

June – July 2025 Parish Report
East Suffolk Council – Parish Councillor Update
Cllr Julia Ewart – Kelsale & Yoxford Ward

Summer is here and the fetes are thriving!

With so many summer fetes and dogs shows what more could a community want? Well for some it is a little support for when village life is not so warm and rosey! Check out the:

Village Hall Grant

This a grant scheme has launched for community buildings, village halls and other community hubs in the District. The grant is up to £15,000 for upgrades, improvements and essential repairs. The press release is here: [Grant launched for community building projects » East Suffolk Council](#).

Applications are open until 9am on 16th September. All funding must be spent, and the project completed by 31 March 2026.

Guidance is here: [Community Centre and Village Hall Repairs and Improvement Fund guidance](#). Application form is here: [Application form](#). Closing I am informed is 16/9/25 at 9am.

East Suffolk Council - HERE For You!

Following a successful series of events last year, East Suffolk officers and councillors will be visiting towns around the district again this summer, chatting to local people about council services and asking how they feel about what we do.

Events have taken place in Saxmundham, Lowestoft and Kesgrave this year, and will be followed by Beccles in July, Felixstowe and Southwold in August before finishing in Framlingham in September.

Councillors and senior officers will be present to listen to local people and chat about our plans, our services and how we are looking to improve lives and outcomes not only in the towns we visit but throughout East Suffolk.

East Suffolk Council - HERE For You! Come and find us at:

16 July - Beccles

6 August - Felixstowe

27 August - Southwold

24 September - Framlingham

All events are from 10am until 1pm.

£4.8million for leisure centre decarbonisation drive

Ambitious plans to upgrade and decarbonise three of the district's leisure centres are moving forward after East Suffolk Council successfully secured a £2.8million Government grant.

Along with an additional £2m investment of its own, the grant of £2.8m from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, run by Salix on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, will help the Council take a major step towards its goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

Leisure centres currently represent the single largest contributor to the Council's greenhouse gas emissions – now accounting for around 42% of the total – and tackling emissions from the buildings is crucial to reaching overall carbon reduction targets.

Planned upgrades to Leiston, Waterlane, and Deben leisure centres will focus on replacing outdated gas boilers with cutting-edge air source heat pump systems for heating, and CO2 heat pumps for hot water in some locations, significantly cutting energy use and emissions at all three sites.

Additionally, Deben Leisure Centre will benefit from a new roof, and all three centres will gain further solar panel installations to help offset increased electricity use from the switch to electric-only systems. Funding will also help future-proof the centres by supporting the replacement of ageing equipment due for renewal – reducing the carbon footprint while avoiding major upfront costs.

GLI Councillor Sarah Whitelock, Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism, said:

“This funding is a game-changer. It allows us to make real progress towards our environmental goals while continuing to invest in high-quality leisure facilities for our communities. We're proud to be taking action that benefits both residents and the planet.”

All schemes will be implemented within two years – marking a significant step towards a greener, more sustainable future for East Suffolk, benefitting both the environment and local community. The transformation of Leiston, Waterlane and Deben Leisure Centres is part of the Council's wider commitment to sustainability, with previous work including improved insulation, LED lighting, solar panels and pool covers to reduce heat loss.

Community spaces set to flourish again as environmental scheme returns

'East Suffolk Blooms', which encourages people in East Suffolk to grow beautiful, pollinator-friendly wildflowers, is returning for 2025.

Each year, East Suffolk Council distributes free packs of bulbs to town and parish councils, community groups and organisations to plant locally as part of the East Suffolk Blooms campaign.

Successful applicants to last year's scheme planted numerous native bulbs in towns and villages across East Suffolk, resulting in colourful flower displays which benefitted pollinators.

This time, in tandem with the East Suffolk's Amazing project to promote an all-round effort to help maintain the beauty and cleanliness of the district, earlier flowering bulbs are being offered that provide colour during early spring.



GLI Cllr Sally Noble, East Suffolk's cabinet member for the Environment, said:

"Year on year, we continue to receive a high level of interest in this scheme, which is why we are pleased it is returning for 2025.

"We expect to have enough bags of bulbs to distribute one to each of 50 groups across the district, and we look forward to receiving applications for East Suffolk Blooms 2025."

Packs of Carlton daffodil bulbs will be available to collect in the autumn, around October, from two locations in the district.

The scheme is funded by East Suffolk Services Ltd, who will be providing £3,000 worth of flowering bulbs.

An application form will be available to complete online until 31 August, before a judging panel meets to decide the successful applicants, with additional consideration given to groups reapplying after missing out last year. Applicants will then be informed of the decision by September.

Apply at: my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/service/east_suffolk_blooms

Operation Camouflage is back for another year!

A popular summer activities programme for young people returns to East Suffolk next month.

Operation Camouflage begins at Sutton Heath, near Woodbridge on Tuesday 23 July. Organised by the Army Welfare Service and East Suffolk Council, the activity programme is open to children and young people aged between 8 and 16 years old who live in or go to school in East Suffolk.

Designed to bring young people together and help them develop new skills, Operation Camouflage runs every Tuesday to Thursday from Wednesday 23 July until Thursday 14 August. There will be a mix of physical, creative, educational and adventurous activities on offer including touch rugby, dance workshops, circus skills, bushcraft, 'It's a knockout' and much more. Snacks and lunch will also be provided.

GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism said:

"Holiday activity programmes such as Operation Camouflage provide essential opportunities for young people to take part in safe, fun activities and give parents and carers some respite from the caring responsibilities that the school holidays bring. Not only does this programme benefit young people's physical and mental health, but it is also a great way for them to meet new friends and try something different this summer."

Funding has been secured from the East Suffolk Holiday Activity Fund to offer free places to those that are eligible for free school meals in East Suffolk. Children of military families from Woodbridge are also eligible for discounted rates of £10 per

day. For those not eligible for these, there are limited spaces available at a cost of £25 per day.

Operation Camouflage is a partnership between East Suffolk Council, the Army Welfare Service and Just42, who have been delivering the programme since 2008. The programme is designed to give young people from military families and those living in East Suffolk an opportunity to be active over the summer holidays and provide safe and positive activities.

Bookings are now open for those that are eligible for free school meals and military discount and bookings will then open to all on Friday 4 July.

Book your place at: **eastsuffolk.co/camo%20**

Ease the Squeeze on Cost of Living

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk.

To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

View the Well Minds East Suffolk booklet: tinyurl.com/9xhka624

To close, may I wish everyone a good summer, and say I look forwards to working with you in September.

For ease my email is Julia.ewart@eastsuffolk.gov.uk & Tel: 07770666604

Regards always,

Cllr Julia Ewart