

September 2023 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Transforming Suffolk's Business Support

Suffolk's district and borough councils (Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, and West Suffolk Council), Suffolk County Council and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership have partnered to invest in business support and development services, including advice to reduce carbon emissions.

By working in partnership, over £1 million will be invested in Suffolk business support services from July 2023 to March 2025. The initiative has combined local authority funding of £632,047 from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK by investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. In addition, £153,407 will come from Suffolk County Council and £300,000 from New Anglia LEP.

Suffolk's economy is primarily composed of micro and small enterprises, accounting for 98.1 per cent of all businesses. The partners recognise that to unlock their potential, tackle challenges and significantly boost economic growth, these businesses require targeted support.

With all partners being committed to and actively supporting local areas to reduce carbon emissions, a net zero business consultancy will be established, building upon the current support offers available. The consultancy will assist Suffolk businesses in identifying what achieving net zero would mean for them, providing advice and developing action plans.

GLI Councillor Toby Hammond, cabinet member for Economic Development and Transport at East Suffolk, said: "Ensuring the success and prosperity of our local businesses and enterprises is a priority we all share across the county, so it makes sense to adopt this collaborative, joined-up approach to providing support."

Have your Say on a New Planning Document

East Suffolk residents are invited to have their say on a new planning document covering custom and self-build housing.

A consultation on the draft Custom and Self-build Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which provides guidance on the development of custom and self-build housing, begins on Wednesday 6 September.

The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and the Waveney Local Plan each contain a policy which supports custom and self-build housing. The Custom and Self-build Housing SPD provides further guidance on the application of these policies:

- Policy SCLP5.9 Self Build and Custom Build Housing (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, 2020)
- Policy WLP8.3 Self Build and Custom Build (Waveney Local Plan, 2019)

The draft SPD covers a range of topics including the types of housing that qualify as custom and self-build housing, an overview of the self-build exemption from Community Infrastructure Levy, consideration of design and the application of design codes, and guidance to help ensure custom and self-build housing is appropriately marketed.

GLI Cllr Kay Yule, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Planning and Coastal Management said: "Supplementary Planning Documents provide detailed guidance to developers and in this case, to people building their own properties. We welcome any feedback and all comments received will be taken into account when finalising the document."

Comments on the Draft Custom and Self-build Housing Supplementary Planning Document must be submitted by 5pm on Wednesday 18 October 2023.

From 6 September, you can view the consultation and comment.

Comments can also be emailed to planningpolicy@eastsoffolk.gov.uk or sent to East Suffolk Council, Planning Policy and Delivery Team, Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 0EQ.

Paper copies of the draft SPD and consultation statement have been made available for inspection at all libraries in the district and at the Council's Marina Customer Services Centre in Lowestoft.

All comments received will be considered when finalising the Custom and Self-build Housing SPD, which will be adopted in the winter of 2023/24. Once adopted, the SPD will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Rehousing Reptiles at Woods Meadow Country Park

New habitats have been created at a country park in Oulton Broad to help reptiles which may need to be relocated from a nearby housing development.

Ahead of the next phase of Persimmon's housing development at Woods Meadow in Oulton Broad, East Suffolk Services Ltd have helped create new homes at Woods Meadow Country Park for reptiles and amphibians which will be relocated from the construction site.

Working alongside Persimmon and ecologists, a team from East Suffolk Services Ltd have constructed artificial habitats, known as 'hibernacula', which will provide reptiles and amphibians with a safe place to overwinter, bask and feed and will increase the biodiversity of the country park.

Woods Meadow Country Park, owned by East Suffolk Council, was created in 2019 to provide a welcoming and informal green space for local people to enjoy and which benefits their physical and mental wellbeing. Earlier this year, the park was awarded a Green Flag for the first time.

GLI Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, East Suffolk's cabinet member for the Environment said: "Woods Meadow Country Park was created for the benefit of both wildlife and people living nearby with a wonderful green space to enjoy, as well as offering opportunities for learning and volunteering. The new hibernacula will help mitigate the habitat loss caused by the housing development and will help the country park continue to meet its objectives of providing a home for wildlife. These habitats will also enable visitors to the park to learn more about reptiles and amphibians."

One of the shelters comprises a log pile placed on top of rubble and covered with subsoil. This will eventually become overgrown and provide an excellent place for reptiles and amphibians to overwinter and to catch the sun to allow reptiles to bask.

The other two habitat constructions consist of piles of rubble topped with a thick layer of subsoil. In the depths of these, and under the layers of soil, cold-blooded reptiles and amphibians will be able to keep warm during their autumn and winter hibernation. In the summer, the south-facing side will offer a place to bask and hide from predators.

Each of the hibernacula were placed in locations deemed to have maximum habitat suitability for reptiles. For example, two were placed in the scrub area, which is an overgrown refuge providing shelter, food and safety for wildlife.

Located next to the Broads National Park, Woods Meadow is a 19.7-hectare site with a wildflower meadow, protected trees and seven English Oaks which were planted in 2022 to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Planting began last year on a 5.8-hectare mixed native woodland whilst a restricted area known as the Hay Field provides a haven for ground nesting birds, especially skylarks. This fully enclosed area is reopened to visitors during the winter and serves as a safe area for dogs to be exercised off the lead.

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