



## **Councillor's Monthly Bulletin – March 2022**

**from Maurice Cook and Lydia Freeman**

*(Please circulate electronically and print only when necessary. We should be most grateful for our bulletin to be posted on your websites for the benefit of your residents.)*

### **Ward News:**

Last month we reported on the Consultation to consider the most suitable way of representing local communities. This led to some questioning whether this was an exercise to abolish Town and Parish Councils.

As District Councillors we have also been asked to put forward our views and I (Maurice) intend to participate fully in this consultation because I believe that the contributions from the Town and Parish Councils can be improved and valued more.

For example, the eight Community Partnership Schemes were created to ensure that East Suffolk Council maintained effective contact with all parts of the District. Yet not all Parishes are invited to attend, instead there being a 'core membership' and a number of outside charitable organisations invited. I have constantly challenged this and have had discussions this week pressing for a change at this year's annual meetings to the effect that all Town and Parish Councils will, in future, be invited to participate.

Having said that, in the Framlingham and Wickham Community Partnership of the eight or ten Parishes invited to participate, only two have ever joined us. Also, frustratingly, a survey to all Parishes to ascertain their capability of being able to host hybrid (in person and virtual) meetings, arranged by County Cllr Stephen Burroughs, and with the intention of improving the communication between Parishes and the District, had to be sent out twice and even then achieved less than 50% response.

My other concern is the number of Town and Parish Councils which currently have vacancies for Councillors and some with more vacancies than Councillors. This indicates to me that residents perceive that Parish Councils have little influence to make a difference whereas I believe that, by working together, as we have shown, they can be extremely effective.

This local Consultation therefore gives all an opportunity to shape the future of local governance and we urge you to participate and help us to achieve an effective structure of local democracy.

## District News

### Taking action to address housing issues

As you may be aware, the Council has undertaken an in-depth, four-month review of its Housing Landlord Service and is now taking steps, with the guidance of the Regulator of Social Housing, to resolve a number of outstanding issues.

You can read the full statement at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/council-taking-action-to-address-housing-issues/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/council-taking-action-to-address-housing-issues/)

### Oak trees distributed for 'Treebilee' celebrations

Two hundred oak trees have been distributed to communities across East Suffolk to plant in commemoration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The Council purchased the trees to be donated to every town and parish council in the district – marking the occasion while helping to tackle climate change and promoting environmentally sustainable communities.



### East Suffolk Council budget approved

The Council's budget for the 2022/23 financial year has been approved, and as part of our commitment to improve the lives and outcomes of local people, finance has been approved for a range of different areas, including £3.35m for economic development and regeneration, £2.46m supporting and enabling communities and £2.39m for our housing services. The budget also includes a further £428,000 to support our green agenda, as part of our pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030. Including maintaining all current services and these ambitious projects it, we are pleased that we have been able, once again, to increase the District portion of your Council Tax bills by less than 3%

Read more at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/essential-services-in-difficult-times-east-suffolk-council-budget-approved/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/essential-services-in-difficult-times-east-suffolk-council-budget-approved/)

## Honour Run returns



Honour Run is returning to Rendlesham Forest on Sunday 13 March to raise money for the Suffolk British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Entries are now open for the 5km (all ages), 10km (12+) and half marathon (17+) routes, which people can choose to walk, jog or run.

This is a unique opportunity to run within MOD Woodbridge, and with some of the route on the historic runway, it's one not to miss.

Spaces are limited and must be pre-booked at <https://frontrowtickets.co.uk/event/honour-run/>

## Relocation of Felixstowe beach huts to be considered

Planning Committee South will be considering an application for the relocation of beach huts which are temporarily housed on Felixstowe's promenade at its next meeting on 7 March.

The huts, for which the Council provides a site licence, were initially situated on the beach itself, however a combination of erosion and unpredictable conditions led to their temporary relocation for safety reasons.

Over the past three years, and in regular consultation with the beach hut owners, we have looked for new locations and thoroughly explored all reasonable options, including beach platforms. However, it is now clear that there is no safe option for their return to the beach and the temporary solution, which impacts on other users on the promenade, is not a viable permanent option.

We are therefore seeking approval for a number of smaller, safer sites and the Planning Committee will now consider whether consent should be granted for the huts to be moved to their new locations. However, should permission be refused, licences will reluctantly be terminated on the basis that no safe and viable location remains.



## Entries now open for second, award-winning Felixstowe Triathlon

The second Felixstowe Triathlon will take place this August Bank Holiday weekend.

Individuals and teams of all abilities can sign up to take part in the award-winning event, organised by Suffolk Tri with support from the Council and Felixstowe Town Council.



Last year's inaugural race was named Large Event of the Year 2021 for the East Region in the Triathlon England awards has been shortlisted for the National Awards later this month.

People can sign up for the Sprint, Supersprint or Standard distance at [www.felixstowetriathlon.uk/](http://www.felixstowetriathlon.uk/).

## Recognising the best in design and conservation in East Suffolk

The winners of our 'Quality of Place Awards', which celebrates building design and conservation projects in East Suffolk, have been announced.

Nominations were judged on quality of design and detailing, quality of workmanship, use of materials and sustainability.

You can find a full list of the winners and highly commended entries at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/annual-awards-recognise-the-best-in-design-and-conservation-in-east-suffolk/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/annual-awards-recognise-the-best-in-design-and-conservation-in-east-suffolk/)

## Dates announced for markets in Beccles and Leiston

Two festival-style markets are taking place as part of the First Light Market Place project:

### **Beccles 'Wild About Art' market takes place tomorrow (5 March) between 10am – 2pm**

The market will be a family-orientated, celebratory event based around art in all its forms. Located mainly within the New Market area of the town, the centre piece will be a set of three life-size marsh ponies created by local artists Sarah Cannell, Rachael Long and Andy Jarrett. A family walking trail linking the three ponies with 12 other hand-crafted ponies and 50 smaller ones will take place across the town. In addition, there will be a makers' market, hands-on family activities and street entertainment as well as locally-sourced food and drink, all creating a mini festival feel to attract local as well as out-of-season visitors.

### **The 'Discover Leiston' market takes place on Saturday 26 March between 10am – 2pm**

The market will celebrate the opening of the new Church Community Garden and include a number of eclectic musical performances, a makers' market, plants and vintage stalls as well as antiques and crafts stalls hosted at the Long Shop Museum. Street entertainers, Dance

### **Bold new beach huts reach next stage of construction**

Work to build contemporary new beach huts on Lowestoft's South Beach has taken a step forward with the delivery of materials for the huts themselves.



The first delivery of components for the huts arrived on 10 February and for the following 7 weeks, deliveries are being made every Thursday and Friday, followed by offloading the following Monday.

Read more at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/bold-new-beach-huts-reach-next-stage-of-construction/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/bold-new-beach-huts-reach-next-stage-of-construction/)

### **Surveys and consultations**

We are currently running one survey and, as always, we want to encourage participation as feedback from people in East Suffolk is invaluable and helps us ensure we're making the right decisions for our communities.

- **Community Partnership Survey**

Residents in the Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsula Community Partnership are invited to take part in a survey to help the development of the Partnership at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/melton-woodbridge-and-deben-peninsula-community-partnership-survey/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/melton-woodbridge-and-deben-peninsula-community-partnership-survey/)