



East Suffolk Council achievements and activities 2025-26

East Suffolk Council continues to high quality services to its residents and communities despite the ongoing financial challenges faced by local government. Working closely with our town and parish councils remains of paramount importance and we greatly value our relationship with Lowestoft Town Council. The following presents a summary of achievements and activities of note during the past 12 months in line with the Council's Strategic Plan, [Our Direction 2028](#).

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced in March that three unitary councils for Suffolk are to be created, replacing Suffolk County Council and the five district and borough authorities; Babergh, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk and West Suffolk. These new authorities will cover western Suffolk, central & eastern Suffolk and Ipswich & southern Suffolk.

The new Councils will begin operations in April 2028. Ahead of this, elections next year will establish 'shadow authorities' for each to lead and oversee the transition.

All existing councils will work closely together to ensure the smoothest possible transition, and to grasp the opportunities that this decision provides. This is the biggest change to local government in Suffolk for over 50 years and we now have the responsibility to create councils which, from day one, continue to deliver the critical services our residents and communities need.

We have a strong and proud history of working together for the benefit of Suffolk and this collaborative approach could not be more important. We are all united by our commitment to local government and this will continue beyond 2028, ensuring we develop service delivery models fit for the future.

We know that our responsibility, right now, is to embrace this challenge and to make it work for our residents, communities and customers.

A new app has been launched to help East Suffolk residents with the changes to recycling which begin in June.

The new app will help residents quickly see which bin is due for collection each week and will help people check what can be put into each bin, to help people recycle even more.

There is also the option to receive reminders ahead of bin collection day and receive alerts if a scheduled bin collection has been delayed through bad weather or a traffic issue.

The new app also enables people to find nearby council-owned car parks, leisure centres and public toilets, as well as local places to eat and their associated food hygiene rating.

The new app is available for Apple and Android in the app store (search for East Suffolk) or via www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/councilapp

The new Better Recycling service launches in Suffolk from 1 June and from this date, residents will be able to recycle more items, including glass and soft plastic, through their recycling bins at home. The collections will be as follows:

- A weekly food waste collection (grey food container)
- A three-weekly general rubbish collection (black lid bin)
- A three-weekly recycling collection for glass, plastics, metal and cartons (blue lid bin)
- A three-weekly recycling collection for paper and card (green lid bin)

By the end of this month, all households will have received their additional green lidded recycling bin and grey food waste container, as well as a smaller caddy to collect food waste indoors.

To help residents recycle even more, the new East Suffolk app has a handy recycling search tool to check whether an item can be recycled. There is also an AI powered image search which enables residents to take a photo of an item and check whether it can be recycled, and in which bin.

East Suffolk Council is investing £1 million in car park infrastructure, including new contactless payment terminals, EV chargers, new cycle racks and signage, as well as introducing a suite of new parking tariffs in the district.

As part of an annual review of its fees and charges last year, the Council agreed to retain the 30 minutes free parking available in many council-owned car parks and to introduce several new tariffs to reduce congestion at peak times of the year.

To reflect the increased number of visitors coming to the district from further afield during the summer, new seasonal tariffs were also introduced in car parks in popular tourist destinations to ease the demand on busy car parks during the main tourism season. New tariffs have also been introduced to allow campervans and motorhomes, HGVs and coaches to park in designated car parks in the district, with limitations on the length of stay.

This was the first increase in parking charges since 2020. From 2025-26 the Council will commit to inflation-only increases.

Felixstowe West and Lowestoft Central have each been awarded up to £20 million funding as part of the Pride in Place Programme.

This is a government communities' scheme which offers local people the power to shape the future of their neighbourhood. Neighbourhood Boards, made up of local people, will decide how to invest this funding, supported by their MP and the local authority.

It will be led by an independent Chair who will be responsible for championing the views of local people and making sure that decisions are inclusive, evidence-based and transparent. They will work with a local Pride in Place Board to create a long-term plan for area and build positive relationships with the community.

East Suffolk Council has this year approved a record £8.5 million spending on 27 infrastructure projects thanks to the 'Community Infrastructure Levy' (CIL). This ranges from a £4.2 million Medical Centre expansion in Beccles to £6,000 for a sensory garden in Rushmere St Andrew.

CIL is a developer contribution which we collect from housing developments to fund infrastructure in East Suffolk. When we receive that we split it three ways. We keep 5% to allow us to administer the service, fully funding our Infrastructure team. Between 15% and 25% goes to the local Town or Parish Council, and since 2013 we have distributed £8.6 million to our Town and Parish Councils to spend on their local infrastructure and facilities. The rest is then spent anywhere in the district.

A lot of this spending is informed by the infrastructure identified in our Local Plans. We also need to assess whether what we are spending our CIL on will bring benefits which mitigate the effects of development and that it is well related to communities where development is happening. Following scrutiny and recommendations from our CIL Spending Working Group our Cabinet approves that spending for the year each autumn.

As part of the suite of East Suffolk Council projects supporting residents this winter, the Warm Welcomes project returned for its fourth year. This project provides funding for community venues to offer heated spaces with free refreshments for residents to go to.

Last year, 22 Warm Welcomes were funded across the district, providing thousands of people a warm welcome in temperature and in spirit. We look forward to over 20 Warm Welcomes running from the first week of November 2025 to the last week of March 2026 offering refreshments, a heated space, and access to services and information in the community.

Alongside this support is the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme. This Department of Education funded project provides holiday activities and meals for families in receipt of benefit-related free school meals.

East Suffolk Council has formally approved plans to install CCTV units in eight additional locations in Felixstowe, as well as upgrading a further 15 cameras.

The eight new cameras are set to be placed at priority sites, including Sea Road, Langer Park, Hamilton Road, Felixstowe Library, the train station, Walton High Street and the area around the Viewpoint cafe in Viewpoint Road. The town council will be contributing £42,000 from its CCTV Earmarked Reserve budget to the total cost of the project, which will be £97,500.

The initiative is being led by East Suffolk Council, which is responsible for six of the CCTV cameras in the town's seafront gardens, with the remaining nine being maintained by the town council. The aim is for a more strategic, district-led CCTV model as East Suffolk Council is the statutory authority responsible for community safety and is responsible for public assets where CCTV is required.

A new law called Awaab's Law has been introduced, giving give social housing tenants greater protection from damp and mould. The law is named after Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old who sadly died in 2020 after prolonged exposure to mould in his home.

It ensures that landlords take urgent and effective action to fix damp and mould problems within strict timeframes. At East Suffolk Council, we already take a proactive approach to damp and mould repairs and welcome this new national standard to ensure every home is safe, warm and healthy. By working together with residents, landlords and support partners we can make sure that every home in East Suffolk is safe, warm and free from damp and mould. If you spot a problem early, report it. If you need help heating your home, reach out.

East Suffolk Council successfully secured a £2.8million grant from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and, with an additional £2m investment of its own, will now move forward with ambitious plans to upgrade and decarbonise three of the district's leisure centres – Leiston, Waterlane, and Deben.

The funding 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. Tackling emissions from these buildings is crucial to reaching overall carbon reduction targets.

The planned upgrades 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. These cleaner, highly efficient systems will significantly cut energy use and emissions at all three sites.

East Suffolk Council has signed an agreement with the Deben Climate Centre (DCC) to roll out an ambitious community action project with a focus on four rivers across the district.

The '4 Rivers Recovery Programme' will focus on each of our major rivers - The Waveney, Blyth, Alde & Ore and the Deben and community workshops will produce recommendations and work packages designed to help restore the more obviously degraded sections of the river catchments. Citizen Science groups will be supported and grown to more extensively monitor the state of our rivers.

Through the participatory decision-making process a number of small-scale nature-based measures will be implemented to help reduce levels of flooding and to contribute towards nature recovery.

East Suffolk Council has partnered with environmental charity Groundwork East to launch 'Nature at Work' – a campaign responding to the climate and nature emergency by helping nature to thrive at hundreds of community sites across East Suffolk.

The campaign will develop and promote the biodiversity of 116 existing council owned spaces, including improved and interactive signage. There is also a renewed focus to support schools, parish councils and community groups on the wider benefits nature-rich spaces can bring to local ecosystems.

Ten schools throughout East Suffolk are being supported by Groundwork to create native wildflower meadows and habitats for wildlife on their school grounds. These spaces can then be used for learning activities, encouraging future generations to be conscious of and inspired by the natural world.

Popular play areas at Seaton Road and Walton Recreation Ground in Felixstowe reopened, following refurbishment works carried out by East Suffolk Council and Felixstowe Town Council.

The transformation of these play areas was made possible using funding from Felixstowe Town Council, East Suffolk Council, and Community Infrastructure Levy. These improvements are part of a five-year programme of improvements to East Suffolk's play areas.

Both councils are especially grateful to the Felixstowe Youth Forum, Felixstowe School, and Grange Primary School for their enthusiastic support in spreading the word and encouraging young people to have their say. Their involvement ensured that the final designs reflected the preferences and needs of local families.

These improvements form part of the Council's Play Strategy 2023-2027, which has seen eight play spaces improved.

East Suffolk Council has secured a provisional allocation of £5.9million to help improve the energy performance of social housing as part of the Government's Warm Homes Plan.

Funding will contribute to a total £12m programme to allow the installation of energy efficiency upgrades and low-carbon heating measures in social homes across East Suffolk – supporting climate goals and helping to protect tenants from risk of fuel poverty.

East Suffolk Council has been offered a provisional allocation of £5,905,116 as one of 127 ‘Challenge Fund’ projects announced in the third wave of the programme, administered by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, and formerly known as the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

The programme aims to raise the energy performance of England’s 1.2m social homes currently below EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) band C. This funding will allow the Council to upgrade a significant amount of social housing stock to be more energy-efficient – helping to drive down emissions and bills, supporting lower income families, and improving the health and wellbeing of tenants. An important step towards addressing fuel poverty and achieving net zero ambitions.

A seafront redevelopment scheme in Felixstowe has moved a step forward after funding was approved by East Suffolk Council.

Funding has been agreed to deliver two projects within the Felixstowe Seafront Development Strategy which are set to enhance the experience for residents, visitors, and businesses, strengthening Felixstowe Seafront as a vibrant and attractive tourism destination.

The Felixstowe Seafront Signage, Wayfinding and Promenade Link project aims to help people better navigate the seafront, with new pathways linking the promenade to Manor Terrace to improve accessibility. Alongside this, the seafront lighting project will upgrade and replace columns, lanterns and festoon lighting, with new lighting also installed in historic seafront shelters.

Following the great success of the 2022-25 East Suffolk UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme - a government funding scheme aimed at kickstarting the local economy - East Suffolk Council was awarded a further circa £901,000 for 2025/26 that will support local businesses, people, and communities.

This is in addition to the £334,000 awarded to East Suffolk Council for the Rural England Prosperity Fund.

During 2022-25, East Suffolk Council supported over 750 businesses to start, grow and sustain through advice, guidance, and grants, supported over 470 economically inactive people to train in life and work ready skills, 269 people to gain a qualification and invested almost £400k in high street and town centre projects which included small high street improvements, facilitating events, and providing funding to improve shop fronts.

A new collaborative approach to tackling health inequalities affecting East Suffolk residents has been launched, with partners working together to improve people's access to health services, education, employment and housing.

The East Suffolk Marmot Place was officially launched in November and was attended by representatives from the main partner organisations; East Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council and both the NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB and NHS Suffolk and North East Essex ICBs which cover East Suffolk.

Health inequalities are unfair and avoidable differences in people's health, including how long people are likely to live, the health conditions they experience and the care available to them. A Marmot Place recognises that health inequalities are shaped by people's living, learning and working conditions, sometimes known as the 'social determinants of health' and include people's access to services, education, employment and housing.

At the launch of the East Suffolk Marmot Place, Sir Michael Marmot delivered a presentation on health inequalities in the district, delegates took part in a workshop looking at the key data around those inequalities and then heard from a range of experts working first hand to tackle them. The event closed with a talk from Alicia Phillips from the Institute of Health Equity about the Coventry Marmot Place and what becoming a Marmot Place means in practice.

Marmot Places were developed after an independent report by Professor Sir Michael Marmot in 2010, commissioned by the then government, identified the most effective ways to reduce health inequalities in England.

During a ministerial visit to the district, East Suffolk Council urged the Government to improve coordination and strategic oversight of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

On Thursday 18 December, Lord Vallance, Minister for Nuclear at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, visited Sizewell C. The Council's Deputy Leader Cllr Paul Ashton and cabinet member for Energy and Climate Change Cllr Tom Daly met with the Minister, alongside the MP for Suffolk Coastal Jenny Riddell-Carpenter. During discussions, the Council pressed its concerns about the lack of coordination across multiple NSIPs affecting East Suffolk and emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum on the social and environmental mitigations secured as part of the Sizewell C project.

East Suffolk continues to play a significant role in the nation's progress towards Net Zero, with several NSIPs already planned or under construction across the district and heritage coast. These include the Sizewell C new nuclear project, alongside other large-scale energy and infrastructure schemes, including the Sea Link grid reinforcement project currently in examination with the Planning Inspectorate.

However, the concentration of these projects, many with overlapping construction periods in the same geographical areas, poses the risk of substantial cumulative impacts on local communities, the environment, the district's tourism economy, and essential services.