

Suffolk County Council Report July 22

Dear All,

Please see below an update for July 2022. As always please email or telephone me if you have an issue that you would like my help with.

Best wishes,

Bobby Bennett

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Homes for Ukraine

Public Health and Communities continue to lead on co-ordinating the countywide response to the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Through multi-agency partnership working processes have been established swiftly and to date Suffolk has welcomed over 600 Ukrainian guests via the Homes For Ukraine Scheme.

Our processes include accommodation and DBS checks, making payments to refugees and sponsors, plus signposting to services including health and applying for school places. A Facebook group has been created specifically for hosts to enable peer support and information sharing which has received positive feedback.

On behalf of Suffolk County Council, Community Action Suffolk are providing support to community groups, including via a dedicated Facebook group and created a map of locations which details existing Community Support Groups which is now available on their website. [Community Groups supporting Ukrainian Guests - Google My Maps](#)

Further work is ongoing to establish hubs to bring Ukraine guests together for peer support and to access service providers where there are gaps. Suffolk Refugee Support have been commissioned to expand their support provision to work with hosts and guests.

For up to date information please refer to our website [Supporting refugees | Suffolk County Council](#) or receive our weekly email update by sending your details to refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk surveyors plead guilty to spate of sales scams

Riva Surveyors Ltd, a company formerly operating from Ipswich, has admitted to using cold calling to mis-sell foam loft insulation at the homes of Suffolk consumers.

David Brason, one of the company's directors, appeared at Ipswich Crown Court today (Tuesday 5 July), where he pleaded guilty to 21 offences and asked that a further 82 offences be taken into

consideration. His colleague, Justin Brason, manager and salesman for Riva Surveyors Ltd, also pleaded guilty to eight offences.

Suffolk Trading Standards were instrumental in securing the guilty pleas, having worked alongside colleagues from the National Trading Standards Tri Regional Investigations Team to investigate complaints from consumers who alleged that they had been cold called and offered a free loft inspection from Riva Surveyors Ltd.

After carrying out the inspection, the company then led its victims to believe that there were high levels of damp and deterioration in the woodwork of their loft which required foam insulation to be installed urgently to rectify the issue, when this wasn't the case.

Both David Brason and Justin Brason will be sentenced at a later date.

Suffolk launches £150,000 Match Funder scheme for community action on the climate emergency

A £150,000 fund has been opened to applications from not-for-profit organisations looking to deliver community-based carbon reduction projects in Suffolk.

The Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Fund will be provided by the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders group as part of its work to address the climate emergency.

The new fund is available to charities, community interest companies, parish councils, voluntary groups and other not-for-profit organisations whose projects contribute to Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan and support our vision for Suffolk to become carbon neutral by 2030.

The projects funded could include improving the energy efficiency of buildings, promoting walking and cycling, using sustainable/recycled materials, or raising awareness of climate change through events, among others.

The fund will support up to 50% of costs (up to a maximum of £10,000) for projects that can demonstrate support from others in the community in the form of contributions from multiple other sponsors for the remaining project costs.

Community fundraising platforms online can be a great way of promoting a project and drawing in donations from sponsors; once sufficient community sponsorship has been raised, a full application to the Match Funder scheme can then be submitted.

To register an initial expression of interest for your project, to check that your project is eligible for the Match Funder scheme, or if you are developing an idea and need some advice, please contact David Walton, david.walton@suffolk.gov.uk

More information can be found at <https://www.greensuffolk.org/suffolk-climate-action-community-match-funder>

Lowestoft convenience store owner prosecuted for selling illegal tobacco

A Suffolk shop proprietor has today been prosecuted for selling illicit tobacco following Trading Standards' continued crackdown on this serious crime.

Mr Ahmed Shokouly, 36, owner of Town Mini Market, a convenience store on Bevan Street East, Lowestoft, appeared at Ipswich Magistrates Court on the 24th June having been charged with breaching tobacco packaging regulations.

Suffolk Trading Standards received intelligence that Shokouly was selling illicit tobacco at his store, and subsequently carried out a test purchase, during which illegal tobacco was sold to an undercover operative posing as a customer.

Following the sting, a raid was conducted by Suffolk Trading Standards in September 2021 as part of Operation CeCe, a National Trading Standards initiative in partnership with HMRC to tackle illegal tobacco.

This resulted in the seizure of approximately 2,000 cigarettes and more than 7kg of hand rolling tobacco. The tobacco seized did not comply with tobacco packaging regulations and contained health warnings which were not written in English, as well as the packaging itself being of an incorrect colour.

In sentencing, Mr Shokouly was issued a fine of £5000, £190 surcharge and £3302.50 in costs (£8492.50 total).

Bury St Edmunds archives branch starts planning for the future

Suffolk County Council is looking to the future as it considers plans for its Suffolk Archives branch in Bury St Edmunds.

As part of long-term planning for the Suffolk Archives service, the county council is looking at options for either remaining at its current location in Raingate Street or moving to the planned new Western Way Development.

Suffolk County Council will be working with users of the branch, depositors of archive documents, and other key local stakeholders to show what the archives service would be able to offer in the future at either Raingate Street or the Western Way development, as well as how they can input into the council's decision.

No decision has been made and any proposed options for the Bury St Edmunds Archives Branch will be considered by Suffolk County Council's Cabinet later in the year.

Extra funding agreed by Cabinet to fund new SEND places

Suffolk County Council's Cabinet has today agreed an additional £15.9million to complete the funding for the creation of at least 879 specialist places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

This money marks the second phase of a £45million five-year project to deliver specialist provision for SEND students in Suffolk. These places include units attached to mainstream schools and three new special schools.

So far, 500 new places have opened across the county, with another 325 due to open between September 2022 and September 2024 under phase 1. The additional money will enable the completion of phase 2 of the project, and the creation of between 54 to 72 new places, depending on design and planning.

The new SEND places support the growing number of children and young people in Suffolk who need specialist help at school. Between September 2021 and May 2022 there have been 1,333 referrals for specialist placements for children currently in mainstream schools.

Plans for new SEND places under phase 3 will come before Cabinet from September. The newly-approved £15.9million includes £6million to complete phase 2, £4.6million to cover overspend and a grant from the Department for Education of £5.3million.

The special schools include Castle EAST, a new communication and interaction school in north Suffolk; a new social, emotional and mental health school in west Suffolk named Sir Peter Hall; and a communication and interaction school in south Suffolk, Woodbridge Road Academy.

Hundreds of local businesses show sustainability is achievable and profitable

462 businesses are leading the way across Suffolk and Norfolk, actively reducing their carbon emissions.

All of these companies are holders of a Carbon Charter award, a scheme which recognises businesses across Suffolk and Norfolk which are actively reducing their impact on the environment.

These businesses were acknowledged at the annual Carbon Charter event (6 July 2022), organised by Suffolk County Council, and held at Anglia Car Charging's base in Broome - themselves a recent recipient of a Silver Carbon Charter Award.