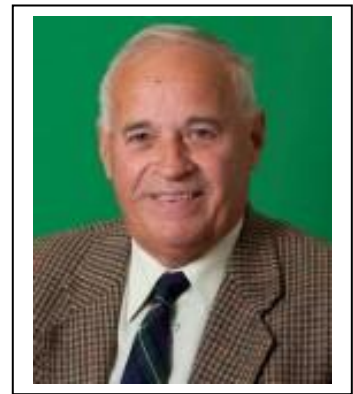


Parish Report August 2025

Councillor

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Information Updates

Cost of Living help and advice:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>

Flood preparation advice: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/fire-and-rescue-safety-advice-in-the-community/preparing-for-flooding>

Flood recovery advice and support: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

Safeguarding in Suffolk

The Cabinet meeting on 15 July also saw annual reports tabled on safeguarding in Suffolk, giving details of how the council works to keep children and vulnerable adults safe and priorities to improve these services.

There have been recent changes to processes in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), where social workers, Suffolk Police and NHS work together to assess safeguarding referrals and decide on the best way forward. For referrals about children, the recent Ofsted report had recommended that there needed to be more consistency in how concerns were handled.

For adult safeguarding referrals, a triage system has been set up to make sure that referrals are appropriate and going to the right place. The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) team in adult care, which helps ensure that people's rights and liberties are protected when they are receiving care, is under pressure at the moment because of the number of annual renewals. DoLS assessments all require an annual renewal, so the more assessments the council undertakes, the more renewals the team has to do every year.

This is a national rather than local issue. Around the county, the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership has been holding events to raise awareness of dementia and how to support people living with dementia, and has also released a short film for young people experiencing suicidal thoughts, following a number of suicides referred to the case review panel.

Preparing for fires

Suffolk Fire and Rescue are asking responsible persons in non-domestic and higher-risk residential buildings to review their foam fire extinguishers.

New regulations against perfluorooctanoic acids (PFOAs), which are 'forever chemicals' that don't break down, came into effect on 4 July 2025. PFOAs are toxic and build up over time in living organisms, and can be found in foam extinguishers used for Class B fires involving flammable liquids such as petrol, diesel, paints or solvents. Foam extinguishers from the last 10 years are unlikely to contain PFOAs, but it is important to check the label and consult with the supplier if unsure. Changes to fire-fighting equipment should also prompt a review of the fire risk assessment for the building, and additional training for staff if needed. Suffolk Fire and Rescue will carry out audits and inspections to make sure fire safety regulations are being followed and equipment is up to date.

Following the heatwave in summer 2022, Suffolk Fire and Rescue invested in new adapters to help them fight wildfires on farmland. These adapters enable fire engines to connect to a farm's water bowsers and tanks once the onboard water has been used up. The adapters are currently being trialled out of fire stations in Ipswich East, Princes Street Ipswich, Haverhill, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket and Lowestoft.

The fire service are also keen that people download the What3Words app, as this makes it easy for the control room and crews to locate fires that are in the middle of the countryside with no landmarks or road names. It uses GPS so you don't need to have a mobile phone signal or data for it to work.

Motions passed on fairer funding and Ipswich northern bypass

At full council on Thursday 10 July, two motions were passed: the Conservatives' motion on fairer funding for local government, and a motion brought by Labour in favour of a 'northern bypass' to make the county less reliant on the Orwell Bridge and alleviate traffic pressure on Ipswich when it is closed.

My group tabled a motion to make it easier to obtain 20mph speed limits where the community supports one, but this was rejected by the Conservative administration on the grounds that they were already planning to do this. The council also considered a report on the new Youth Justice Plan, which details the work the council is undertaking to support children involved in the criminal justice system and what the service's priorities will be in the year ahead.

These include increasing the number of children involved with the service who are in education – new coordinators have been hired with a focus on children whose educational status is most at risk. The county's Criminal Exploitation Hubs, which provide support for children recruited into 'county lines' drug crime, now each have a new worker to support parents and carers.

They are also planning work with schools to support children at risk of exclusion who might be vulnerable to this kind of exploitation.

Transitions from children's services to adult services

On Wednesday 9 July, the council's Scrutiny Committee looked at how young people are supported as they move from children's services to adult services.

Not all children who receive support from children's services need continued help in adulthood, but those who are disabled, have learning disabilities or who need social care support often have to move across to access adult services at the age of 18. Feedback from families had indicated that the transition process could be poorly managed and disruptive, leaving young people and their families frustrated and upset.

The report to Scrutiny noted that transition work should begin from the age of 14 for young people, and that adult services have increased the number of staff members in their Transitions team to reduce delays in assessment.

The number of referrals into adult services increased from 182 in 2023-24 to 356 in 2024-25. In addition, adult services and children's services have begun a joint review to track the process of 50 young people through their transition from the age of 14, in order to identify where improvements can be made. They hope to co-produce a better service through consultation with young people and their families.

Upgrade to Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) at Great Blakenham

At Cabinet on Tuesday 15 July, a decision was made to upgrade the facilities at the recycling centre at Great Blakenham so the council can fulfil its duties for 'Simpler Recycling'.

The new law to collect glass and food waste was passed by the previous Conservative government, but the changes have not yet come into effect. Suffolk County Council does not collect waste or recycling, but it does have responsibility for the waste and recycling once it is collected by district and borough councils, and this means it needs to make changes to its recycling centre.

The works will be paid for by Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding, whereby producers of packaging must pay for the cost of dealing with it when it is empty and discarded. The council has already received this funding (£5.9m) from the government and will be using it to cover half the cost of the works to upgrade the Material Recovery Facility to reduce the amount the council would have to pay to cover the borrowing costs of the contractor (Biffa) on the full amount.

This is an 'invest to save' decision – the council will save money on the amount of money it has to pay Biffa in the long term. The full cost of the upgrade will be £10-12m.

All Suffolk food waste to be processed in the County

All food waste collected from Suffolk households will be processed at a specialist facility in the county. This will mean a more efficient, environmentally friendly and cheaper way to deal with Suffolk's food waste, with weekly household kerbside collections beginning in 2026.

Suffolk County Council and Bio Capital have agreed a four-year contract to process food waste at the recently approved anaerobic digestion plant at the Adnams Distribution Centre, in Reydon near Southwold.

Around 31,000 tonnes of household food waste could be sent to the new facility each year, which will be processed to generate green fuel (biomethane), and turned into soil fertiliser – meaning Suffolk's food waste is put to better use.

This is part of the government's 'Simpler Recycling' initiative, to standardise recycling practices across all local authorities in England. It aims to make recycling easier, more consistent, and more effective.

Currently, food waste that is thrown away in your general rubbish bin is taken to the Energy from Waste site at Great Blakenham, near Ipswich, where energy is recovered to produce electricity.

Further information on Simpler Recycling can be found at www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](#)