

County Council report – June 2024

Pupils champion active travel in Suffolk schools

Pupils from four Suffolk schools have been awarded nearly £2,000 worth of funding to deliver projects that promote active travel to and from their schools.

Suffolk County Council and sustainable travel experts Modeshift invited pupils from Beccles SET, Claydon High School, Farlingaye High School, and Thomas Gainsborough School to pitch their active travel ideas at the Active Travel Ambassador (ATA) Campaign Junction event last week.

The event gave the pupils the opportunity to suggest solutions to transport challenges affecting their school community and to answer questions from an expert panel.

The pitches included ideas to increase walking and wheeling by making crossings safer, introducing walking, and cycling competitions and running a 'Park and Stride' promotion.

All the participating schools were successful in their pitches and have been awarded up to £200 from Modeshift, with a match fund contribution from Suffolk County Council, to deliver their projects.

Free compost, expert advice and bargain compost bins to help Suffolk residents

As part of International Compost Awareness Week (from Saturday 4 May), Suffolk Waste Partnership is supporting several initiatives aiming to help residents get composting.

Ipswich residents, schools and community groups have the chance to win compost for their project with their new compost competition 'Make it Grow with DiGBY!'

For those interested in making their own compost, the Suffolk Waste Partnership is continuing its successful compost bin promotion, which helps residents buy compost bins and other food digesters at discounted prices to suit most resident's needs and budget. Prices start from only £19.98 for compost bins and £26.50 for food digester systems.

On average, more than a third of the contents of Suffolk's rubbish bins could easily be composted at home. Each household in Suffolk could compost 150kg of organic material a year, turning this waste into free soil improver for their garden.

Craig Renton, Suffolk County Council Waste Advisor, said:

"Home composting is the cheapest and most environmentally friendly way to deal with compostable material, as it requires no transport or processing and is an environmentally friendly alternative to peat-based compost.

“Our Compost Awareness Week events and activities provide the opportunity for people to discover the many benefits of compost, whether it is made at home or through the councils’ green waste recycling services.”

For details of all the discounted items available to Suffolk households through the offer, and to order, please visit <http://www.getcomposting.com/> or call 0800 316 4454. Information about discounted compost bins will be available at all events listed. Further details on Compost Awareness Week and home composting please visit www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk

Significant Suffolk Anglo-Saxon archaeology to be celebrated

Rendlesham Revealed is the Suffolk community archaeology project which uncovered a 1,400-year-old royal settlement of the East Anglian Kings in the Deben Valley.

Rendlesham Revealed is run by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund thanks to National Lottery players, who awarded a grant of £517,300 for the four-year project.

Rendlesham Revealed has been an incredible success and has added such a wealth of new understanding to Anglo-Saxon life in East Anglia.

Three years of excavations, not far from Sutton Hoo, were completed in the summer of 2023 but work continues to analyse the findings.

Faye Minter, Suffolk County Council’s Archaeology Archives and Projects Manager, said:

“South-east Suffolk was the power centre of the early East Anglian kingdom, and Rendlesham was the place from which it was ruled. Rendlesham’s archaeology gives a unique insight into what a royal centre of international importance was like at that time.

“What has been excavated during this project shows how wealthy and powerful the East Anglian kings were in Suffolk – from the discovery of a timber hall and possible temple, to the evidence of feasting that took place.”

Councillor Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro, Suffolk County Council’s Deputy Cabinet Member for Protected Landscapes and Archaeology, said:

“***Rendlesham Revealed*** has been an incredible success and has added such a wealth of new understanding to Anglo-Saxon life in East Anglia.

“But none of this would have been possible without the many volunteers from the local community who have spent hundreds of hours field-walking, excavating and cleaning finds. This celebration event is just as much about recognising them and their incredible achievements.

“This fantastic project led by the council’s archaeological team means Suffolk’s history and this new knowledge is available for generations to come.”

Further items from ***Rendlesham Revealed*** can be seen in a temporary display at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Museum until 23 July 2024, and a virtual interactive tour of the original exhibition at Sutton Hoo is available online at heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham

“Our driving force behind this fund has focussed on the council’s key objectives to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and to strengthen our local economy – we will continue to keep residents updated with dates and progress related to these projects.”

Norwich to Tilbury pylons: council to object to plans and call for pause

Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet will formally object to National Grid’s current proposals for pylons between Norwich and Tilbury.

The total length of pylons would be 183 kilometres, consisting of around 158 kilometres of new overhead line supported by 520 pylons. There would be also four sections of underground cabling running through, and in the vicinity of, the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Waveney Valley.

A paper to be presented by Councillor Richard Rout at the Cabinet meeting on 21 May 2024, will recommend that the council’s position is to call for a pause to consider alternative options, such as an offshore solution, or High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) undergrounding.

It will also object to the current proposals for several reasons, including:

- the need for additional undergrounding of cables in the Waveney Valley and elsewhere along the route
- the need for much greater clarity regarding the relationship between the proposed project and proposed solar projects, and the cumulative effects
- potentially serious implications for at least six airfields, including pylons close to runways and, in some cases, possibly stopping all flying

Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment, said:

“Our message to National Grid and Ofgem is that the current proposals must be put on hold so that the alternative solutions, which do not involve pylons, can be properly explored.

“We support the government’s desire for energy security for the UK but this must be achieved appropriately and fairly where our communities, and the local environment, will feel the impact from energy projects.

“Our work so far has helped change the proposals, by introducing more undergrounding of cables and altering the location of parts of the scheme. But this does not go nearly far enough, and in our opinion, there are significant issues which remain - not least adequate research into offshore solutions or HVDC, as well as more clarity around the

cumulative impact of other energy projects. Therefore, we have no choice but to object to the proposed scheme.”

Several recent reports help to support the council’s position:

The [ESO East Anglia Network Study](#) by The National Grid Electricity System Operator, explored better ways to connect offshore wind in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. The council previously stated that it was critical for National Grid to take these findings into consideration as they continue planning their Great Grid Upgrade, including the Norwich to Tilbury project.

The “[Valued Landscape Assessment](#)” of the Waveney Valley, commissioned by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, acts as a timely reminder to National Grid, of the need to respond effectively and robustly to the sensitivities of Suffolk’s landscapes and communities.

The [Hiorns Smart Energy Networks report](#), also commissioned by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, suggested that it is possible for the Norwich to Tilbury project to be paused in order to consider alternatives.

The Norwich to Tilbury project is currently in a statutory consultation phase until 18 June 2024, and it is expected to submit its application to the Planning Inspectorate in 2025.

Funding secured to boost digital tech innovation

Suffolk County Council, working with Norfolk County Council and Connected Innovation, has secured funding from Barclays Eagle Labs Ecosystem Partnership Programme to boost support for the region’s digital technology sector.

The funding will be used to deliver ‘The Future’, a joint project which aims to support and scale digital technology innovation in Suffolk and Norfolk in three critical ways:

- Developing a local ecosystem with stronger connections between experienced entrepreneurs and the next generation of regional startups
- Developing a process for identifying, engaging, and supporting early-stage startups and integrating them into the community
- Creating more opportunities for founders from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds by offering stipends to those who would not otherwise be able to commit to their venture full-time.

The project is bolstered by further funding from Connected Innovation as well as match funding from Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils.

The project will be delivered by Akcela in Norfolk and Innovation Labs in Suffolk.