County Councillors Report (July)

New events lined up for much-loved Brecks Outdoor Festival

A festival of outdoor activities returns for a third year to celebrate the Brecks, taking place from 8 to 23 August 2026, with regular favourites and some new events.

60 events, many of which will be free, will take place over the fortnight recognising the collaboration of 27 partner organisations in the Brecks Landscape Partnership.

The Brecks is an invaluable part of the UK's landscape, covering nearly 400 square miles:

- Over 40% of the landscape is covered by conservation areas
- Nearly 13,000 species have been recorded in the area
- 28% of the UK's rarest species are found there
- It contains Thetford Forest and Kings Forest, making the largest lowland forest in the UK
- It is home to eight registered parks and gardens, 157 scheduled monuments and over 1,000 listed buildings



I'm delighted that one festival can champion local food producers at the Elveden Estate, as well as highlighting the great conservation initiatives in the area. Councillor Morgan Brobyn, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for food, Waste and Rural Affairs

Now a staple feature of the local calendar, a number of popular events will return, including:

- **Elveden Estate tour and meal** - a behind-the-scenes tour and estate-grown meal
- **River Discovery Day** - family river dipping activities, themed games and crafts on Thetford Riverside and free guided paddleboarding along the Little Ouse

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- **The Nine Stiles Walk** - a guided walk of the ancient 'Beating the Bounds' route, around the town of Brandon
- **Saints, Sites, and Sights** - a long-distance walk following the Little Ouse trail from Brandon to Thetford
- **Groove & Meditation** - a wellbeing guided walk including elements of music and dance
- **Archaeology for Kids** - a day-long workshop at West Stow Country Park
- **Eclipse Effect Edventure** - a special night walk to coincide with the summer solar eclipse
- **Help Create a Video Game** – a drop-in art activity, encouraging children to develop nature-inspired artwork for a new Brecks video game

Other events will include guided walks, creative activities, outdoor yoga, family activities and trails, outdoor swimming and more.

Councillor Morgan Brobyn, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Food, Waste and Rural Affairs, said:

"The Brecks is a fascinating and unique landscape, and the outdoor festival truly helps show it off in all its glory.

"I'm delighted that one festival can champion local food producers at the Elveden Estate, as well as highlighting the great conservation initiatives in the area.

"Whether you want to get active with the walks or cycling, or get creative with music or crafts, there really is something for everyone to enjoy."

Credit: Joanne Sclater

The Brecks Landscape Partnership is a legacy of two previous Partnership Schemes funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and decades of successful local collaboration. Using the money raised by the National Lottery players, the project has been creating positive and lasting change for people and communities in and around the Brecks.

Starting in November 2025, The National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded a Resilience Grant of £248,073 to build on everything that's been achieved so far and create a permanent, self-sustaining Partnership - a long-term united voice for the landscape.

A small partnership delivery team hosted by Suffolk County Council has facilitated successful management of the project, bringing together more than 60 local, regional and national groups, as well as many volunteers - all with a central vision and plan.

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The festival runs from 8 to 23 August 2026, the full programme of events can be found at www.brecks.org

Blast off for an out-of-this-world adventure to the moon

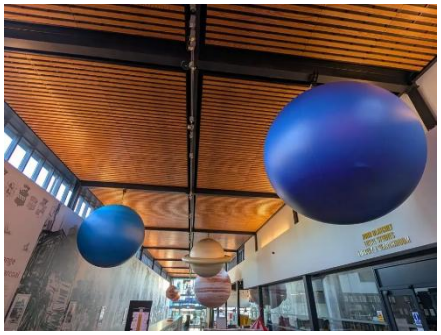
The Moon: Meet Our Nearest Neighbour, a touring exhibition from Bespoke Scientific, touches down at The Hold Ipswich from 26 June to 19 September.

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The chance to touch a real moon rock, marvel at a giant inflatable solar system, and explore Suffolk's space stories awaits adventurers to Suffolk Archives' free, family friendly summer exhibition.

The Moon: Meet Our Nearest Neighbour, a touring exhibition from Bespoke Scientific, touches down at The Hold Ipswich from 26 June to 19 September.

The exhibition includes a giant, inflatable, solar system installation by Glow Inflatables suspended from the ceiling of The Hold in Ipswich, the home of Suffolk Archives. Credit: Suffolk Archives



Discover the science and mythology of the moon. Re-live historic moments in lunar discovery, including how the space race unfolded and the lead up to the 1969 moon landing. Explore how the moon influences our natural environment from tides and seas to nighttime animals.

Learn about Alice Grace Cook, a pioneering female astronomer from Stowmarket. Search for the truth behind the mystery of the Rendlesham UFO. Look to the sky with local astronomical groups to understand how you can safely observe its wonders closer to home.

There is loads happening alongside the exhibition.

Blast off with the pop-up Wonder Dome Planetarium in August. Fully immersive shows that'll take you on a thrilling trip through the cosmos and its many wonders - from the birth of planets to the death of stars.

Book on to Suffolk Archives' space-themed craft sessions, including relaxed options; and look out for free craft pop-ups in Suffolk Libraries. The Hold also has star-studded films for littles one with WALL-E and E.T. and a fun trail.

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The exhibition will include two visits from the pop-up Wonder Dome Planetarium, a fully immersive cosmic adventure for all ages. Credit: Wonder Dome Planetarium

Enjoy a step-free Stars of Science walk highlighting Ipswich's contributions to science and exploration. There are also talks about Suffolk archaeologist Basil Brown's work in astronomy and an evening with Space East about technological developments happening here in Suffolk.

Suffolk invests £3.6 million in new fire engines to support community safety.

New fleet of modern appliances will help Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service maintain fast, reliable emergency response and keep communities safe across the county.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has invested £3.6 million in a new fleet of fire engines to support the continued safety of communities across the county.

The 11 new standard B Type frontline appliances, which complement the existing SFRS fleet and are designed to respond to a wide range of emergencies, have been procured as part of an ongoing fleet renewal programme, which helps ensure vehicles remain reliable and up to date.

The new vehicles are currently in production and undergoing specialist fitting and testing before being delivered later this year. They are expected to enter service at fire stations across Suffolk between November and December this year.

Chief Fire Officer Jon Lacey said: "The new appliances are a vital investment. Designed around our crews' needs, they provide the tools and technology required for a range of incidents and will ensure we are able to continue to respond quickly and effectively when our communities need us."

Councillor Tristan Gale, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Planning, Devolution and the Fire Service, commented: "We are proud to support Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service and recognise that ongoing investment plays a vital role in maintaining a safe, efficient and dependable emergency response across the county."

New 30-second approach to help patients reduce air pollution exposure

Suffolk County Council is joining forces with health partners across Suffolk and Essex to launch a new campaign that helps healthcare professionals talk to patients about air pollution in as little as 30 seconds.

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Suffolk County Council is getting ahead of Clean Air Day by joining forces with health partners across Suffolk and Essex to launch a new campaign that helps healthcare professionals talk to patients about air pollution in as little as 30 seconds.

A joined-up approach to cleaner air

The initiative, funded by Suffolk County Council and Colchester City Council's DEFRA air quality funding, brings together NHS partners and local Primary Care Networks to raise awareness of the health impacts of air pollution and the simple steps people can take to reduce their exposure.

Why air pollution matters for our health

Air pollution is one of the most significant preventable public health threats in the UK, contributing to around 30,000 deaths each year. It is linked to a wide range of conditions, including heart disease, lung disease, cancer, stroke and dementia, as well as affecting children's development and increasing health inequalities.

Everyone is affected by air pollution, but some people are particularly vulnerable, including older adults, pregnant women, children, and those with existing heart or lung conditions.

Research shows people are more likely to trust and act on advice from healthcare professionals, making routine appointments a key opportunity to share practical guidance.

A simple conversation that can make a difference

The campaign introduces a 'Very Brief Advice' approach, based on the proven Ask, Advise, Act model used in smoking cessation. This enables healthcare professionals to start a quick conversation with patients and direct them to simple actions that can help protect their health, such as choosing routes away from busy roads, improving ventilation at home and reducing everyday sources of indoor pollution.

To support this, partners have developed a package of training and resources, including short videos, briefing materials and patient-facing leaflets. These tools make it easy for busy healthcare professionals to include air pollution advice in everyday consultations.

Jenny Casey, Respiratory Nurse Specialist, is amongst the first in Suffolk to make use of the resources as part of her training offer. She said:

"Air pollution is an important and often overlooked public health issue that can significantly affect respiratory and cardiovascular health. I welcome this collaborative Suffolk and Essex programme, which provides healthcare professionals with practical information and resources to help raise awareness of air pollution and support patients in taking simple steps to reduce their exposure."

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Cllr Paul Sutton, Deputy Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health at Suffolk County Council, said:

“Clean, unpolluted air makes a difference to the health and wellbeing of people of all ages. I’m pleased to be working with partners, supporting healthcare professionals to have these crucial conversations with patients to raise awareness of the issue.”

Cllr Darius Laws, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and the Environment at Colchester City Council, said:

“Clean air is essential for our health and wellbeing, and this campaign shows how we can all play a part in reducing our exposure to pollution. By working with trusted healthcare professionals, we are helping residents better understand the risks and the small steps they can take in their daily lives to protect themselves and their families.

“This project is a great example of what can be achieved when local authorities and health partners work together to make a real difference to people’s health.”

The campaign will officially launch on Clean Air Day, Thursday 18 June, aligning with national efforts to improve awareness of air pollution and its impact on health.

Patients and residents can find more information about the campaign, including practical advice on reducing exposure to air pollution at home and outdoors, at www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/air-quality-advice.

Suffolk County Council and its partners hope the initiative will help more people understand the risks of air pollution and feel empowered to make small changes that can have a positive impact on their health.

Suffolk unites to fight fraud

Suffolk’s fight against fraud takes a major step forward with the launch of a new partnership today.

Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk Trading Standards have joined forces with businesses and community interest groups from across the county to launch Suffolk Against Fraud.

The launch took place today in Framlingham with a welcome address from Police Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore, as well as presentations from Police and Trading Standards.

Being scammed or targeted by fraud can have a devastating impact on vulnerable people in Suffolk. It can also destroy small businesses. This partnership sees statutory organisations, local businesses, charities and community groups working together to support residents and businesses in Suffolk to help protect them from fraud.

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As well as bringing together investigative resource, expertise and intelligence to tackle and combat fraud, Suffolk Against Fraud will see joined up campaigns and media messaging and improved quality of victim support.

Fraud poses a significant threat to the people, prosperity, and security of the residents of Suffolk. It is by far the most common crime and now accounts for over 40% of all offences in the County.

Suffolk Against Fraud was launched in Framlingham today (17 June 2026)



Cllr June Mummery, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for coastal affairs, communities and public health, said:

"These prolific predatory scoundrels take money out of the pockets of hard-working people, businesses, and organisations – callously targeting the most vulnerable, online and in their own homes.

"Bank accounts can be emptied in minutes and life savings lost. The impact however goes beyond financial loss. Victims often feel ashamed, blame themselves, and may hide what has happened. Many experience stress, illness, and negative effects on their work, relationships, and wellbeing, which can also lead to increased reliance on health and social care services.

"The launch of Suffolk Against Fraud is an important step forward, bringing agencies together to share information, protect vulnerable residents, and prevent further harm. By working collaboratively, we can strengthen our response to fraud, crack down on these criminals and better safeguard our communities."

Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner Tim Passmore said:

"Fraud is a very serious issue and an increasing threat, locally, nationally and internationally.

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“This pernicious and wicked crime affects everyone regardless of age and background; and even if you are not a victim of crime yourself, the chances are you’ll know someone that has fallen victim to a fraudster, it is sadly so widespread.

“I was delighted to be involved in the launch of Suffolk Against Fraud which is a fantastic example of partnership working; two organisations working together, harnessing the power of collaboration for the common good. It’s exactly what makes this county great.

“Prevention is key. Our aim is to reduce the likelihood of Suffolk residents and businesses falling victim to fraud, but if you have been defrauded it is most important that you report the incident. I can understand why some people might feel embarrassed but, as a victim of fraud myself, I’d say there is nothing to be ashamed of, it really is so important that all fraud is reported.”

Detective Chief Inspector Craig Powell said:

“I see every day how fraud affects people, families and businesses across Suffolk, and with it now accounting for over 40% of recorded crime, we have to act collectively. Working alongside Trading Standards, I believe Suffolk Against Fraud will bring businesses, organisations and charities together through shared knowledge to prevent harm before it happens and better protect our communities.”

Anyone who believes they may have been targeted is encouraged to report it to Report Fraud at www.reportfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. If money has already been transferred, they should contact their bank immediately.

Minerals and Waste Plan now under way

Work has begun to shape the future of minerals and waste provision across Suffolk.

The existing Suffolk and Minerals Waste Plan was published in 2020 and is now in the process of being updated.

The plan plays a vital role in supporting economic growth, protecting the environment and ensuring communities continue to benefit from well-planned development.

The first stage of work on a new plan is a ‘call for sites’ survey which is now open and closes on 27 July 2026.

It invites landowners, operators and others to suggest possible sites. This helps the county council understand what land is available and where development could take place, before any decisions are made.

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Once adopted, the new plan will set out how Suffolk will provide for a steady and adequate supply of minerals - such as sand and gravel - alongside identifying the infrastructure needed to manage waste.

However, there are a number of stages to go through, including further public consultations and Examination, before the new plan is formally adopted - which is expected to be in late 2029.

Surface dressing season for Suffolk's roads gets underway

Road space equivalent to 106 full-sized football pitches will be treated between now and August

New ways of working will be trialled as Suffolk Highways launches its annual surface dressing programme to help maintain and improve roads across the county.

During the 2026 season, running from this week to August 8, 759,000 square metres of road – equivalent to 106 full-size football pitches - will be treated, delivering safer, longer-lasting surfaces for residents, businesses and visitors.

Surface dressing is a fast, efficient and sustainable way to maintain roads. It seals the surface, restores skid resistance and protects against water damage, helping extend road life and reduce the need for more costly repairs.

This year will also see new innovations introduced:

- Variable Message Signs (VMS) at busier sites, providing advance warning and live updates
- A new product called Lockchip will be trialled on nine sites across Suffolk, helping to seal down the new surface and reduce loose chippings.

Residents can support the works by moving vehicles from affected areas in advance, helping teams complete the programme quickly and efficiently.

Councillor Christopher Hudson, Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, said: “Surface dressing is a speedy process which means that disruption to road users, local businesses and emergency services is minimised, but I would urge people to be patient if they are affected by works.

“This approach is significantly faster and cheaper than full resurfacing, helping to extend the life of our roads and ensuring that limited public funds go further across the county.

“By preventing deterioration early, we reduce the need for more expensive repairs later, protecting both the network and the taxpayer.”

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Surface dressing is significantly quicker than full resurfacing, reducing disruption for road users.

Before work begins, targeted patch repairs are completed to ensure the surface is fit for treatment.

The road is then fully cleaned before a layer of bitumen is applied, followed by stone chippings which are rolled in to create a durable surface.

The process is completed with further sweeps to remove loose material and ensure safety for road users.

Drivers should take extra care going through sites and keep speeds down to protect both their vehicles and the workforce.

Residents are advised to avoid newly treated surfaces until instructed and to check footwear if walking on it is unavoidable.

Businesses will remain open throughout the works and pedestrian access will be maintained wherever feasible.

Suffolk Highways also reminds residents to stay alert to scams - neither the organisation nor its contractors will offer to carry out private driveway or property works.

Suspicious cold callers can be reported to Citizens Advice on 0808 223 1133.

Information boards will be placed at the ends of affected roads, and more details can be found at www.suffolk.gov.uk/surfacedressing.

For further enquiries, contact Suffolk Highways at customer.services@suffolk.gov.uk or call 0345 606 6171 (Monday–Friday, 8:30am–5:30pm).

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