
May 2022 District Councillor report

Depden Parish Council Annual Meeting

West Suffolk Council is helping with the overall County and national effort to help **Ukrainian refugees**.

As you would expect, Suffolk County Council and the district councils are working together as a partnership to respond to this challenge and provide help to people. You should already be receiving weekly updates sent from Suffolk County Council – if you are not receiving these please contact communications@westsuffolk.gov.uk who can ensure that you receive future updates. I urge you to read that update each week as it will provide the latest news about a changing situation.

As you would expect the situation is still fluid, but organisations are pulling together to either fill any gaps or clarify Government guidance. A case management system has been set up for organisations across the county to have access to and therefore better co-ordinate responses.

A number of teams across West Suffolk Council are playing a role supporting Ukrainian refugees who are coming to our district and this will evolve over the coming months from response, to longer term community support.

Our immediate priority is to carry out property checks and to support Suffolk County Council by checking documents for DBS and safeguarding purposes. This involves staff from the Private Sector Housing and Environmental Health Team visiting the homes of potential hosts to ensure that they are suitable to welcome refugees. There are currently just over 50 potential hosts in West Suffolk.

The Families and Communities Team is working with partners to develop a package of support for hosts, refugees and community groups who want to provide assistance. This builds on the strong links we developed with partners during the Covid pandemic. Teams are also supporting people to access housing and benefits services advice for those arriving via both the Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

There is a frequently asked questions page on the Suffolk County Council website which is being updated as more questions come in. It can be found at [Frequently Asked Questions | Suffolk County Council](#)

I hope that helps explain some of the role that West Suffolk is carrying out in welcoming Ukrainian refugees and providing the support that they need.

Cllr Robert Everitt

Cabinet Member for Families and Communities

West Suffolk Council

Many of you will be aware of the publication of the Government's British Energy Security Strategy. The strategy sets out how Great Britain will accelerate the deployment of wind, new nuclear, solar and hydrogen, with the aim of seeing 95% of electricity by 2030 being low carbon.

You can find the Government's press release here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-acceleration-of-homegrown-power-in-britains-plan-for-greater-energy-independence>

The strategy clearly includes positive news both for Sizewell B and Sizewell C. You can find our statement here: <https://www.edfenergy.com/energy/nuclear-new-build-projects/sizewell-c/news-views/sizewell-c-and-new-uk-energy-strategy>

It is important to note that a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build the Sizewell C Project is still being considered following the examination of the planning application last year. We anticipate that decision will be announced in late May and we will of course notify all interested parties as soon as we hear the outcome. Should the DCO be granted, we will work with local communities, councils, businesses and all stakeholders to help make Sizewell C do the power of good for East Suffolk.

If you have any questions, we are as always available on freephone 0800 197 6102 or by email at info@sizewellc.co.uk

The West Suffolk Local Plan Working Group, which includes cross party representation from across West Suffolk Council, has been discussing the local plan. It is now ready for its second stage of public consultation – the Preferred Options stage.

Subject to the agreement of Cabinet later this month and then Council in May, the public consultation will last for eight and a half weeks from 26 May 2022.

This will offer the chance to find out more about why it is so important that we have a local plan, the draft pattern and scale of development, strategic and local policy parameters, the preferred options sites distribution, as well as to learn where this sits in the various stages of preparing a local plan

COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF). The first phase of applications for CARF, has seen West Suffolk Council so far award close to £900,000 of business rate relief to 187 businesses from across the district.

The CARF scheme which is for businesses across West Suffolk that:

- Are in the business rates system
- Can demonstrate that they have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Have not qualified for other COVID-19 rate relief such as the relief given to retail, hospitality, leisure and childcare nurseries.

The Government has provided data to councils that indicates the scale of economic impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on different business sectors. It is based on this data alongside the rateable value of business properties, that levels of CARF business rate relief have been determined to different types of businesses for this first phase. We have emailed those who successfully applied for CARF and new bills will be going out to these businesses shortly.

We do still have a small number of applications that are being looked at in terms of eligibility and evidence presented and so the above figures may increase slightly over the next week or so.

What happens next?

As you may recall, the Council was allocated £4.05m from Government for the CARF scheme. Alongside the £900,000 of phase one rate relief outlined above, the Council has also used its discretion to apply a small level of rate relief to those sectors the Government says have been hardest hit but who have not come forward for CARF. New bills showing this reduction will be going out to businesses next month. These businesses will also be invited to apply for further CARF business rate relief, in line with the Government's eligibility criteria when we open a second phase of CARF applications next month.

In the meantime, more information can be found at www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support/covid-19-additional-relief-fund.cfm

Community Governance Review – draft recommendations consultation. West Suffolk Council is carrying out an interim Community Governance Review and on 22 March 2022, Council approved some draft recommendations for consultation. The consultation on the draft recommendations has been published and those members with a recommended change to arrangements for a parish/town within their ward have been written to separately. For more information about the review, including the Terms of Reference, FAQs and details of all draft recommendations, please visit our website: [Community governance review West Suffolk District 2021-22](#).

The consultation closes on 30 June 2022 and the final recommendations will be considered by Council in September 2022. If you have any queries regarding the Community Governance Review then please email cgr@westsuffolk.gov.uk.

Plans for a new state-of-the-art West Suffolk Hospital to provide 21st-century healthcare have been submitted to planners. Details lodged with West Suffolk Council say the creation of a new facility is of critical importance given the current issues with the existing concrete hospital building. The hospital was picked by the government as one of 40 to be built before 2030, with West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust choosing Hardwick Manor - next to the current hospital - as its preferred site.

The new hospital will be created in a mature parkland setting covering an area of up to 100,000 square metres, plus a multi-storey car park, while Hardwick Manor will be converted for hospital uses.

The planning statement, prepared by Newsteer, on behalf of West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, says the plans are in outline at this stage and the appearance, layout, landscape and scale of the new building will be the subject of future reserved matters applications.

The report said: "The proposed new hospital is necessary due to the poor condition of the existing hospital building and its delivery is a national priority following the inclusion of the hospital on the New Hospitals

Programme (NHP) which was announced by the Prime Minister in October 2020.

The proposals include the change of use of the existing Hardwick Manor house to health-related uses in relation to the development of the new hospital building and incorporation with the wider campus on the Hardwick Lane site.

Garden Waste Collection Service [Garden waste collection \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

Current year subscriptions end on 31 May. After three years at £43, the cost per bin rises £2 to £45 a year, ensuring the service covers its costs and that it is funded by those who use it.

This year we continue to encourage sign up to Direct Debit and encouraging those we have to contact by post to give us an email address.

From Monday 4 April, we will be contacting customers to let them know they need to re-subscribe by the 27 May to ensure continuous service.

There will be social media and information will be copied to parish and town councils.

West Suffolk Council (WSC) Insights

For more information on the links below see

www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Councillors_and_meetings/councillorsandmps.cfm

Political make up of West Suffolk Council

West Suffolk Council is made up of the 64 councillors. You can find out who your local councillor is from the links below.

The West Suffolk Council is made up of the following as of 25 November 2021:

Political groups	Number of councillors
Conservative Group	40
The Independents Group	19
Labour Group	4
Non-Grouped Independent	1
Vacancies	0
Total	64

Search by postcode for West Suffolk Council councillors

- [Search for your councillor by postcode](#)

West Suffolk Council

- [West Suffolk councillors](#)

Parish councillors

- [Your parish councillors](#)

Suffolk County Council councillors

- [Your Suffolk County Council councillors](#)

Members of Parliament (MPs)

- [Your MPs](#)

Councillors' attendance

- [Councillors' attendance statistics](#)

How councillors use your information

Outside bodies

There are a number of organisations which are independent from the council, but have an impact on its service areas.

In order that the council can maintain effective partnerships with a number of these organisations, representatives of the council, usually elected councillors, sit on the various committees and forums that are responsible for them. To find the contact details for the council's representative on a particular outside body please follow the relevant link.

If you have any queries with regard to the Council's representatives, then please contact democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk.

- [Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership](#)
- [Aspal Close Working Group](#)
- [Association for Suffolk Museums Management Committee](#)
- [Barley Homes \(Group\) Ltd - Shareholders Representatives](#)
- [Brandon Heritage Centre](#)
- [Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields Management Committee](#)
- [Brecks, Fen Edge and Rivers Board \(replaces the Brecks Partnership and Breaking New Ground Board\)](#)
- [Citizens Advice West Suffolk](#)
- [Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty \(AONB\) and Stour Valley Joint Advisory Committee](#)
- [Destination Management Organisation \(DMO\): Bury St Edmunds](#)
- [District Councils' Network](#)
- [East of England Local Government Association](#)
- [East West Rail Consortium](#)
- [George Savage Trust](#)
- [Guildhall Feoffment Trust](#)
- [Home of Horseracing Trust](#)
- [Internal Drainage Board - Burnt Fen](#)
- [Internal Drainage Board - Lakenheath](#)
- [Internal Drainage Board - Mildenhall](#)
- [King Edward VI Grammar School, Bury St Edmunds: Foundation Board](#)
- [Local Government Association \(LGA\) \(General Assembly\)](#)
- [Love Newmarket Business Improvement District \(BID\)](#)
- [Mildenhall Community Association](#)
- [Mildenhall Dome Joint Management Committee \(formerly Mildenhall Dome Leisure Centre Joint Co-ordinating Committee\)](#)
- [Mildenhall Museum Trust](#)
- [National Horseracing Museum](#)
- [New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership \(LEP\) Board](#)
- [Newmarket Vision Steering Group](#)
- [ONE Haverhill Partnership Board](#)
- [OurBuryStEdmunds \(Bid4Bury\) Board](#)
- [Rural Services Network \(SPARSE\)](#)

- [Southgate Community Partnership \(SCP\)](#)
- [St John's Centre Trustees, Bury St Edmunds](#)
- [Stiff's Almshouses Charity Trustees, Rougham](#)
- [Suffolk County Council - Our Greenest County Board](#)
- [Suffolk County Council - Suffolk Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee](#)
- [Suffolk County Council- Health and Wellbeing Board](#)
- [Suffolk County Council- Health Scrutiny Committee](#)
- [Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Policy Panel](#)
- [Suffolk Police and Crime Panel](#)
- [Suffolk Waste Partnership](#)
- [Theatre Royal Board of Management](#)
- [Verse Facilities Management Limited: Shareholder Advisory Group](#)
- [West Stow Anglo Saxon Village Trust](#)
- [West Suffolk Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Council of Governors](#)
- [Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership](#)

Mike Chester



District Councillor for the Chedburgh and Chevington Ward
Vice-Chair of West Suffolk District Council