



# District Councillors Report to Grundisburgh and Culpho Parish Council For the Annual Parish Meeting, and Parish Council Meeting.

For April/May 2022

**Carlford and Fynn Valley Ward.**

Rushmere Village, Great Bealings, Little Bealings, Playford, Bredfield, Grundisburgh & Culpho, Witnesham and Swilland, Westerfield, Hasketon, Clopton, Charsfield, Dallinghoo, Tuddenham, Boulge, Burgh, Debach, Otley.

**From District Councillor**

**CLlr Colin Hedgley and CLlr Tony Fryatt.**

## **Introduction.**

What is the Annual Parish Meeting? Strictly this is the Annual Meeting of the Parish. It is also known as the Annual Parish Meeting and as the Annual Parish Assembly, they are all the same thing. The Annual Parish Meeting is the meeting where the parish council report to its electorate on what it has accomplished in the preceding year. The Annual Parish Meeting should be a relatively informal event for the community whereas the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council is a formal council meeting. There should be an opportunity for the public and press to express their opinions on what the council are doing during the meeting. Many town and parish councils make this meeting a community event by providing refreshments, presentations from community groups and providing an informal atmosphere. The Annual Parish Meeting is usually called by the Chairman of the Parish Council. Sometimes the District Councillors will make an annual report at this meeting sometimes they will make it at the Annual General Parish Council meeting. Every parish Council has different traditions.

## **Cllrs Report**

1. There hasn't been a Parish Meeting for some time due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. But that doesn't mean to say that the normal work of the East Suffolk Council, the County and District Councillors came to a stop. Far from it. In fact in some respects, it increased with the additional work of making sure that no one was forgotten or left behind during these troubled couple of years. Trying to look back and remember all that has happened I find quite difficult especially when putting it all down on paper.

As you may know Tony and I work across 17 Parish Councils in Carlford Ward with a total of just over 7,000 constituents. We both work very closely with the Carlford County councillor, Elaine Bryce and I am sure that the Chairman will vouch for the fact that Highways problems always has a tradition of coming somewhere near the top of the agenda every time.

2. Of course I recognise that over the past few years the major item that has concerned all the people of Grundisburgh has been Chapel Field Application. As you know it was finally



agreed to go ahead after the ESC Planning Committee passed it by one vote, the Chairman's casting vote. I can assure you that your two Councillors worked very hard (along with the Parish Councillors and supporters) to get this application turned down and to lose by only one vote was bitterly disappointing. I still believe the roads around the Chapel Field site are inadequate and that Lower Road in particular is going to cause a great deal of distress to the people that live there. Probably for years to come.

3. On the plus side Myself and Tony, from our Enabling Funds, have been able to help a number of projects in Grundisburgh including:-

Singing Ducklings:- £200 and £275

Grund Village Hall:- £1000

Grund Playing Field:- £1000 and £1000

Meeting Lane Verge:- £1000.

4. With the lead and help of County Cllr Elaine Bryce we are hoping that the grass verge problem in Meeting Lane will be resolved soon.

### **Other News**

I think it is important to recognise the work done by our Parish Councils, unsung heroes all. The Parish Councils keep the District Councillors abreast of problems in and around the Parish and together we find ways of helping the people of the villages or towns they represent.

There is of course a great deal happening in the wider area and we endeavour to keep you in touch with that.

## **East Suffolk encouraged to 'Clean for the Queen'**

Residents and organisations in East Suffolk are being encouraged to get involved in the Queen's Jubilee celebrations by helping to tidy up the environment we live in. East Suffolk Council has launched a new campaign to encourage and support people who want to do their bit and help clean up the litter that blights our villages, towns and countryside. Taking place on Friday 29 April – Monday 2 May, the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign will not only mark the very special occasion, but also help keep East Suffolk litter free.

A bit of time and effort can make a big difference to an area, not only for the people who live there but the wildlife too – it is a great way of giving something back to your local community and I hope that other residents appreciate the efforts of those who voluntarily pick up litter, helping to keep East Suffolk such a beautiful place in which to live, work and visit. It is a shame it is needed in the first place but unfortunately some people think it is acceptable to dump their rubbish anywhere they like. It would be much better if everyone



took responsibility for their own rubbish and disposed of it correctly, using litter bins or taking it home, instead of other people having to pick it up for them.

East Suffolk Norse can lend out equipment for organised litter picks, including Hi-Viz vests, litter pickers, bags and bag hoops. They can also remove the waste collected if notified in advance. Register your litter pick now at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/waste/litter/love-east-suffolk/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/waste/litter/love-east-suffolk/) To find local litter picks, or to tell others about one you have already organised, go to [www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/learning-zone/get-involved/Suffolk-litter-picking](http://www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/learning-zone/get-involved/Suffolk-litter-picking)

## **Three-year programme to drive down long-term empty home numbers in East Suffolk**

East Suffolk Council has agreed an ambitious new programme as part of its commitment to tackling the issue of long-term empty homes in the area. At a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, councillors approved revenue funding to deliver a three-year long-term empty homes programme. The appointment of a dedicated Empty Homes Officer was among proposals put forward to drive policy. Long-term empty properties are defined as residential properties that have been empty for at least two years.

In East Suffolk, 280 properties in private ownership have been empty for more than two years. These will be prioritised for action according to type, location, duration unoccupied, and housing need in the surrounding area. The dedicated programme will be designed to bring homes back into use via a variety of options.

Examples of empty homes becoming part of the Council's own stock, to provide affordable accommodation and much needed regeneration, include 560 London Road, Lowestoft, converted into a House in Multiple Occupation, and 98 Park Road, Lowestoft, now occupied as a five-bed council house. Funding to support the development of a long-term empty homes programme is available from reserves created from the New Homes Bonus (NHB) claimed by East Suffolk Council from central government in recent years. The revenue cost of the service is estimated at £281,958 for three years.

Property purchases would initially use the reserve as a source of funding, with capital receipts providing a replenishment when properties are sold.

- A survey carried out on behalf of the charity Empty Homes, in October 2016, found that around three quarters (76%) of adults surveyed believed their local authority should place a higher priority on tackling empty homes.
- There are approximately 117,000 homes in East Suffolk. The number of long-term empty homes represents less than 0.25%.



**Wild spaces return to East Suffolk** An annual scheme which creates essential spaces for wildlife will return this year, as part of East Suffolk Council's commitment to the environment. Launched in 2020, the Council's 'Pardon the weeds, we're feeding the bees' campaign returns for its third year with over 100 wild spaces where grass and wildflowers will be left to grow to help wildlife thrive. These areas, which are large enough to provide an environmental benefit and do not present any safety issues for local communities, will be marked with our eye-catching yellow signs to make residents and visitors aware of the scheme. Town and parish councils, supported by East Suffolk Norse, will monitor the conservation areas to remove litter and control any invasive plant species. East Suffolk Council has an ambitious environmental vision and since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, has expressed its intention to increase the number of wild spaces in the district, where a more conservation-based approach to cutting could promote biodiversity. Town and parish councils are encouraged to contact East Suffolk Council to highlight any additional areas which could benefit from a possible change in how they are managed. Residents are asked to contact their town or parish council directly if they have any suggestions for new wild spaces. Residents can also share photos of their local wildlife space on social media, tagging in East Suffolk Council and using #PardonTheWeeds.

## **East Suffolk Council completes sale of former Melton Hill offices in Woodbridge**

East Suffolk Council is pleased to announce the sale of its former offices to a family-run developer to provide much needed housing in the Woodbridge area. The site on Melton Hill has been vacant for six years since the Council moved to its current offices at nearby Riduna Park. The sale was completed between East Suffolk Council and Manningtree building firm, Rose, on Monday 4 April.

The 3.23-acre site lies close to Woodbridge town centre, overlooking the River Deben, with views across to Sutton Hoo. It was initially sold in 2016, but the sale fell through, and the council restarted the process of marketing its former offices with a fresh perspective last July – following the end of a contract with the site's original developer.

The buyer's intention is to work up plans and engage with the local community very soon – and we look forward to seeing the creation of a residential scheme that will meet local needs

## **Council Tax £150 Energy Rebate**

Households in Council Tax band A to D are likely to receive a £150 Council Tax rebate from the Government to help towards the cost of living now that gas and electricity prices are going up. Eligible households already paying by direct debit should receive a one-off payment straight into their bank account from us in late April or early May and do not need



to do anything. Households not paying by direct debit will need to claim the rebate which may take longer. We will contact those household to let them know how to claim.

Empty homes and second homes will not get the rebate.

See more information at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/council-tax-150-energy-rebate/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/council-tax-150-energy-rebate/)

### **Lots of interest shown in 'Eastern Edge' huts**

A huge number of enquiries have been received from people interested in purchasing one of the contemporary beach huts that are being built on Lowestoft's seafront.

The sale of a number of beach huts is being jointly managed by agents Paul Hubbard and Steel & Co. Those who have already formally expressed an interest in buying one of the Eastern Edge huts will be contacted and provide with pre-sales information over the next few weeks.

New enquiries can be made to Paul Hubbard by calling 01502 531218 or emailing

[info@paulhubbardonline.com](mailto:info@paulhubbardonline.com)



### **East Suffolk united in support for Ukraine**

The Council has united to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and pledged to support any Ukrainians seeking refuge in the district.

Local authorities Suffolk are working closely together to ensure they can deliver an effective, co-ordinated response to Government requirements to support Ukrainians seeking refuge in Suffolk. To assist this co-ordinated approach and to ensure those living and working in East Suffolk are kept informed of the Government's response to the crisis, a new position has now been created within our cabinet and as of Friday 1 April, Cllr Judy Cloke is the Assistant Cabinet Member for Refugee Support.

Read more at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/east-suffolk-united-in-support-for-ukraine/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/east-suffolk-united-in-support-for-ukraine/)

### **Robopets bringing comfort to older residents**

To help older residents, especially those living with dementia, we have recently purchased 20 companion pets which are being given to local dementia groups and care homes across East Suffolk. The pets, which are robotic cats and dogs, provide the interactive



companionship associated with owning a pet which can be therapeutic for many people, especially those living with dementia.

Piloted at the Memory Lane Group in Felixstowe, robopets have so far been given to Sole Bay Health Centre in Reydon, Glebe House Residential Care Home in Hollesley, the Pear Tree Fund in Halesworth and the Forget Me Not Café in Kesgrave.



### **New lease of life for former railway signalman's cottage**

A run-down railway crossing cottage has been granted a new lease of life thanks to a deal enabled by the Council.



The former signalman's cottage, just north of Campsea Ashe, near Wickham Market, was purchased and sold as part of our strategy to ensure availability of good quality housing for the benefit of the East Suffolk community.

### **East Suffolk Council responds to planning consent for major offshore wind farm projects**

East Suffolk Council acknowledges that The Secretary of State for the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has awarded planning consents for ScottishPower Renewables East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two Offshore Wind Farms.

The projects will contribute up to 1.7GW of renewable energy, once constructed, and help towards achieving the Government's ambitions of 40GW of offshore wind by 2030. East Suffolk Council will now be responsible for discharging a number of the requirements imposed on the developer via the Development Consent Orders, with the potential that the projects may commence construction in 2023. The projects are the third and fourth to be



developed in the East Anglia Zone, following East Anglia One and East Anglia Three offshore wind farms, which were consented by Government in 2014 and 2017 respectively. ScottishPower Renewables was awarded the rights to develop the East Anglia Zone as part of the Crown Estate's Round 3 process.

The East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two projects will make landfall at Thorpeness with underground cables laid to a substation site immediately north of the village of Friston. The projects share the same onshore Order Limits and include a requirement that should the cabling associated with the projects not be installed at the same time, the first project must install the ducting for the second project concurrently with the installation of the first project's cabling. This is one measure which has been secured to help reduce the disruption and adverse effects experienced along the cable route by the environment and local communities nearby.

## **Managing Director appointed to lead East Suffolk Services**

The creation of a new trading company in East Suffolk – delivering crucial services such as waste and recycling collection, grounds maintenance and street cleansing – has moved a step closer with the appointment of its first Managing Director and confirmation of the organisation's trading name. Cassandra Clements arrives from Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils, where she is currently Assistant Director for Environment & Commercial Partnerships, to lead the newly created East Suffolk Services. She will be tasked with driving the highest possible standards of service delivery, while seeking the best possible value for money for residents, businesses and all local stakeholders. This Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) will operate as an 'arms-length' commercial business, separate to the Council, following the conclusion of the contract East Suffolk holds with Norse for the provision of operational services in July 2023

**Cllr Colin Hedgley**

**Cllr Tony Fryatt**