benefit of the wider community. This could include assistance in making premises in the area fit for use as a community hub or supporting mobile services in bringing provisions to a village.

#### Misc

I am running the Southwold 10 K run on the 28<sup>th</sup> November to raise funds for the Eyke village hall refurbishment

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/james-mallinder>

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