

**GREAT BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL - MINUTES**

**Minutes of Gt Blakenham Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at Parish Rooms.**

**Present: Chair Nick Leonard, Cllr Matt Powell, Cllr Debbie Kemp, Cllr Karen Wheeler, Karen Grimwood (Parish Clerk), SCC Cllr Chris Chambers and MSDC Cllr Adrienne Marriott, 2 Port One representatives and 10 members of public**

- 1. To receive and approve any apologies for absence – None**
- 2. Declaration of any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests**
  - a. Councillor's declaration of interest appropriate to any item on the agenda. Cllr Leonard 8a**
  - b. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interest (if any) None**
  - c. To grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate. None**
  - d. Co-option of parish councillor(s) / to sign declaration of acceptance. None**
- 3. Public Forum**

- a. Port One Planning Application DC/25/05114 – Former Mason's Quarry Site / S106 Mitigation**

**Jack Payne and Andrew Piper-Hunter attended the meeting on behalf of Port One to provide an update on progress with the Section 106 (S106) Agreement mitigations and to answer questions relating to the current site and the new outline planning application.**

**Port One advised that approximately 75–85% of the agreed mitigations have now been completed. The Port One Legacy Biodiversity Fund is now operational, and payment for the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was made in June 2025. The Little Blakenham Community Hall is close to completion. The Employment Skills and Payment Plan remains in progress. PV solar panels have been installed at Great Blakenham Village Hall, Claydon Village Hall and Bramford Village Hall. Installation at Little Blakenham Village Hall will take place once the building is complete, and the installation for Barham Parish Council is still pending.**

**Work on the Gipping Meadow Management Plan is ongoing and further discussions are awaited with the MSDC Biodiversity Officer. The land will be managed as a wildlife area, and clarification is still required as to whether grazing will also be permitted. With regard to the Port One minibus scheme, one 8-seater minibus is currently available and there are plans to purchase two additional 15-seater minibuses by February 2026. Progress has been significantly delayed but Port One expects delivery to proceed in stages. Potential uses include trips to and from Ipswich railway station and services to Ipswich, Needham Market and Stowmarket. Details still to be confirmed include service frequency, staffing, operating hours, battery capacity and whether services will run outside normal working hours. Port One confirmed that this mitigation will be delivered.**

**Drop-in consultation sessions for the outline planning application will be held on 12th, 13th and 14th January at Little Blakenham Village Hall, Claydon and Barham Village Hall, and Great Blakenham Village Hall. Members of the Port One team will be present to answer questions and listen to residents' concerns. Display boards will present the proposals and residents will be able to complete a survey. Port One advised that the planning application process is expected to take at least 12 months before any development begins, and that the Planning Performance Agreement timescale could extend to 10–15 years, including reserved matters stages. Port One has been working with the Planning Department for the past six months. An online presentation is expected to be available by the end of January and**

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Dated.....  .....

approximately 4,000 newsletters will be distributed to residents with key information. Section 278 highway works for site access have been agreed, with completion anticipated in August or September.

Public asked whether work had already commenced at the quarry, as recent activity suggested that operations may have started. Further questions were raised about the potential impact on wildlife, the condition of local roads, and the expected increase in traffic. The Port One representatives explained that activity currently taking place relates to approved preparatory and mitigation works rather than full development. They stated that wildlife considerations are being addressed through agreed biodiversity mitigation measures and ongoing management planning. In response to concerns about roads and traffic, they advised that highway access and improvement works under the Section 278 agreement have been approved and are scheduled for completion later in the year, and that traffic impacts will be managed through the planning conditions and mitigation requirements.

b. To receive the report from the County Councillor – See attached report. It was also advised that a three-year transport settlement has been agreed, providing £4.4 million per year in revenue funding to support bus routes, with new bus stops planned in the next financial year.

c. To receive the report from the District Councillor – See attached report

d. To receive questions from members of the public – Included in 3a

4. To approve the Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – Approved

5. To note the Clerk's update from previous Meetings.

a. Awaiting a response from landowner for leasing meadow land on Stowmarket Rd – Noted. Clerk to chase again.

6. Planning

a. To consider the following planning applications.

DC/25/05114	Former Mason's Quarry site	Outline planning permission (with layout, scale, appearance and landscaping being reserved) for the extension of Port One Logistics Park, Comments by 23.02.202624  <b>Councillors agreed to object to the planning application and will submit a written objection once the wording has been agreed.</b>
SCC/0165/25 MS	Masons Materials Recycling Facility Bramford Road Great Blakenham Ipswich IP6 0LW	Extension to the materials recycling facility to house additional plant for the processing of glass, with additional works including a side extension to the reception hall, external storage bays, a welfare building,

		<p>ventilation and filter plant, fire-suppression system, fencing, and associated internal and external work.</p> <p><b>CIlrs had no objections to this application</b></p>
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b. To note any planning determinations. – **None Received**

**7. Growth, Highways, and Infrastructure**

- a. Note Footpath link between Barham & Gt Blakenham – **PC noted that a newspaper article had been published regarding the railway crossing between Barham and Great Blakenham, discussing the possibility of Network Rail closing it. The Parish Council acknowledged the article but confirmed they have not been formally approached by Network Rail and are not aware of any confirmed plans at this time.**
- b. Note Suffolk energy-from-waste facility 10-year report – **Noted see attached report**
- c. Note Port One Open day – **The date of 14 January 2026 at Great Blakenham Village Hall was noted. Councillors will be present throughout the day. A survey will be available for visitors and will also be shared on social media.**
- d. Polbef update / PIIP – **Revised grant guidance notes agreed making the process more accessible. Encouragement was given for all five parishes to develop a Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan (PIIP) and to ensure that it is published and easily accessible on the parish website. Planning officers will refer to PIIPs when considering community benefits that may be secured through Section 106 agreements linked to major planning applications, including the Port One application currently under consideration. The Communities Team has produced a comprehensive toolkit to support parishes in preparing their PIIPs.**

**8. Governance**


- a. Funding applications – **Deferred to next meeting**
- b. S106 Mitigations – **Noted in 3a**
- c. Note Government consultation and survey on LGR in Suffolk – **Noted**
- d. Precept Confirmation – **The CIlrs considered and agreed the budget for the forthcoming financial year. Members approved a proposed increase in the precept of 5% to ensure all yearly costs and earmarked reserves would be covered. The completed precept request form was subsequently signed by the Chair and the Clerk for submission to the relevant authority within the required timescale**

**9. Village Maintenance**

- a. Street Lighting chalk Hill Lane – **Suffolk Street Lighting reported that two units in Chalk Hill Lane had failed and are no longer manufactured, requiring replacement at a cost of £1,000. The Council agreed not to replace them at present but to review later in the year. The Clerk was asked to challenge the annual maintenance (£15.16 per unit) and energy (£68 per unit) charges, as the lights are not in use.**

**10. Allotments - None**

**11. Churchyard and Cemetery – None**

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Dated 12/2/2026 .....

b. Note Whip Street noise issues

**17. Future meetings**

- a. To note invitation for items to be considered in the next meeting.
- b. To note the date of the next scheduled Meeting on **12<sup>th</sup> February 2026** and any items for the agenda.

Karen Grimwood -Email: [clerk@greatblakenhamparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@greatblakenhamparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Date: 09/01/2026

Signed  .....

Dated 12/2/26 .....

## **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT FEBRUARY 26**

### **Councils support Ipswich ambition to be City of Culture**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are backing Ipswich's bid to become City of Culture 2029 – saying it deserves Suffolk-wide support. Cllr Andy Mellon, Mid Suffolk District Council Leader said "Mid Suffolk has many residents who work in the town and use its facilities...so we can show the bid has wider support". He went on to say that putting a bid together would have a huge positive effect on Ipswich, bringing cultural partners around the table and sparking new ideas and collaborations towards a shared vision of the future.

### **Boosting biodiversity by funding nature in your neighbourhood**

Local groups are being urged to apply for new funding from Mid Suffolk District Council, designed to connect people with nature and restore natural habitats within communities. Mid Suffolk's new Community Nature Recovery Fund was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> January. It will offer up to £50K for projects that protect and expand wildlife corridors and habitats within the district. One application can be made per project, per year and the deadline for applications for the first round of funding is Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March. To find out more details or to submit an application, visit the Mid Suffolk District Council Community Funding page.

### **Helping households to save money, eat well and reduce food waste**

Households across Suffolk can now get free access to Five Dinners – an award-winning meal planner which helps them eat healthily, save money and reduce food waste. Feel Good Suffolk – a collaboration between all Suffolk's local authorities and NHS partners – provides free support to residents who want to manage their weight, get more active and stop smoking. The service has team with FiveDinners.com – the online platform founded by TV chef and author Theo Michaels. Households across the county will receive free premium access to this platform for a year after visiting <https://FiveDinners.com/MyCommunity>. Once registered they will receive a meal plan every week, tailored to their needs and preferences.

### **Councils call for urgent reform of sewage sludge regulations**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are calling for urgent action by the Government to tighten regulations governing the spreading of sewage sludge on agricultural land, citing serious concerns for public health, farming and the environment. Evidence has shown the presence of "forever chemicals", microplastics, pharmaceuticals and hormone-disrupting substances in the sludge, many of which are not routinely tested. At their January full Council meetings members supported writing to the Secretary of State at the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

### **Find out how much heat your home is losing – by borrowing a thermal camera for free**

Suffolk residents can now borrow a thermal camera from their local library for free to detect where heat is escaping their homes and take action to stop the leaks. Sustainable Suffolk and the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership

(including Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils) have previously loaned out thermal cameras to community groups through their project called Keep the Heat. Since 2022, over 153 community groups have taken part in this project, surveying almost 2000 homes across Suffolk. An extension of this project now enables Suffolk residents over 18, who are library members to collect a camera from Ipswich County Library as one would collect a book.

### **New local powers to keep pavements clear**

On 8 January, the Department for Transport announced new local powers to be made available to local leaders in England to introduce pavement parking restrictions in their area, helping keep them clear and accessible for everyone who uses them, while allowing exemptions where needed <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-local-powers-to-keep-pavements-clear-for-those-who-rely-on-them-most>.

Following a public consultation, the Department for Transport has confirmed that local leaders will be given new and improved legal powers to make it easier to restrict pavement parking across wider areas, rather than relying on the previous approach, where action is often limited to individual streets and requires lengthy, complex processes. Under the new approach, local leaders will be able to decide to take action on pavement parking whilst retaining flexibility where they deem pavement parking may still be acceptable. The department will set out guidance to help councils use these powers in a proportionate and locally appropriate way later in 2026.

### **Hospices in England to receive additional funding**

On 7 January, the Minister of State for Care, Stephen Kinnock MP, announced that hospices in England will receive an additional £25 million in capital funding at a Select Committee on Palliative Care.

<https://committees.parliament.uk/event/26150/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/> The funding will upgrade over 170 hospices, including urgent repairs, improved facilities and patient rooms, enhanced outdoor spaces, and better IT equipment.

### **Disabled Facilities Grant additional funding announced**

On 10 January, the Department of Health and Social Care announced an additional £50 million of government funding to help more older people and people with disabilities adapt their homes to live independently. The additional funding for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) in 2025-26 could support around 5,000 more people to install vital home adaptations such as stairlifts, ramps, accessible bathrooms and assistive technologies. These assistive technologies include automatic door openers, lifts, height adjustable surfaces, ceiling track hoists, and smart technology for light and heat. The DFG supports around 60,000 older people and people with disabilities each year, with an average grant of around £10,000. The funding will be allocated to councils in February and brings total DFG funding for 2025 to 2026 to £761 million.

### **Disability Confident scheme overhauled to improve workplace standards for disabled people**

## 12. Training and Development for Councillors and Clerk – None

## 13. Finance

### a. Payments made out of meeting December 2025 – Approved

Shades	Bacs	Grounds maintenance as per tender -2798	£758.33	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	Bacs	Street Cleaning as per tender - 2797	£1213.33	LGA 1972 s111
Payroll	Bacs	November 2025 payroll	£1075.63	LGA 1972 s111
Three (H3G)	DD	Mobile phone contracts	£33.98	LGA 1972 s111
Nest	DD	Pension Month 8	£53.99	LGA 1972 s111
Lloyds Bank Card	DD	Office equipment	£339.27	LGA 1972 s111
Lloyds Bank Card	DD	Card charges	£3.00	LGA 1972 s111
Unity Trust	DD	Service charge	£6.00	LGA 1972 s111

### a. To consider approving and making the following payments for January 2026 – Approved

Shades	Bacs	Street Cleaning as per tender -2808	£1213.33	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	Bacs	Grounds Maintenance as per tender - 2807	£758.33	LGA 1972 s111
Shades	Bacs	Bus shelter, notice boards and signs as per tender - 2809	£485.33	LGA 1972 s111
Payroll	Bacs	December payroll 2025	£1075.83	LGA 1972 s111
HMRC	Bacs	P30 Quarter 3 ending 05.01.2026	£376.25	LGA 1972 s111
Suffolk. Cloud	Bacs	Hosting /support 01.01.26 -31.12.2026 - 0305	£120.00	LGA 1972 s111
Nest	DD	Pension Month 9	£53.99	LGA 1972 s111
Three (H3G)	DD	Mobile phone contract	£33.98	LGA 1972 s111
Unity Trust	DD	Service charge	£6.00	LGA 1972 s111
Lloyds bank	DD	Card charges	£3.00	LGA 1972 s111

### Income received

31.12.2025 – Credit Interest - £ 905.30 – Noted

### Bank Balance @ 30.11.2025

Unity Trust Current Account Balance -£ 39,855.67

Unity Trust Saver Account Balance - £ 164,276.49

Total - £204131.91

### Bank Balance @ 31.12.2025

Unity Trust Current Account Balance -£ 36375.14

Unity Trust Saver Account Balance - £ 165181.79

Total - £ 201,556.93

## 15. Reports:

a. Village Hall

## 16. Correspondence

a. Note Masons landfill site traffic & height issues

On 15<sup>th</sup> January the Department for Work and Pensions announced that sick and disabled people will have more opportunities to move into work, following the overhaul of the Disability Confident Scheme. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/disability-confident-scheme-overhauled-to-boost-workplace-standards-for-disabled-people> While around two thirds of employers agree that joining the scheme had a positive impact on their organisation, the Keep Britain Working review <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-britain-working-review-final-report/keep-britain-working-final-report> by Sir Charlie Mayfield published in November 2025 concluded that while it has many positive aspects it “lacks teeth”. In response to the review, the government is overhauling the ‘Disability Confident’ scheme to help prevent ill-health, support people to stay in work, and help employers build healthier, more resilient workplaces. The reforms are aimed at making employers’ experience on the scheme more meaningful and more impactful on their organisations, incentivising them to progress their Disability Confident status and make their workplaces inclusive of disabled talent.

### **Letter from Minister of State for Housing and Planning to the Planning Inspectorate: Modifying planning obligations**

On 18 December 2025, the Minister of State for Housing and Planning wrote to the Planning Inspectorate about the clarification the government has provided to local planning authorities and developers regarding the use of Section 73 applications. [www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-from-minister-of-state-for-housing-and-planning-to-the-planning-inspectorate-modifying-planning-obligations](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-from-minister-of-state-for-housing-and-planning-to-the-planning-inspectorate-modifying-planning-obligations) A Section 73 application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is used to vary or remove conditions attached to an existing planning permission. It allows for “minor material amendments” to a development—such as changing approved plans, opening hours, or materials—without submitting a completely new application. It results in a new, independent planning permission alongside the original. The new government guidelines are “to accelerate growth and housing delivery”.

### **Consultation on updates to consumer standards and requirements**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has already consulted on Competence and Conduct and Social Tenant Access to Information. On 9<sup>th</sup> December a further consultation was launched by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to include tenant satisfaction measures and the introduction of new tenant satisfaction measures on electrical safety checks. The Competence and Conduct requirements are aimed at driving greater professionalism and higher standards by ensuring relevant housing staff have the required skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours to deliver a high standard of service to tenants. Senior housing managers and executives will also be required to hold, or be working towards, a housing management qualification. RSH’s consultation also sets out how it proposes to implement a new tenant satisfaction measure covering electrical safety checks. The consultation closes at 6:30pm on 3 March.

### **New design guidance for new build developments**

On 21 January, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published an updated new build design guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-design-guidance-to-raise-the-bar-for-new-build-developments> setting a benchmark for well-designed neighbourhoods, ensuring new developments are well-connected to local shops and services. The guidance sets out how new homes should reflect modern life – from space to work from home to flexible layouts that adapt as families grow and cater for every stage of life. Working together, councils and developers will use the guidance to make visible improvements for residents, including calmer streets with less traffic to improved green spaces. New builds will be expected to address and adapt to climate change, creating adequate shade and minimising potential flood risk. The government is intending to create model design codes – set to be launched later this year – with clear rules to create successful places. Councils will set the vision for their areas through local plans, ensuring clear design expectations using masterplans, local design codes and guides.

### **New social and affordable housing package unveiled**

On 28<sup>th</sup> January the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government unveiled new measures to give councils, housing associations and other providers greater financial support to help increase construction of new homes. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-more-families-to-get-warm-secure-social-homes> Landlords will also have to meet robust standards to provide homes that are warm and energy efficient and free of disrepair and damp through a new Decent Homes Standard (DHS), updating decency standards for the first time in 20 years. This is on top of new requirements to upgrade properties under new Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards that could save social tenants money on their energy bills. The latest update comes ahead of bidding opening next month for the £39 billion Social and Affordable Homes Programme. The government will work with providers, councils, and developers to agree a framework to get the Section 106 market moving again. The government has also announced the process to agree a compact with the social housing sector, urging all providers to come forward with ambitious pledges to increase housing supply. A new social housing taskforce, made up of key experts, will hold the sector to account on delivering new homes. Other measures include:

- Making £2.5 billion in loans available to private registered providers of social housing at just 0.1% interest.
- Allocating an extra £3.5 million through the Council Housebuilding Support Fund for councils to draw up plans for more council homes.
- Increasing the Housing Revenue Account threshold – a ringfenced account for income and spending on councils' own housing stock – from 200 to 1,000 homes.
- Extending the discounted borrowing rate for council housebuilding from the government's lending facility, the Public Works Loan Board.

- Confirming how social rent convergence will be implemented so providers can bring rents that are currently below the government's formula up to that level over time.

### **Government launches Warm Homes Plan**

On 20<sup>th</sup> January, the government launched the Warm Homes Plan to help families across the country see lower energy bills. The Plan will deliver £15 billion of public investment, roll out upgrades to up to five million homes that could help save them hundreds on energy bills. The Plan will target help at low-income families, alongside a universal offer, to ensure that families can feel the benefits of products that can cut their bills. Alongside this, the Plan will support consumer choice for all households, so people can choose the technologies that work for them as and when they want. Homeowners will be able to apply for government-backed, low and zero interest loans to install solar panels. Furthermore on 29 January, the government announced the extension of the Warm Home Discount through to 2031 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/energy-bill-support-extended-for-millions-of-families> providing eligible households with a £150 rebate on their energy bills.

### **COVID-19 Day of Reflection 2026**

The COVID-19 Day of Reflection: <https://dayofreflection.campaign.gov.uk/> takes place on 8 March. Events and activities can take place in the week before and surrounding days. Last year over 200 events were added to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) map, including almost 50 council-led events. We saw how important the day was for those involved. It is an opportunity to remember lives lost, reflect on the sacrifices made by many, recognise many are still feeling the impact of the pandemic, and pay tribute to all key workers and volunteers. There are many ways to get involved – providing an opportunity for people to share their reflections or promoting local spaces for reflection or events. Councils may wish to make use of information on the campaign website which includes education resources including stories from the pandemic, a toolkit and more. Councils can submit events and activities in their area to show how they are getting involved. For any questions please contact: [covid.commemoration@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:covid.commemoration@dcms.gov.uk)

### **Mobile homes: Fit and proper person test re-application starts on 1 August**

MHCLG is reminding councils that the fit and proper person test re-application process will commence on 1 August. Councils must be prepared to receive and assess applications from site owners by that date.

A fit and proper person test for those operating land as a residential park (mobile) home site was introduced on 1 October 2021. All park home site owners were required to apply by that date, for themselves or the person appointed to manage the site, to be assessed and placed on

a local fit and proper person register. A person can be placed on a register for up to five years, after which they must apply to the council to be re-assessed. Guidance for councils on implementation of the fit and proper person test and setting a fee policy is available on gov.uk. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-homes-fit-and-proper-person-test-guidance-for-local-authorities> Further information about the re-application process will be published shortly. If you have any questions, please contact: [parkhomes@communities.gov.uk](mailto:parkhomes@communities.gov.uk)

## Public health update

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### Norovirus cases still rising but overall trend decreasing

On 29 January, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) reminded people of the steps they can take to halt the spread of norovirus: Latest data shows that cases have increased 18.3% in the last two weeks, compared to the previous two-week period. While older people continue to account for most cases of the vomiting bug, activity has also increased in children under the age of five in recent weeks.

Common symptoms of norovirus include:

- nausea and vomiting
- diarrhoea
- high temperature
- abdominal pain
- aching limbs

Good hand hygiene is important to stop norovirus spreading. To stop norovirus spreading, you should:

- wash your hands thoroughly using soap and warm water after using the toilet or contact with a sick individual and before preparing and eating food
- stay off school or work until you have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days

- not rely on alcohol gels instead of washing your hands, as these do not kill the virus
- wash any contaminated clothing or bedding using detergent at 60°C using disposable gloves to handle any items
- use bleach-based cleaners to disinfect surfaces

If you catch norovirus, stay home for 48 hours after your symptoms clear. UKHSA has a poster available explaining norovirus, its symptoms, how to prevent it from spreading and details on recovery: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stop-norovirus-spreading-this-winter-leaflet> as a PDF to download, print and display. Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

### **Respiratory syncytial virus vaccination for older adults: expansion of eligibility**

From 1 April, the eligibility criteria for the programme will change to allow people aged 80 years and over, and all residents in care homes for older adults, to receive the RSV vaccine on the NHS.

*Adrienne Marriott  
Blakenham District Councillor  
03/02/26*

# Local Matters

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## Council sets out plans for 2026/27 budget

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The £850 million plan aims to safeguard frontline services, support the most vulnerable, and invest in Suffolk's future – despite rising costs, growing demand and shortfalls in national funding.

Key themes of the draft budget include:

- **Savings and efficiencies:** £46.5 million of savings through service transformation and efficiencies, including a temporary reduction in employer pension contributions, made possible by the strong position of the council's pension fund.
- **Rising financial pressures:** Increasing demand, in particular for adult and children's social care, will add £32.2 million in costs, alongside continued pressures from the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit.
- **Reserves:** A one-off use of reserves will bridge a £5.9 million funding gap, while keeping reserves above the minimum level needed to manage financial risks.
- **Capital investment:** The capital programme has been shortened from four years to three ahead of local government reorganisation in 2028. It continues to fund essential projects like school expansions and infrastructure upgrades, as well as new schemes, such as improvements to bus services, public rights of way, and cycling and walking infrastructure.

## Department for Education acknowledges progress - and sets clear expectations for Suffolk's SEND improvement

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In a recent stocktake visit, officers from the DfE reported progress in governance, quality assurance and timeliness, leadership and multi-agency working. They praised a shared commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND and laid out a number of recommendations for further improvement.

SEND services in Suffolk are delivered in partnership by Suffolk County Council, the NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB, the Suffolk Parent Carer Forum and education settings.

The findings of the stocktake visit have been published in a letter addressed to Sarah-Jane Smedmor, Executive Director of Children & Young People's Services at Suffolk County Council, and Dr Ed Garratt OBE, Chief Executive Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board. You can read the letter [here](#).

The DfE acknowledged work to clear the backlog of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) by January and the fact that plans will be delivered above the national average for timeliness. Officers noted a need to ensure that plans reflect families' views and lead to timely, appropriate support.

**Chris Chambers - County Councillor for the Gipping Valley Division**

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# Local Matters

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## Suffolk County Council backs new 20mph speed limit policy for communities

A new 20mph speed limit policy to enhance road safety and improve quality of life across Suffolk's communities has been agreed by county councillors.

Suffolk County Council's Cabinet has backed the proposal to make it easier to reduce the speed limit, where appropriate, in residential and high-pedestrian areas to 20mph. Under the new scheme any applications for a 20mph limit in an area where recorded average traffic speeds are 28mph or under is likely to be approved.

Under the scheme, areas with recorded speeds of:

- Below 28mph – likely to be accepted, with a speed limit sign only, although signs warning that a 20mph zone is ahead may be required
- Between 28 - 32mph - unlikely to be acceptable with signing alone. Gateway signing and traffic calming throughout the area may be required
- Above 32mph - Unlikely to be acceptable without extensive traffic calming measures such as road humps, plus night-time lighting. It would also be subject to a Road Safety Audit

The new policy will come into immediate effect for all new applications.

## Action Taken on Early Morning HGV Parking on Highways

I am aware of ongoing concerns from residents in Great Blakenham about HGVs arriving too early and parking illegally on the B1113 near Masons Landfill.

After these issues were raised with me, I contacted Masons Landfill directly to urge immediate action to address early arrivals and unsafe or illegal parking. As a result, a series of strengthened measures are now being implemented with immediate effect.


What is changing

- A traffic marshal is already in place and will now be positioned at the entrance to the lane from Bramford Road from 6:00am every morning.
- No vehicles will be permitted to enter the site before 6:45am.
- Any vehicle arriving before this time will be turned away and not accepted for at least one hour.
- Repeat offenders will be issued with a "red card", resulting in a three-month ban from the site.

**Chris Chambers - County Councillor for the Gipping Valley Division**

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It has also been identified that some drivers have been attempting to avoid enforcement by parking further along the B1113, out of sight of the traffic marshal.

## To address this:

- A member of staff from Masons Landfill will now carry out patrols around Great Blakenham before 6:45am.
- Any vehicle found to be parked illegally and destined for the landfill will be issued with a red card and barred from the site.

## Communication with hauliers:

Masons Landfill is issuing an immediate notification to all known customers and hauliers, making it clear that:

- Illegal parking will not be tolerated
- Vehicles breaching the rules will be banned from the site
- The message must be passed on to any third-party operators

## Ongoing monitoring:

I will continue to monitor the situation closely and remain in contact with both residents and the operator. If problems persist, I will press for further enforcement action.

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## Fisons Site Left in Limbo

It is an absolute kick in the teeth for residents to see the latest assessment for the former Fisons site on Paper Mill Lane.

Despite the desperate need for progress, the site has been stalled at "Stage 1" and deemed unsuitable for the Joint Local Plan. Why? Because of "ownership uncertainty."

Why this matters:

- **Planning Paralysis:** This decision makes it even harder for future development or planning applications to move forward. We are stuck with a "Not Suitable" label that could ward off investment for years.
- **A Public Safety Hazard:** We all know the reality on the ground—this site is a death trap. It is unsafe, decaying, and a magnet for trespassing.
- **Neglect:** While the paperwork stalls, the site continues to rot. Simply saying "ownership is unknown" isn't good enough when the community is living with an eyesore that poses a genuine risk to life.

Bramford deserves better than a derelict landmark left to crumble.

**Chris Chambers - County Councillor for the Gipping Valley Division**

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**10 years of putting waste to good use**

**2015 → 2025**



**Suffolk energy-from-waste facility**



# Suffolk energy-from-waste facility

## 10 year report

Over the ten years of the partnership between SUEZ and Suffolk County Council, we've put **2,771,016** tonnes of waste

to good use generating enough electricity to power **50,000** homes each year\*



\*Based on the average mean consumption of all domestic meters in the East ([www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk)). This figure will fluctuate as the amount of electricity used by households changes year on year.

Suffolk County Council and SUEZ recycling and recovery UK work in partnership to dispose of all of Suffolk's household waste left after recycling.



Putting Suffolk's waste to good use

SUEZ recycling and recovery UK  
Suffolk energy-from-waste facility, Lodge Lane, Great Blakenham, Suffolk IP6 0JE

01473 839149 · [www.suffolkefw.co.uk](http://www.suffolkefw.co.uk)

## INPUTS

### Waste processed

#### Municipal waste

**2,351,800** tonnes

#### Commercial waste

**419,216** tonnes

#### Total

**2,771,016** tonnes

### Electricity imported

**4,469** megawatt hours

**The Suffolk EfW has successfully diverted 98.6% of Suffolk's waste from landfill.**

## OUTPUTS

### Energy generated and exported

#### Electricity (generated)

**1,900,858** megawatt hours

#### Electricity (exported)

**1,682,187** megawatt hours

### Waste recovered

#### Bottom ash (aggregate)

**519,412** tonnes

The on-site recycling facility uses the ash produced by the energy-from-waste process to make secondary aggregate products for use in road-building and construction, for example.

#### Metals

**92,290** tonnes

The recovered metals are sorted and sent to recycling facilities where they are melted down and reprocessed into new metal products.

### Waste disposed

#### Air pollution control residue

**66,860** tonnes

## LOCAL ECONOMY

**£7,597,048**

spent with Suffolk suppliers

- 50 staff
- 6 apprentices
- 3 interns

## SAVINGS

**363,863** tonnes fossil fuels

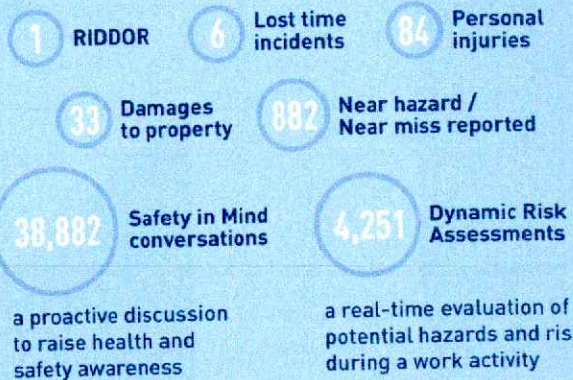
saved by exporting

**1,682,187** megawatt hours of electricity, compared to natural gas power stations

The energy-from-waste process is one of the most tightly regulated industrial processes in Europe. At the Suffolk facility, both SUEZ and the Environment Agency monitor the facility to ensure it operates within the conditions set out by the environmental permit. Flue gas is treated throughout the process to ensure compliance with the permit limits. Further information is available on our website ([www.suffolkefw.co.uk](http://www.suffolkefw.co.uk)).

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

SUEZ actively promotes safe behaviour and awareness through the work of its dedicated health and safety teams, training courses, safety auditing and the Safety in Mind (SIM) charter.



## BIODIVERSITY

- Self-seeding wildflower Suffolk Wildlife Trust biodiversity survey undertaken
- 1 bug hotel installed on wildflower meadow
- 6 beehives on site, looked after by local beekeepers
- 3 clutches of eggs laid by peregrine falcons in purpose-built nesting box
- 6 chicks fledged

## COMMUNITY AND VISITOR CENTRE

- 773 visits, including open days
- 508 adult groups
- 265 education / school / children visits
- 12,351 total visitors
- 91 outreach events
  - ↳ The Suffolk Show
  - ↳ Suffolk Youth Climate conference
  - ↳ Primary school assemblies and lessons
  - ↳ Children's community clubs
  - ↳ Adult outreach talks
  - ↳ Careers events
- 103 colleagues completed a 'Day a year to volunteer'

Supporting projects including construction work at Suffolk Owl Sanctuary, stock sorting and preparation at St Elizabeth Hospice, building a dead hedge and maintaining natural habitats for indigenous creatures at Red Gables, overhauling a memorial at the National Museum Arboretum, assisting with maintenance at Flixton Aviation Museum, assisting with preservation of flora and fauna at Orford Ness and serving Christmas lunches at Red Gables.

## SPONSORSHIP

- The facility donated over £10,000 to good causes in Suffolk including:
  - ↳ Local schools
  - ↳ Local sports clubs
  - ↳ Home-Start in Suffolk

The SUEZ Communities Fund has donated more than £600,000 to local organisations.