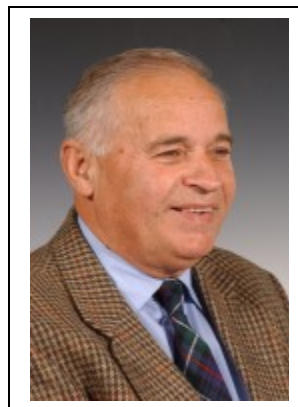


Parish Report May 2017

Councillor

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Suffolk County Council Elections 2017

I would like to express a huge and sincere vote of thanks for the overwhelming support I have received from the electorate at a difficult election time. There was an impressive 35.6% turnout for the vote!

I look forward to serving ALL residents within Melford Ward of Suffolk County Council.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service join call to be AWARE when near Water

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has joined a call by UK fire chiefs to raise awareness of the dangers of everyday activities near water. Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has joined a call by UK fire chiefs to raise awareness of the dangers of everyday activities near water after statistics show nearly 50% of people who accidentally drown in the UK never intend to enter the water.

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) [Water Safety and Drowning Prevention campaign](#), 'Be Water Aware', is running from April 24 – April 30 and is being supported by fire and rescue services throughout the UK.

Latest statistics show that in 2015, 321 people died after tripping, falling or simply underestimating the risks associated with being near water. Messages will be posted on social media using the hashtag [#BeWaterAware](#) and people are encouraged to share the posts to spread the message.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service are supporting the campaign this week and operational crews will integrate a prevention message into their educational work from this week and throughout the summer months.

94% of Children offered first choice of Primary School

94 per cent of parents in Suffolk have been offered their first choice of primary school for their children this year.

Suffolk's primary school admission figures released show that 94% or 7,161 children have been offered a reception place for September 2017 at their parents' preferred school, with 98.5% offered one of their three preferences. There has been a more than 3% increase in the number of children offered their first preference this year compared with last year.

Suffolk County Council received a total of 7,621 applications for a place in the Reception year from parents outlining which school they would prefer their children to be educated at from September 2017. This is 299 less than last year because it is a smaller cohort. 97.7% of pupils moving to a junior school have secured their first preference place with 99.34% being offered one of their three choices.

The number of people choosing to submit an application online has increased from 78% to 93%. These applicants were able to see their school place offer online from 18 April. Letters were sent to all applicants by second class post, including to those who filled in a paper application form.

Any parents or carers with a child born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 who have not yet applied for a school place should make an application immediately by downloading the CAF1 application form from our website www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions or contact Suffolk County Council on **0345 600 0981**.

Sport and physical activity in Suffolk to benefit from £160,000 investment

Efforts to increase sport and physical activity in Suffolk have received a timely funding boost from Sport England.

The organisation has awarded Suffolk County Council £160,000 to deliver a range of activities that will help encourage more people to be active and, in doing so, support Suffolk's long-term ambition of becoming the most active county in England. The grant follows a successful three-year partnership with Sport England that has seen new activities developed and supported across the county, a leadership programme implemented and the strategic landscape for sport and physical activity transformed.

Activities to have been directly supported thanks to the partnership include the popular parkrun's across the Suffolk, the Fit Villages project, the Great East Swim outreach programme, Great Run Local's at Needham Market and in Southwold, a disability sport programme and the sport and event volunteering project.

The new funding will see some of this work extended but also new activity introduced and insight gained in areas that might prove successful in encouraging those who are currently inactive to become more active. New blossoming partnerships will continue to prosper with Dance East, the Broads Authority, ActivLives, Sporting Memories and the Great East Run.

[Suffolk's Most Active County programme](#) is a partnership of local authorities, public sector bodies, the voluntary sector and private companies that has been established to turn the tide of inactivity. It focuses on bringing added value to the good work that many organisations across the county already do to engage people in physical activity.

The partnership was a recent finalist in the Local Government Chronicle Awards, the best new ideas and most innovative solutions in local government.

Warning to residents with Solar Panels after victims targeted

Suffolk Trading Standards is asking residents to be vigilant if they receive a call from energy saving companies claiming they'll be able to save them money.

Since the turn of the year Suffolk Trading Standards have received a large number of complaints from residents who own solar panels, with energy saving companies claiming they have an energy saving device that will save them money, or offering to check their 'system' for free. Last month, two elderly residents were contacted by such companies, convincing them that they and their properties were at risk.

One victim, in Lowestoft, was told the lid to her water tank was loose, which then ran the risk of overflowing onto the electrics in the house, and electrocuting her. The resident was told they would need to pay the company £7,500 up front in cash, and that work would need to start as soon as possible. The victim went straight to the bank to withdraw the money, but fortunately the bank staff contacted Suffolk Trading Standards before any money was passed over.

The second victim, in Ipswich, was told their solar panels needed to be serviced. When the trader took a look at the panels, they informed the victim that the company that had fitted them had gone out of business and that the installation was dangerous, as a power save unit had not been installed, creating a fire risk to their property. They were told the repair would cost £3,295 and the victim paid a deposit of £800. The trader has not yet returned to carry out the work and despite the victim trying to cancel the work, they have not yet received a refund.

Suffolk Trading Standards is offering advice to consumers to ensure they do not fall victim to such companies and traders.

If you have any concerns about a trader, call Trading Standards via Citizens Advice Consumer Service on **03454 040506**.