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## September 2020 District Councillor report

for

### Depden Parish Council

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**Timeline for solar farm plans** - District planners will be expected to give their opinions on a sprawling solar farm just outside Newmarket – but because of the scale of the plans elected councillors will not be able to block it. The Sunnica proposal, as a major infrastructure will be determined by the Government, with local planning authorities acting as consultees only. it would have the potential to deliver up to up to 500MW of renewable energy – enough to power approximately 100,000 homes and contentiously covers an area the size of 900 football pitches. The proposed site is on the Suffolk-Cambridgeshire border.

**Plans for £14m wards at hospital for 2021** – Plans for West Suffolk Hospital submitted to West Suffolk Hospital.

#### In awe of the Earth .

Saturday 3 October 2020 to Sunday 18 October 2020



**Following the huge success** of Luke Jerram’s Museum of the Moon installation at The Apex in 2019, we are delighted to present his spectacular installation Gaia, a seven-metre replica of planet Earth.

Gaia has recently been shown in Hong Kong, Australia, Taiwan and at the Natural History Museum in London. Gaia features 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the Earth’s surface. The artwork provides the opportunity to see our planet on this scale, floating in three-dimensions, suspended three meters above the auditorium floor. A specially made surround sound composition by BAFTA award winning composer Dan Jones is played alongside the sculpture.

Implementation of the Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan begins on September 21<sup>st</sup> with the redevelopment of 17-18 Cornhill, the former Post Office's Victorian façade will be retained whilst the rest demolished and replaced by apartments and retail units featuring an arcade thus creating a transitional access connecting the architecture of the old town with newer Arc shopping centre.

**Detailed homes plans approved.** West Suffolk District Council continues to meet the requirements for the demand (both statutory and actual). A 63 new home development for Marham Park has been approved.

**CPE (Civil Parking Enforcement)**, where enforcement was transferred from the Police to local government in April this year is causing anger amongst residents in West Suffolk. From a legal perspective all that has changed is the law on illegal parking are now being enforced.

**County line drug pushers 'change the way they operate' to continue importing drugs into Suffolk during lockdown** - County line drug pushers have changed the way they operate, allowing them to continue funnelling illegal substances into Suffolk towns during lockdown. Please report any suspicious activities to the Police.

**You may already be aware of this but,** if not, as West Suffolk Councillors I also wanted to make sure you knew. We have been informed of a Covid-19 outbreak in the Samuel Ward Academy, Haverhill. Currently five teaching assistants have tested positive, with a further two assistants with symptoms. An Incident Management Team (IMT) was held today which included the School head, the academic chain Chief Exec, Public Health England, CYP and Suffolk Public health.

**Friends of the Earth** named West Suffolk as one of the top areas in the UK for tackling climate change and supporting the environment late last year, but we recognise more must be done.

Earlier this year we announced that the area had seen a 45 per cent drop in air pollution during lockdown, and while we recognise this is because people had to stay at home, we are keen to keep the environmental and health benefits of improved air quality.

While we will continue to encourage people to walk or cycle or make other changes were possible such as working from home, West Suffolk is a rural area and people will still need to use their car for some journeys.

Working with our partners, we are improving the EV infrastructure to give people more confidence to switch to EV or hybrid vehicles, cut pollution and help both the environment and our health.

Funding for a new initiative is now in place to provide 22 Electric Vehicle charge points connected to lampposts for residents that lack off street parking. All locations selected are where off-street parking is not available and where lampposts are suitably located at the kerbside.

We will monitor use at each location and if a need is identified elsewhere, then the Councils can either apply to OLEV for more funding for more charge points or relocate any that are being underused.

I am sure that you will agree that this is an important part of our ongoing commitment to reduce carbon emissions and help tackle climate change. We already own one of the largest Council solar farms in the UK, we support businesses through solar for business, we are working on initiatives to reduce vehicle idling, we have secured investment in charging points for electric vehicles and Cabinet has said it is committed to bringing in more EV charge points across West Suffolk to benefit our residents and businesses.

EVs deliver a significant reduction in pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide as well as reducing carbon emissions compared to petrol or diesel vehicles, both per mile and over the life cycle of a vehicle including production. By switching to EVs people are helping reduce air pollution which Public Health England said in 2017, cost the country £42.88 million in health and social care costs.

**West Suffolk Domestic abuse reports up a quarter in lockdown** – Domestic abuse referrals in west Suffolk rose by more than a quarter during the coronavirus lockdown, latest data shows – and more reports are expected over the coming weeks and months.

### **Western Way given planning approval**

A nationally ground-breaking initiative to create jobs, improve access to services and create better health and educational outcomes for West Suffolk has been given planning approval.

The Western Way development in Bury St Edmunds will bring leisure, health, education, public services and commercial properties into one place as part of the national One Public Estate programme.

West Suffolk Council's Development Control Committee approved the plans at their meeting today, Wednesday, 5 August.

The scheme involves a range of partners who will now be looking at the planning requirements and the next phases of the scheme, including the impact of COVID-19 and a requirement to provide more details on a travel plan and changes to the athletics track. A report will be going to West Suffolk Council Cabinet at a later date.

Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of West Suffolk Council, said: "We are pleased that another important step has been taken along the way to deliver another ground-breaking initiative in West Suffolk. Not only will people be able to access health, leisure, education and public services on one site but it shows that working together across the public sector in new ways can bring greater benefits to health and wellbeing. We are now looking forward to working with our partners to consider the next stages of delivering this long-term and exciting project, which if anything, recent events have shown is even more needed than ever".

Councillor Jo Rayner, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Community Hubs, said: "Western Way is part of the way public sector partners in Suffolk are working across traditional boundaries to improve outcomes for our communities. Mildenhall Hub is another such project nearing completion which brings services together in one place so people can benefit from a more holistic approach to their needs, such as having complementary facilities and expert advice, such as health and leisure, together in one place."

*Mike Chester*

**District Councillor Chedburgh and Chevington Ward**

## COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

In August, the local SNT got in touch with me to say they were looking to have more involvement with parish councils. They are planning to hold virtual meetings with local parishes where you can raise questions. They have divided the area in two groups. It is broadly the area covered by the Clare Division plus Kedington, Barnardiston, Chedburgh, Chevington, Hawstead and Whepstead. I have supplied them with the email addresses for the parish clerks covering our local villages.

At SCC we have set up a fund of about £3m for community enhancements projects to be undertaken this year. The idea is that the Suffolk 2020 fund will finance projects across the county and not be over bureaucratic! Schemes in the pipeline for approval are planting more trees including the establishment of a healing wood as a site of commemoration post Covid19; a network of electric car charging points at village/community halls; the designation of quiet lanes and a new app and upgraded smart marker posts for rights of way.

We have worked very hard to make arrangements to get the 12,000 children entitled to free school transport to school safely. Full details are on [www.suffolkonboard.com](http://www.suffolkonboard.com) I will be able to provide an update on the situation at Samuel Ward, Haverhill, if required this evening.

The re-opening of the Household Waste Recycling Centres has gone extremely well and we are looking at making the system of booked appointments a permanent feature.

Suffolk's Fire Chief Mark Hardingham is leaving us to take up the prestigious role of Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC). This is a nationally significant position with considerable responsibilities. Mark, who holds the Queen's Fire Service Medal, led the parade of UK's uniformed Civilian Services at the national Remembrance Day Service at The Cenotaph in 2018. He will be hugely missed when he leaves SCC. The deputy Chief Fire Officer Dan Fearn is stepping up in the interim pending a formal recruitment process.

Saturday 15 August was the 75th anniversary of VJ Day in the UK, marking Victory in Japan at the end of the Second World War. Troops from the Suffolk Regiment served across the Far East including in the Razmak District of Pakistan, Burma, and Singapore, as well as in Europe and Africa. It was following the loss of Singapore in February 1942 that the 4th and 5th Battalions spent three and half years as Prisoners-of-War, initially in the infamous Changi Jail, then constructing the Burma to Thailand Railway. The team at Suffolk Archives have put together a [special online exhibition marking VJ Day](#), exploring the stories of two Suffolk men who were taken prisoner in the Far East, Able Seaman Harold Lock and Private Raymond Suttle, from the 4th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment, as well as looking at the way our county marked the end of the Second World War.

Suffolk Highways has completed its 1,000th resurfaced mile, following the Council's commitment to relay new road surfaces on a quarter of Suffolk's road network. In 2017, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet committed to resurfacing 1,000 miles of road across Suffolk over a four-year period in a bid to improve the quality of roads, reduce the number of potholes and to help stop potholes from forming in the first place. The commitment also makes sound financial sense, as preventing the deterioration of road surfaces by machine surfacing or surface dressing helps reduce the need to spend more money on reactive maintenance repairing potholes now, and in future years.

The County Council's Bikeability team is now offering FREE cycling sessions to provide practical skills on how to cycle on today's roads. Everyone is welcome to take part - adults, families, and children. The sessions are aimed at those who want to cycle more regularly, whether to keep fit, to commute to work or school, or to visit friends. A session lasts between 2 and 2.5 hours and is delivered by a fully qualified Bikeability Cyclist Trainer. The trainer chats to you first about what you are trying to achieve and tailors the session to your specific needs.

Travel behaviour has transformed during lockdown, both nationally and in Suffolk, as more people turn to cycling for essential journeys and exercise. It has been a cycling revolution! Journeys made by bike rose by 120% during the pandemic, while bus, rail, ferry, plane and car journeys fell by as much as 95%.

Latest research also suggests that as much as 16% of the population in England (8.9 million people) have been cycling per week during the pandemic.

Suffolk County Council wants to encourage more people to get out and about by cycling and walking for their short journeys. The aim is to embed active travel as part of a long-term habit and reap the associated health, air quality and congestion benefits.

Suffolk has already implemented several cycling schemes in Ipswich as a result of funding received from the Department for Transport and further schemes are now being considered in Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket, Beccles, Felixstowe, Stowmarket and Sudbury. It is also promoting the Government's Fix Your Bike £50 voucher scheme, and has provided funding to Greater Anglia to install more cycle racks at their train stations across Suffolk to help more people make cycling part of their commute or daily routine.

Apprenticeships Suffolk is launching a reward package, **Recruit Retain Reward**, providing £1,000 grants for businesses taking on new and/or redundant young apprentices, aged 16-24. In a bid to give small and medium-sized Suffolk and Norfolk businesses as much support as possible, the project aims to offer a flexible 'Apprenticeship Incentive Fund' of £1000, giving businesses a boost to recruit their workforce for the future.

Employers who take on apprentices can experience a wide range of benefits. Developing apprentices' skills to be relevant to the organisation, along with improved productivity, better quality of product or service, and higher staff morale are benefits highlighted by around three-quarters of employers. More than 8 out of 10 employers recommend an apprenticeship to others \*

The new incentive scheme across Suffolk and Norfolk, will complement and enhance the new Government apprenticeship incentives announced recently by the chancellor Rishi Sunak (£2,000 for 16-24, £1,500 for 25+), and also the existing age incentives of £1,000 for 16-18s (19-24 with an Education Health Care plan).

In addition to the one-off financial payment, there will also be continued support for organisations who are new to apprenticeships. A collection of online resources is being created to support businesses employing an apprentice for the first time. This includes practical guidance and useful information from existing, local apprenticeship ambassadors to help add real value to the business. Apprenticeships Suffolk provides an impartial service to all employers, providers, apprentices and stakeholders. Further details of the project can be found here: [apprenticeshipssuffolk.org](https://www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org)

We are supporting the Government's Kickstart scheme to fund employers to create job placements for 16-24-year-olds and we are exploring with our partners in the district and borough councils and business how to extend the scheme and make it really relevant to Suffolk residents. The ideas under consideration are *Suffolk Kickstart+* which would involve giving extra support to younger and more vulnerable candidates to enable them to secure placements and *ReStart Suffolk* to support mature workers aged 50+ to get back into employment including guidance on switching career.

New resources have been published to help young people in Suffolk understand how movement and physical activity can improve their emotional wellbeing. The resources, which include a handy, pocket-sized information card, have been developed for young people with input and feedback from young people.

Made possible by Suffolk Mind and the Suffolk Most Active County Partnership, with assistance from Suffolk County Council's Children and Young People's engagement hub, the resources provide essential information about seven ways young people can improve their mental health through movement.

They also include three simple and effective ideas that young people can try straight away to help them take control of their mind and mood through movement, as well as a range of key local contacts for further support. The resources will be distributed to schools, GP surgeries and libraries across the county. They are also available as a direct download from [keepmovingsuffolk.com/wellbeing](https://keepmovingsuffolk.com/wellbeing) and [thesource.me.uk/move](https://thesource.me.uk/move).

Yours with kind regards

Mary

Mary Evans

## **VAS Summary Depden August 2020**

VAS records number of vehicles and speeds in 5 minutes intervals and 5 mph ranges - not individual registrations etc. VAS shared with Hargrave and Ousden in rotation (4 weeks each village).

### ***1 Claremont, Depden Green (IP29 4BY) coming from A143 Jul25-Aug13 2020***

Average speed: 32.7 mph

Vehicles: 5,368

Average number of vehicles: 280/day

**Fastest speed: 70mph (11/08/20 at 21:20)**

68% of vehicles speeding (3,661)

Avg speeder: 37.8 mph

85 percentile speed: 41.8 mph

Over 35 mph: 2,195 (41%)

Over 45 mph: 379 (7%)

Over 60 mph: 10

### ***2 Claremont, Depden Green from Water Tower dirn (IP29 4BY), Aug 13-22 2020***

Average speed: 32.1 mph

Vehicles: 2,111

Average number of vehicles: 269/day

**Fastest speed: 75mph (17/8/20 11:55am)**

65% of vehicles speeding (1,379)

Avg speeder goes 37.2 mph

85 percentile speed: 40.5 mph

Over 35 mph: 806 (38%)

Over 45 mph: 119 (6%)

Over 60 mph: 1