

Framlingham Ward Newsletter - January 2024

Vince Langdon-Morris - District Councillor

Local WhatsApp Groups

Since 2020 Framlingham has been affected by two emergencies. In March 2020, as covid raised its ugly head, my neighbour in Castle Brooks (also a Fram Town Councillor) suggested our community set-up a WhatsApp group to help each other through the pandemic.

Since that time our small covid WhatsApp group has remained operational, it continues to communicate and help each other out in all sorts of ways (including a meet up for Christmas eve drinks).

For me this is a really positive sign of community collaboration and resilience, out of what was a very bad experience for all of us. After three years, through covid and flooding emergencies, our small community group is still cohesive, we willingly continue to meet and help each other out. See picture, a recent example of cardboard boxes delivered by neighbours, after a WhatsApp message asked for help to pack household items away, whilst the interior of the house gets painted!



Barclays Bank Pop Up and Framlingham Post Office Sorting Office

Barclays: I dropped into the Crown Hotel last week and chatted with the staffer running the pop-up bank. She told me lots of customers continue to use the pop-up, which is good news as this helps to ensure we do not lose any more financial services (especially given the recent flooding which so severely impacted our Post Office).

Post Office: After the horrible floods on 20th October, our Post Office has had to temporarily relocate into Bulstrodes shop (off the town square) whilst their flood damaged premises on Riverside are renovated. Unfortunately this has led to yet another business loss for our town. Royal Mail (*which is a separate, private company from the Post Office*) has decided to move its letter and parcel sorting operations from Framlingham to Saxmundham, including moving all of our posties!

Members of the Town Council, working with our MP and myself, are trying to bring our sorting office back to Framlingham Post Office. There are plenty of good reasons why Royal Mail Sorting should do this:

- Discontinuing Fram sorting operations and moving us to Saxmundham is going to cost us and Royal Mail (*and our planet*) far more than just simply remaining in our town (*the rent cost to Royal Mail is approximately £25,000 annually. Note that Royal Mail generated over £12 billion in revenues in 2022, this is a tiddly sum by comparison but has a very large impact on our town 😞*).
- Some back of the envelope calculations to try and represent the true "cost" to us. We have on average 7 posties working daily around Framlingham. According to the AA's mileage calculator the distance between Framlingham and Saxmundham Post Office is 7.67 miles. Assume 15 miles a day for a post van going back and forth. *Ergo*, 105 miles per day delivering post for 50 weeks equalling 36,750 additional miles annually. At 45p a mile that's £16,537 alone. According to 'My Climate Carbon Calculator' this mileage equals to **20.1** metric tons of carbon dioxide lost to the atmosphere annually.
- Most of our posties are based in and around Framlingham, so this requires a half hour drive each way to Saxmundham daily, so **double** all the figures shown in the point above!

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The decision by Royal Mail to move our sorting office from Framlingham to Saxmundham has an enormous social, financial and climate **cost** that far outweighs the minimal annual expense and multiple benefits of simply staying put! See this link [part-and-parcel-the-economic-and-social-value-of-post-office.pdf \(onepostoffice.co.uk\)](#) for more detail about the multiple benefits of having a fully functioning Post Office in our town.

East Suffolk District Council and East Suffolk Services Ltd

This weekend I was contacted by a resident about a large deer carcass lying on the B1116 approach to Framlingham. Over the past few years I have noticed the carnage of roadkill, there are so many dead animals lying uncollected on the side of the road. I will follow this up with the District Council to see what can be done about collection and how to make reporting more obvious on the council website. If you would like an animal removed please report it via customerservices@eastsuffolk.gov.uk. This will be passed on to the relevant council agency. Please also see below some other useful Council contacts.

Weather related incidents occur more regularly during the winter months – however there is a range of information and support available should you be affected.

If you are faced with an emergency situation outside of working hours (including the weekend), which requires an immediate Council response, please call our 'out of hours' number: **0800 440 2516**.

Please do not call this number during normal working hours as it is diverted to other services, and ONLY call in the case of an emergency (such as further flooding or homelessness).

Closely follow flood warnings and alerts from the Environment Agency and take action if advised - www.gov.uk/check-flooding

If you have a powercut - call **105** or report it online: www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut

For fallen or overhanging trees – if there is an immediate danger, please call Suffolk Highways on **0345 606 6171**.

Report non-emergency fallen trees or debris on the road to Suffolk Highways - highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk

For dangerous structures call **01394 444219** or **0800 440 2516** outside of office hours.

Report flooding to your property - www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage

Sign up for flood alerts - www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

The Met Office provides very useful advice about staying safe in a storm - www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice

Citizens Advice East Suffolk advice line: **0800 278 7866** (Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm)

FRAMLINGHAM FLOOD RESILIENCE & RECOVERY GROUP

Storm Babet - What Happens now? Building a Stronger, More Flood Resilient Community Together



PUBLIC FLOODING MEETING & WORKSHOP

What can be done to mitigate the effects of future flooding locally?

All those affected in Framlingham and across the Ore Valley are invited to join us

PANEL TO INCLUDE:

SUNDAY

21st January 2024

FROM

3:00PM - 5:00PM

VENUE

Castle Community Rooms

Priority will be given to questions submitted in advance. We hope to run this as a hybrid meeting with online access. Please keep an eye on our website for the login link www.framlingham.com

LEIGH PARRATT

Amazi Flooding Consultant commissioned to write report for FTC

AARON DIXEY

Area Flood Risk Manager, Environment Agency

MATT HULLIS

Head of Environmental Strategy, SCC

BEN MCFARLAND



Head of Conservation, Suffolk Wildlife Trust


TO REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE AND/OR SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL PLEASE EMAIL:

DTC@FRAMLINGHAM.COM

OR CALL 01728 720 183

Please note: Numbers are limited



Framlingham Flooding.

Public Meeting, Castle Community Rooms

The Town Council has agreed to use Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) funds to employ a consultant to do a flood risk assessment of Framlingham. This was agreed to speed up the process of doing a flood risk assessment (as Suffolk County Council estimates an 18-24 month timeframe to do the same). Please see the invitation.

Framlingham Flood Resilience and Recovery Working Group

This recently formed working group (including Town & District Councillors, Local Organisations and the public) has met regularly at the Town Council offices. Several key actions have been discussed and agreed:

- Fram Town Council agreed to fund a consultant (fully approved by SCC) to complete a flood risk assessment. I repeat, this decision was taken to speed up the flood risk assessment processes.

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- Convening a public flooding meeting will provide a forum for wider discussion, questioning and public input into the flood assessment terms of reference,
- The working group has compiled a draft Framlingham Emergency Response Plan, which will be tested in the near future.

Storm Babet funding support

East Suffolk District Council has worked closely with Suffolk County Council to distribute flood relief funding, received from several central government ministries to affected residents and businesses as quickly as possible (in accordance with strict government / ministerial criteria). As at the 8th January the following has been disbursed::

197 East Suffolk residents out of 215 applications received by the Council have been paid the £500 Community Recovery Grant and received Council Tax Discount as per the scheme guidance.

33 applications received from businesses by the Council, 2 have been paid a £2,500 Business Recovery Grant. It should be noted that Government eligibility criteria (which the Councils are obliged to follow) is much more extensive than that which supports residents applications. The processing of business applications takes far more time.



I have followed up with council staff to discuss the issue of time taken to provide emergency support to residents. Navigating layers of institutions and rules (from a central ministry down to Town Council) is complex and slow. In my view (and this is supported by Council Officers) what we really need is a more flexible "Resilience Fund" held at District and County Council Level. Climate change events, in my personal view, are set to increase in the future and support and funding needs to be locally held, and far more flexible and quickly accessible.

Thomas Mills and Framlingham College Eco Councils to collaborate



I'm working with the Swift and Wildlife Group to establish small wildflower beds across Framlingham this coming spring. Teachers and students at the environment councils of both schools have now met twice and agreed to partner in setting up even more wildflower gardens. Students from both schools have shared their eco projects and agreed to collaborate.

It's great to see young people so interested in the health and wellbeing of our planet and do things to foster the well being of both people and our planet.



Suffolk County Council - Highways

Driving out of Parham last week on my way home from work in Melton I had the misfortune to hit a pot-hole, which bashed the suspension of my little car. Note, you can report damaged roads and potholes on the SCC Highways website portal and receive a reference number ([see link](#)). I'm happy to report that after reporting, the pothole was repaired the very next day 😊.

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