



# District Councillors Report to Great Bealings Parish Council

**For September 2024**

**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**

[\(Colin.Hedgley@eastsoffolk.gov.uk\)](mailto:Colin.Hedgley@eastsoffolk.gov.uk)

## **Neighbourhood Plans formally adopted for two East Suffolk villages**

Easton and **Playford** have become the latest East Suffolk villages to formally adopt Neighbourhood Plans. A Neighbourhood Plan gives communities the opportunity to shape development within their local areas. Formal adoption follows much hard work by parish councils and extensive public consultation to ensure that local residents have their say on how development will take place. Each plan is subject to a public referendum to ensure public support before being adopted by East Suffolk Council.

Easton and Playford Neighbourhood Plans were 'made' by Full Council at a meeting on 24 July 2024.

The two Neighbourhood Plans form part of the development plan for East Suffolk and will be used to consider planning applications within each neighbourhood plan area.

## **Speedy Sprinter is back! Bike trail returns to East Suffolk towns.**

To celebrate the return of the Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men to East Suffolk in September, a popular interactive bike trail has been relaunched.

Following on from the success of last year's bike trail and accompanying sticker book featuring Speedy Sprinter, Speedy is now back in a new adventure, *Speedy Sprinter and the Big Bad Bike*.

Designed as a sticker collection book, *Speedy Sprinter and the Big Bad Bike* brings back Speedy the racing bike and nine other colourful cycling characters in an exciting new story written by local author Jenny Edgerley. People can collect a free Speedy Sprinter sticker book from participating shops and businesses in towns across East Suffolk, hunt for the Speedy Sprinter characters hidden in shop windows and collect stickers to complete the story. The bike trail gives residents and visitors the chance to support local businesses whilst they are in town collecting sticker books and looking for stickers.



The following locations are taking part in the Speedy Sprinter bike trail; Framlingham and Wickham Market. Plus further north, Beccles, Bungay, Carlton Colville, Halesworth, Kirkley, Leiston, Saxmundham

As well as taking part in the bike trail, businesses are also able to show their support for the Tour of Britain Men by downloading posters and social media graphics from [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/tour-of-britain](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/tour-of-britain)

**The Lloyds Bank Tour of Britain Men** - Britain's biggest professional cycle race - is coming to East Suffolk on Sunday 8 September, with the race starting on Lowestoft seafront and finishing in Felixstowe.

More details, including the stage six route map and information on local activities at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/tour-of-britain](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/tour-of-britain)

### **Winter grant scheme funding available for Warm Welcomes and cost of living support projects**

Despite the season, East Suffolk Council is asking people to think ahead to winter – and how their communities could provide support for residents who need it during the colder months.

Community groups, voluntary organisations, and town and parish councils are being invited to apply for funding available through two winter grant schemes being launched on Monday 9 September.

Depending on the size of the community, grants of up to £3,000 will again be available for 'Warm Welcomes' to provide somewhere safe, warm and welcoming for people who may be struggling to meet the cost of living.

Part-funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the scheme aims to provide a network of venues for people to keep warm, socialise, connect with others, and have the opportunity to access additional information, advice and support from local partners.

East Suffolk Council would ideally like to hear from groups and organisations capable of operating a venue for at least eight hours a week, offering something additional to their community this winter, such as support around the cost of living and inequalities, access to free or reduced-cost food, activities to reduce social isolation, improved wellbeing and a warm community welcome.

Information about the Warm Welcomes will be available on the [Warm Welcomes grant page](#) of the East Suffolk Council website from early September.

Meanwhile, the Cost of Living (COL) grant scheme, funded by Suffolk County Council through the Suffolk Collaborative Communities Board, will offer grants of up to £2,000 to support a wider range of smaller projects, also focussed on keeping people warm, well, fed and connected to others in the community this winter, but not only on bringing people together in a physical meeting space.

During the previous two years of the scheme, more than 50 projects have been supported by COL grants for activities such as 'Healthy Bites on a Budget' cooking classes for families, smaller scale Warm Welcomes open for an afternoon each fortnight, [Community Pantry](#) top-ups and more.



Information about the COL grant scheme will be available on the [Community grants and funding page](#) of the East Suffolk Council website, also from early September.

Also [communities@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:communities@eastsoffolk.gov.uk).

The closing date for applications is Monday 30 September – allowing all projects to be considered by a grant panel in time for launching by November.

## **Environmental Impact Strategy plants seeds for addressing climate and biodiversity emergencies**

East Suffolk Council has given unanimous support for a strategy setting out its commitment to protecting the environment and tackling climate change.

The Environmental Impact Strategy was adopted by Full Council on Wednesday 24 July and forms a core pillar of the overarching Our Direction 2028 vision for East Suffolk over the next four years.

The strategy sets East Suffolk Council's environmental vision and priorities for delivering positive climate, nature, and environmental impacts through its decisions and actions.

[Our Direction 2028](#) was approved by Full Council in November following significant consultation and development. As well as Environmental Impact, its four strategic themes include Sustainable Housing, Tackling Inequalities, and Thriving Economy, and aim to promote a bright, green, open, free, and fair future for East Suffolk.

The most important priorities to residents who took part in consultation on the Environmental Impact theme of Our Direction 2028 were supporting sustainable transport, restoring ecosystems and biodiversity, working in partnership to manage coastal adaptation and resilience, a continued commitment to Net Zero by 2030, and supporting, promoting and implementing green tech.

All are now among the Environmental Impact Strategy's key priorities, along with a focus on reduction, re-use, and recycling of materials, encouraging food self-sufficiency, and preserving and maintaining the district's beauty and heritage.

East Suffolk Council has committed to collaborate with other local and national organisations to deliver the strategy's priorities, including by working with partners to address important national issues such as low carbon transport and decarbonising private homes.

Delivery of the strategy's priorities will be monitored by a cross-party Environment Task Group and Officer Environmental Impact Delivery Group.

## **New strategy to encourage tree planting across East Suffolk**

A new focus on increased tree planting across East Suffolk has been agreed to improve biodiversity and help tackle the climate crisis.

It was agreed that the Council would develop a Tree and Hedgerow Strategy, seeking input from residents, community groups, and experts to identify key priorities and requirements for tree and hedgerow planting and management of existing trees across the district.

Currently, forests cover just 12% of land in the UK, whereas Europe's total land area has forest cover comprising 47%. The Tree and Hedgerow Strategy would aim to enable 250,000 trees to be planted across East Suffolk, increasing canopy cover by 1%.



Landowners play the key role in protecting and planting trees and will be invited to suggest spaces suitable for tree planting. Ongoing work to map the tree canopy in East Suffolk will be completed, creating a map of council-owned land where there are opportunities for tree planting and feeding-in to Suffolk's developing 'Local Nature Recovery Strategy'.

The Council will also commit more resources to supporting the work of town and parish councils, as well as local tree wardens and community volunteers, who all perform a fundamental role in protecting and managing new and existing trees. Working with Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council will also promote the importance and value of street trees.