

Parish Report June 2013

Councillor

Richard Kemp

Tresco
New Road
Long Melford
Suffolk
CO10 9JY
01787 378149
richard.kemp@suffolk.gov.uk



Response from Leader of Suffolk County Council on Broadband

As Richard alluded to, broadband speeds in Suffolk are inconsistent and very often quite poor. Indeed, only 59% of the county will benefit from commercially funded upgrades. To address this, Suffolk County Council has now awarded BT a contract to intervene in the c41% of Suffolk premises which are outside of the scope of commercially funded broadband upgrades (eg BT Infinity, Virgin Media). This contract will ensure that, when combined with the 59% of commercial coverage, 90% of Suffolk premises are served from fibre broadband, and the remaining 10% of premises will enjoy speeds ranging from 2Mbps to 24Mbps, with a minimum universal commitment of at least 2Mbps across all premises in the county. This will be completed in 2015, with incremental progress along the way. Beyond 2015, we intend to secure additional funding to push coverage and speed further.

Work is already underway on delivering these improvements, and in the coming weeks we will be publishing a broad phasing map, showing where in the programme each parish will fall. You will appreciate that the information we currently use is based upon various assumptions, and is therefore fit for a bid, but not complete enough to publish a committed rollout schedule. The current plan is to launch this map at the Suffolk Show this year. There are 9 phases to our rollout, the design work for phase one is underway, and once it is complete we will be able to announce the coverage to be achieved from the first phase. After this, the second phase will follow, and hence a more refined idea of coverage will be published as the survey and design for each phase is signed off.

Suffolk is in fact one of the first two Local Authorities to proceed under the national government funding scheme, and are also ahead of schedule with the deployment programme. BT have also brought forward the completion date for their commercial rollout by twelve months, so broadband improvements in Suffolk are moving as fast as anywhere in the country. Of course, we would always love to be able to deliver this instantly, but it is a complex engineering process.

Although frustrating, we are unable to publish detailed information on coverage and speeds until survey and design work is completed for each phase of deployment. This is also due to the regulation around broadband provision in that we must announce new areas of coverage on an equivalent basis to all retail service providers (eg Orange, Sky) through an established process. We will however release information on new areas of coverage throughout the programme as soon as it becomes available, via the website www.suffolk.gov.uk/broadband

In terms of the area referred to, I have asked my team to look into this and it appears that the cabinet which serves your premises is one which is currently progressing through the planning system, and should be deployed within the next few months. If you require any further updates, please feel free to contact broadband@suffolk.gov.uk

Speeding Traffic and crossing safety for school children in Southgate Street, Long Melford

Speed issues will be discussed in the next SNT / Highways meeting so that a coordinated response can be prepared. We'll also have a look to see what data already exists. Longer if it looks like a practical scheme could be delivered it may be possible to use Quality of Life budget. A refuge would be affordable but a formal pedestrian crossing is likely to far exceed the available Quality of Life money.

Water Result!

Do you remember the [Inking About Africa](#) story earlier this month, where CSD's Faye McSloy provided an update on a project aimed at raising money to install a new well in an African village? The project is now complete, with the well in place and fresh drinking water available to residents.

Are you Care Aware?

A new referral service provided by Care Aware has been launched by Suffolk County Council that will provide sound information and advice on how to fund long term care. SCC is the first local authority in the country to directly refer customers to Care Aware in order to help families prepare for any future care needs. Care Aware offers free and impartial information & advice for the people of Suffolk.

Care Aware is a non profit making information and advisory service specialising in the issues relating to the funding of long term care for older people. Its objectives are to improve public understanding and knowledge about the care system, to reinforce the rights and choices of the individual and to assist the public on the issues associated with the provision of care. The care system can be complex and often has far reaching implications for individuals and their families. The need for care invariably creates issues across a range of professional matters including health, finance, taxation & law and therefore it is important that any advice takes into account each of these issues.

Where individual circumstances require more detailed advice and guidance regarding the legal, tax and financial aspects of paying for care, Care Aware may recommend access to an Endorsed Later Life Adviser provided by Care Asset Management Limited. Each of their advisers is an Endorsed Later Life Adviser and is a full member of the Society of Later Life Advisers (SOLLA). Care Asset Management Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority and provides independent advice from the whole of the financial market.

Since its soft launch on 17th October last year Care Aware has received over 80 enquiries from the people of Suffolk requesting further information and advice for later life planning and paying for long-term care.

Councillor Colin Noble, Suffolk County Council portfolio holder for Adult and Community Services said: "I am delighted to announce the launch of Care Aware in Suffolk. This service is designed to help people make informed choices about paying for care and to reduce the risk of money running out whilst still protecting any inheritance legacies. I am confident this new service will really help people better understand what options are available to them. The service being provided will go a long way to helping individuals and families understand the true cost of care in later life and will help them plan for the future".

For more information about Care Aware service call Care Aware on Freephone 0800 954 0091 or email them at Suffolk@careaware.co.uk

Learning the ropes (and balloons, and cooking.....)

Last week's Learning at Work Day was a first for the council and hopefully just the start of an annual celebration of learning new skills in the workplace. Talented staff volunteered their expertise in the Italian language, Asian cooking, chair Pilates, silver clay jewellery making and much more.

Good news on Stroke in Suffolk

Stroke patients and their families have two reasons to celebrate this week, one short term; the news from the Stroke Review Project board, that both Ipswich and West Suffolk hospitals will be supported to be both “hyperacute” and “acute” stroke units, providing the full range of diagnostic tests, thrombolysis (clot dissolving) expertise and rehabilitation services. The other news is the early work from Glasgow University / Glasgow’s Southern General Hospital, where a small number of stroke patients have been involved in a pilot clinical trial to assess the safety of injecting human stem cells into a stroke-affected brain. This marks the first real, but as yet distant promise of significant recovery after a part of the brain has essentially died as a result of blood being shut off.

The residents of Suffolk will, I am sure, continue to support local services for Stroke, the details of which have still to be hammered out at hospital level. Organising a 24 hour day, 7 day week service with rapid access to senior clinicians for decisions after scanning as to the best course of action is not easy. The Health Service has long suffered from a shortage of senior staff “on the front door” and the European Time Directive has not helped in limiting junior doctor’s hours (which were of course generally too long) and which to some extent has hampered the use of the more “senior” junior doctors in training. Simply put, we continue not to have enough seniors in the hospital at all hours and enough juniors in training. Face to face, doctor to patient relationships are vital and telemedicine (video links between hospitals and specialists) will also have a role to play in helping the speed of diagnosis and treatment, but are not a substitute for the ever-important appearance at the bedside of “the man/woman that knows”, who has the confidence of patient and family alike.

The real key to making this work will involve the patients themselves and their close family, as personal support through a time of crisis has so much bearing on the outcome. No doubt patients, relatives, nurses, therapy staff and doctors may all have to travel that extra mile to keep our vital services within the borders of Suffolk. Those of us that are peripheral to the stroke arena at present can also be effective in recognising and minimising the risks in stroke: smoking, inactivity, high blood cholesterol levels and obesity and of course, supporting the voluntary sector which helps patients and families in so many ways.