
January 2021 District Councillor report

for

Depden Parish Council

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

West Suffolk Council has been and continues to lead and play its part in tackling COVID-19, keeping our communities safe, supporting out businesses and delivering services during this challenging time. On this page you will find information about what the council is doing and how you can play your part, as well as guidance and support for our communities and businesses.

Latest updates



National lockdown: stay at home

(updated 4 January 2021)

- You must stay at home. This is the single most important action we can all take to protect the NHS and save lives.
- You must not leave, or be outside of your home except where necessary. You may leave the home to:
 - shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
 - go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
 - exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
 - meet your support bubble or childcare bubble where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
 - seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
 - attend education or childcare - for those eligible
- Stay 2 metres apart from anyone not in your household or bubble.

Suffolk, like the rest of the country, is in a national lockdown due to rising infection rates of COVID-19. This means much more tighter restrictions on what you can do to stop the spread of COVID-19. This includes most pupils being schooled at home. Everyone must play their role in tackling COVID-19 and taking action to stop the spread.

- [GOV.UK - National lockdown: stay at home](#)

Government guidance

The lockdown guidance means many businesses have to close and others operate in other ways. The guidance can be found on the Government website and we ask residents to support their local businesses at this difficult time. They must also play their part in social distancing and sticking to COVID safe measures when using businesses.

- [GOV.UK - Work and financial support](#)
- [GOV.UK - Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- As part of its measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the Government has announced grant funding to be paid out by councils to businesses that have, as a result, have been required by Government to close. Please visit our [COVID-19 - Business grants webpage](#) for more details.
- [GOV.UK - National lockdown: stay at home](#)
- The Government has brought in a payment for those on benefits or low incomes who have been asked by the national Test and Trace service to self-isolate. Find out more on how to claim for the [Test and Trace support payments](#) if asked to do so, you must self isolate.
- Whether you meet the criteria or not set by Government, there is help available for those facing financial difficulty or needing support. The Suffolk Support and Advice Service helps people across the county access information or support relating to debt, benefits, housing or employment. You can contact the service on 0800 068 3131 between 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday or visit [Suffolk Support and Advice Service](#).

Home But Not Alone

Find support during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, including our emergency phoneline if you need urgent help such as getting food and medicine. Find out more: [Suffolk County Council - Home But Not Alone](#)

Government and medical guidance

COVID-19 case numbers are rising rapidly across the whole of the UK and in other countries. You must act now to control the spread of the virus. The single most important action you can take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home, to protect the NHS and save lives.

Remember, Hands. Face. Space:

- **hands** - wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds
- **face** - wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- **space** - stay two metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or one metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings)

The NHS has advice on what you must do if you are showing symptoms or if you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive. Please download the NHS Test and Trace app. It is vital to stick to social distancing and COVID safety rules as one in three people don't show symptoms.

For more information visit:

- [NHS - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - Get the latest NHS information and advice about coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [NHS - Social distancing and changes to everyday life](#)
- [NHS - Self-isolation and treating coronavirus symptoms](#)

Fraud advice

In an initiative between government and the independent charity Crimestoppers, the public can now call a new COVID Fraud Hotline (0800 587 5030) anonymously and free of charge to report suspected fraudulent activity. The COVID Fraud Hotline is open 24/7, 365 days a year on 0800 587 5030 or fill in the simple and secure anonymous form at www.Covidfraudhotline.org

Read more on the Government scheme: [New hotline launched to report COVID fraudsters](#)

Helping the community

- [KickStart -providing six-month employment placements for 16-24s on Universal Credit to assist them in gaining the skills and experience they need to succeed in the future](#)
- [COVID-19 Community support](#)
- [COVID-19 Landlords and tenants advice](#)
- [New National Lottery community funding available](#)
- The Suffolk Support and Advice helpline is open between 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Phone: 0800 068 3131 or visit [Suffolk Support and Advice Service](#)

Helping businesses

- [COVID-19 support for business](#)
- [Creating safer places](#) - West Suffolk continues to work with partners to help make places as safe as possible and to support businesses. But this requires the public and businesses to follow guidelines. Brandon, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Mildenhall and Newmarket - changes to highways and footpaths information, and business information pack to help businesses.

Changes to services

- [West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village](#), museum, visitor centre and shop are closed.
- [Moyes's Hall Museum](#) is closed.
- [Leisure centres](#) are closed.
- [The Apex](#) cafe, Tourist Information Centre and box office are closed.
- Abbey Gardens, Brandon Country Park, East Town Park, Nowton Park and West Stow Country Park are open daily for exercise, the toilet facilities at each of these sites are open. The café facilities at Nowton Park and West Stow Country Park are open for take-away refreshments, Brandon Country Park tea room is closed.
- The 200 play areas maintained by West Suffolk Council are all open.
- [Abbey Gardens tennis courts](#) are closed.
- Outdoor gyms at East Town Park and Moreton Hall are closed.
- [Skateparks](#) are closed.
- [Shopmobility](#) in Bury, Newmarket and Haverhill is closed.
- [West Suffolk Markets](#) are open to sell essential goods only.
- [COVID-19 - waste disposal advice](#)
- [Tips for reducing waste](#)
- [Residential permit holders in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill allowed to park in nearby West Suffolk Council car parks at no extra charge during national lockdown restrictions, plus arrangements for residents in Newmarket](#)

For more information visit: [COVID-19 Changes to services](#)

Staying physically and mentally healthy

Staying safe

- What you should do: Keep a social distance of two metres from anyone not in your household bubble; wash your hands frequently for 20 seconds and clean equipment before use. Wear a face covering and stay local. You must avoid non-essential travel.

- [The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership have created a video is to raise awareness of safeguarding for children and adults at risk](#) and tell members of the public what to do if they see something that doesn't seem quite right. During this challenging time, it will be even harder for children and adults who are already vulnerable to tell us what is happening to them. We are all responsible for safeguarding and now more than ever it is important that we are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect. Please share this amongst your networks.

Protecting your wellbeing by staying active

People are encouraged to exercise to protect our physical and mental health. You can continue to do unlimited exercise alone, or in a public outdoor place with your household, support bubble, or with one other person if you maintain social distancing. You should follow the [guidance on meeting others safely](#). This remains part of the nation's battle against COVID-19 and the same free opportunities continue in West Suffolk for you to keep up your routines or add to new ones.

Find out the latest updates:

- [Parks and open spaces](#)
- [Keep Moving Suffolk](#)
- [Play areas](#)
- [Skateparks](#) are closed

[COVID-19 Information and wellbeing support guide](#) - LifeLink has compiled this guide of great resources and virtual support.

Latest news

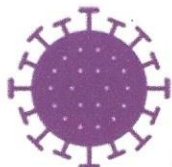
Read our recent press releases in [Latest news](#)

Last updated:

08 January 2021 9:12 AM



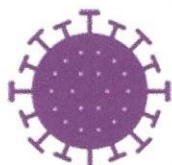
- [Creating safer places](#)



- [COVID-19 Landlords and tenants advice](#)



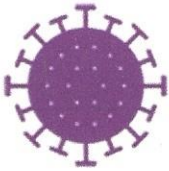
- [Skills](#)



- [COVID-19 Changes to services](#)



- [Test and Trace Support Payment](#)



- COVID-19 support for communities

More in Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- [COVID-19 support for business - grants](#)
- [COVID-19 Market deliveries](#)
- [COVID-19 Waste disposal advice](#)
- [COVID-19 Licensing update](#)
- [COVID-19: Advice for equine and horse racing industry](#)
- [COVID-19 Information, health and wellbeing support guide](#)
- [COVID-19 Apex updates](#)

COVID-19 vaccine scam

Fake Text re - Covid-19 Test

A dangerous fake NHS text has been circulating, telling people they're eligible to apply for the COVID-19 vaccine. Here's what it looks like.

NEVER give out your personal details.

With the recent approval of multiple vaccines in the UK, these types of scam attempts are likely to continue as fraudsters look to take advantage of the rollout to so many people.

Cold calls regarding the vaccine are also beginning to take place - we've already had reports of scammers asking people to pay for it over the phone. If you receive one of these calls, hang up.

Protect others by reporting incidents like this. If you, or anyone you know, have been affected by this fraud or any other scam, report it to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk

A dangerous fake NHS text has been circulating, telling people they're eligible to apply for the COVID-19 vaccine. It reads: "NHS: We have identified that you are eligible to apply for your vaccine. For more information and to apply, follow here : uk-application-form.com

The link takes you through to an extremely convincing fake NHS website that asks for your personal details.

07 Jan 2021

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The COVID-19 vaccination is only available through the NHS to eligible groups and it is a free vaccination.

If you, or anyone you know, have been affected by this fraud or any other scam, report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040, or at www.actionfraud.police.uk

You can find out more about the rollout of the vaccine at:

- [NHS UK – Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine](#)
- [Gov UK – Why you have to wait for your COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Public Health England and NHS publication – COVID-19 vaccination: Why do I have to wait](#)

Please share this message with your family and friends.

West Suffolk Hospital has been granted planning permission for a new decant ward while urgent repair works take place

A new 32-bed ward is to be built at West Suffolk Hospital to maintain services while urgent repair work takes place.

West Suffolk Council granted planning permission shortly before Christmas for the hospital to create a single-storey extension to the existing facility which will form a 'decant ward' - bed space for patients and staff to move into to allow healthcare to continue uninterrupted while maintenance work takes place at other wards.

The hospital said it will have 32 beds and hopes it will be ready by summer 2021.

A spokesman from West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust said: "Our long term plan is to build a new healthcare campus for Bury St Edmunds but while that work takes place we need to maintain the existing West Suffolk Hospital building, which is now more than 45-years-old.

"This new decant ward will help us minimise disruption to patients while we carry out maintenance work in the current building.

"The new ward is designed as a modular structure which means it has the potential to both be put in place quickly - hopefully by the summer - and also to be moved and re-used in the future."

West Suffolk Hospital is to move to a new site being created at Hardwick Manor from 2025 - Credit: West Suffolk Hospital

While the hospital is due to move to a new facility being constructed at the nearby Hardwick Manor, that scheme is not likely to be completed until after 2025, meaning some essential maintenance work is needed to maintain the existing hospital.

Mike Chester

District Councillor Chedburgh and Chevington Ward

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

More than 770 people have now sadly lost their lives to coronavirus, according to the latest official data. And I am sorry to say that data is already out of date

Suffolk needs you to strictly follow the lockdown rules, to save Suffolk lives. By staying at home and limiting your interaction with others, this will stop the virus moving from person to person, make fewer people ill and ultimately prevent people from dying.

Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health for Suffolk, said:

“My thoughts are with everyone who has been affected by the loss of a loved one.

“Sadly, there will be further deaths, but every single person has the power to bring this number down with immediate effect, to reduce the pressure on our hospitals and to stop people from becoming ill with this deadly disease.

“This new variant is far more infectious, it doesn’t recognise that you follow the rules most of the time, it only takes one opportunity.

“The message could not be clearer: Stay at home. Save lives.

“The lockdown measures are in place because the new strain of the virus is spreading more easily between people. If everyone limits their interaction with each other, we will not be giving the virus the opportunity to affect more people.

“Do not use lockdown restrictions as a challenge to see how you can flex the rules. Question yourself every time you think about leaving your home or getting in the car: is this the safest thing to do to protect my friends and family? Am I putting other people’s loved ones in danger?”

As of 25 December 2020, 774 people have lost their lives.

Staying at home can bring its own challenges, including feelings of isolation or worries about finances if you’re not able to go to work.

However, there are many people who are ready to listen, support and guide you through any difficulties or worries you have.

Home But Not Alone (tel. 0800 876 6926) is there to support you if are self-isolating and need access to medicine or food. There is financial support for those self-isolating and is available through your local borough or district council.

Support and resources for Suffolk include:

- **Home, But Not Alone:** Supporting clinically vulnerable people gain access to medication, food and community support: 0800 876 6926
- **Suffolk Advice and Support Service** If you need to talk to someone about your finances and how you can access help please call the SASS service on 0800 068 3131
- **NSFT & Suffolk Mind** If you need to talk to someone about your mental health and wellbeing please get in touch with NSFT: 0300 123 1503 Suffolk Mind: 0300 111 6000
- **First Response** If you or someone you know is in mental health crisis please call First Response 0808 196 3494

- **Domestic Abuse Helpline** Are you a victim of domestic violence and abuse? Call the Suffolk 24-hour Freephone Helpline 0800 977 5690. Are you hurting the one you love? Choose to stop. The Respect Phoneline 0808 802 4040
- **Physical activity** Visit Keep Moving Suffolk for ideas to improve yours and your family's physical activity levels. www.keeptomovingsuffolk.com
- **The Source website** Information and advice for young people in Suffolk, visit <https://thesource.me.uk>
- **Emotional Wellbeing Hub** Support for young people, call 0345 600 2090 or visit Emotional Wellbeing Gateway

The news of the deaths in Suffolk, comes as further roll out of vaccinations is undertaken in Suffolk. It is obviously an NHS programme but to make it easier for people to find out what is happening we are hosing information on the SCC website

For more general information on the Covid-19 vaccination programme in Suffolk, a web page has been set-up on the Council public website, linked for your information here: www.suffolk.gov.uk/covidvaccinations

Locally our vaccination will be in Haverhill; fairly soon when the most at risk groups have been vaccinated a mass vaccination sites will be set up

The key advice to share with residents is

The **NHS will contact you** when it's your turn to have the vaccine.

Do not contact the NHS for a vaccination before then.

You'll need to be registered with a GP surgery in England (to get a vaccine). You can [register with a GP](#) if you do not have one.

Please be aware the vaccine is free but there are scammers at work trying to con people into paying – do not be taken in!

The support for people isolating because of a positive test has been extended. Previously Test and Trace Support payments could only be given to people meeting certain criteria, including on benefits. Now Councils across Suffolk have extended this, using their discretion, to help those on low incomes but not on benefits. Councils across Suffolk are helping administer the Government grant scheme to help people remain at home and do their bit to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Details about the Test and Trace Support Payments can be found on West Suffolk Council Council websites and how to apply for it (**see below**). This is part of a range of measures that councils across Suffolk have introduced to support communities and businesses during the coronavirus pandemic.

Those who are eligible will need to meet all the following criteria:

- You have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace on or after 28 September 2020.
- You have responded to your notification from the NHS Test and Trace and engaged with the service by providing the legally required information.
- You are employed or self-employed.
- You cannot work from home and will lose income as a result.

- You are currently receiving at least one of the following benefits: Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income
- Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit, OR (under the new discretionary powers) you have a household income of less than £37,400 (couple or single parents) or £19,200 (single person) and have savings of less than £3,000.
- You made your application within 14 days of the last day of your NHS test and trace self-isolation period.

Applicants should ensure that they have the below information available before starting the application:

- NI number
- Your 8-digit test and trace ID number
- Your most recent bank statement, proof of self-employment or wage slips

Visit your District or Borough Council websites for details on how to apply for the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment:

- West Suffolk Council Test and Trace Support Payment [westsuffolk.gov.uk](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk)

Additional help, including financial aid, is also available from Suffolk Support and Advice Service. This additional help is available for those facing financial difficulty or needing support – especially for those who have never asked for help before. On 1 October 2020, the Suffolk Support and Advice Service phonenumber was launched to help people across the county access information or support relating to debt, benefits, housing or employment.

Seven new projects were announced just before Christmas as part of the Suffolk 2020 fund to support residents and improve the county for years to come.

As part of the council's investment in Suffolk's communities and its ongoing commitment to protecting the environment, the authority launched a special one-off fund in March with the aim of setting up and delivering a range of initiatives and projects that provide a positive, tangible impact in what has proven to be an extremely challenging year.

The announced initiatives and projects are as followed:

New booking system and automatic number plate recognition at Household Waste Recycling Centres – Improving the efficiency and customer experience across all 11 recycling centres by enhancing the online booking system using automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) and automated entry barriers.

Adult Digital Learning - Developing new virtual learning tools and techniques and setting up a laptop loan scheme to strengthen and extend access to the Adult Learning Service for those living in digital and/or rural isolation. This approach will enable people to enhance their knowledge and skills to secure employment. Building on the swift switch to virtual learning during lockdown, we will further develop virtual learning for adults across Suffolk and use new technologies to enrich and improve the quality of interaction and training, modernising the service's offer.

Youth Work - Developing and supporting growth of grass roots organisations to deliver accessible, high quality provision for youths across Suffolk. Includes creation of a virtual

'Centre of Excellence' to share best practice and provide a 'one stop shop' of support for youth groups across Suffolk.

Discovering Suffolk – raising awareness of Suffolk's countryside and the county's rights of way network, promoting local (Covid-safe) outdoor activities across all of Suffolk with the development of a smartphone outdoor app and QR codes to engage new audiences.

Automated Numberplate Recognition Speed Indicators – Devices will be installed at the roadside to tackle localised problems with speeding drivers. The devices will be periodically moved between sites of concern and the data will be forwarded to the Police to assist with targeted enforcement.

Virtual Reality therapy - Engagement and coproduction with people living with dementia and their carers to explore and develop interactive and therapeutic experiences to support wellbeing. These would be delivered through mobile virtual reality headsets and include bespoke content and interactions based around archive media of Suffolk.

Mobile Community 'Care Hubs' - Digitally equip and staff selected community vehicles accessing rural communities within Suffolk. This will support digital inclusion and provide a way to share information and provide help around the opportunities available with care technologies and other digital skills.

The work involved in setting up and enabling these projects will begin in early 2021, setting in motion a range of new community projects that will benefit people for years to come. The council's agreement to move forwards with these exciting projects listed above follows the successful launch of the first three Suffolk 20202 projects that were announced over recent months:

EV Vehicle Charging Points – Making grants available to install around 100 vehicle charging points throughout the county. Particularly targeting rural areas and sites owned and managed by not-for-profit organisations such as Parish Councils, village halls, sports clubs, libraries and charities.

Tree Planting - Increasing tree cover, through rural and urban planting schemes, planting approximately 100,000 trees over the next 18 months, establishing 'healing woodlands' to remember those lost to Covid-19, and increasing biodiversity along roadside verges.

Quiet Lanes - Encouraging the use of non-motorised vehicles and more considerate driving at lower speeds along a range of the community's self-selected rural lanes, with a view to adding 200 new lanes across Suffolk.

Locally, it's been announced we will provide a new recycling centre for Haverhill.

The option of a site at Homefield Road could provide a bigger recycling centre with improved access which would lead to less congestion and queuing.

The current Haverhill recycling centre site at Chalkstone Way has previously been identified as requiring improvements or relocation as part of the council's programme of recycling centre improvements. The current size and footprint of the site will not be sufficient for the forecast housing growth currently projected in the area. Early plans for the new site involve designing out the need for steps, making it safer and easier for people to recycle their rubbish and also removing the need for the site to close for bin changes as the operational vehicles would be kept separate from the public.

Yours with kind regards

Mary Evans