

Parish Report August 2013

Councillor

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Views welcomed on A14 Bridge proposals

AN EXHIBITION in Bury St Edmunds will allow people to put forward their views on a new £2m pedestrian and cycle bridge over the A14.

The new bridge will provide a safe and direct route for cyclists and pedestrians to cross over the A14, whilst creating a useful link between the town centre to the south and railway station to the residential and commercial areas in the north of the town. It will be financed by both Suffolk County Council and the Department for Transport, who have provided the majority of funding.

Currently, the main route for cars to cross under the A14 is Fornham Road - however, this road is not suitable for cycling and the options for improving it are limited by the narrow road width and requirements for residential parking. Graham Newman, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for roads and transport said: "Bury St Edmunds has some excellent existing cycling facilities that will be complemented by the new bridge. We are hopeful that the introduction of a new bridge will make walking and cycling safer, more convenient and pleasurable and will encourage more people to leave their cars at home when making shorter journeys around the town."

In parallel with this project Suffolk County Council is carrying out cycling improvement schemes on Tayfen Road, Northgate Avenue and Tollgate Lane to enhance the links from existing cycling facilities to the new bridge. From Monday 15 July, proposals can be viewed at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations

Suffolk celebrates 50th No Cold Calling zone

OVER 2,500 households are now united in saying 'no' to uninvited doorstep callers as Suffolk celebrates its 50th No Cold Calling Zone (NCCZ).

Local residents, county councillors, Suffolk Trading Standards and Suffolk Constabulary gathered today in Newmarket to celebrate the launch of two new NCCZs, one zone in Manderston Road and Princess Way and the second in Adastral Close, bringing the total to 50 across the county.

NCCZs consist of a road or small group of roads where residents have decided that they do not want uninvited salespeople knocking on their doors. The zone's are clearly identified by street signage and stickers on householder's doors, in an attempt to empower consumers to say 'no' to cold calling doorstep traders and stay safe in their homes.

The first ever Suffolk NCCZ was launched in April of 2009 in the area of Maryon Road and Grassmere Close in Ipswich. Since then, residents living in NCCZs have been asked about their experiences. The most recent survey saw that 92% said they felt as confident or more confident now they lived in a NCCZ, 96% said they received no or significantly fewer visits from cold callers and 98% said they felt safer or as safe.

A resident from Stowmarket, who has benefited from the NCCZ that was launched in his road back in September 2010, said: "I would like to thank Suffolk Trading Standards and the Police for introducing this scheme; it has made a great improvement to my life. Aged 81 I no longer have to deal with aggressive callers at my door."

Suffolk communities, Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and Safer Neighbourhood teams who are concerned about crime and doorstep callers are invited to nominate roads for a NCCZ by contacting Suffolk Trading Standards. Officers will then conduct a proportionality check of the area to ascertain if a scheme is a proportionate measure. Zones are then set up free of charge to the residents through Trading Standards funding.

Trading Standards is supported with the use of Consumer Protection legislation which means that if doorstep cold calling is carried out in a zone by a trader or company, it may be a criminal offence.

Councillor Colin Spence, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for public protection said; "Following the launch of Suffolk's first NCCZ in 2009, we have steadily increased the number of zones in partnership with local communities and the local police to reach the milestone 50th NCCZ today.

"Community safety issues that include the support and funding of NCCZ are very high on the priority list and we look forward to growing the partnerships that develop within Suffolk No Cold Calling Zones and empowering the local people living within them."

Lee Nunn, Suffolk's lead officer for NCCZs said; "These zones work very effectively with the support of the residents living within them. When local partnerships unite and act together, prompt action can be taken and huge differences can be made."

Anyone interested in knowing more about NCCZs, including the nomination of a road, can visit Suffolk Trading Standards website pages via www.suffolk.gov.uk or call directly on 01473 264859.

Locality Budget & Small Roadworks Budget

The locality budget has been increased this year to £12,000 for the Melford Division. The amount is to cover nine parishes, with an electorate of circa 7600 people and total population of just under 10,000 people, applicable to both budgets. Already there has been take-up on both budgets. Preference for applications is given to Charities that operate within the Melford Division.

Suffolk's Fire Chief Leaving County

Suffolk County Council's director of public protection and chief fire officer, Andy Fry, is to leave the authority in the autumn to take up a new role in Royal Berkshire. Andy has served the people of Suffolk as head of the county's fire and rescue service for four and a half years, but is moving on to become chief fire officer for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Paying tribute to Andy's considerable contribution to Suffolk, Councillor Colin Spence, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for public protection, said: "Andy's commitment to serving the public of Suffolk and striving for improvement in the services has been outstanding, and his enthusiasm and drive for maximising opportunities for collaboration will be greatly missed.

"He has provided me with an exceptional level of support in my role as cabinet member and is always a consummate professional. Andy has been a fantastic colleague to work with and I have very appreciated his support and advice in delivering services to the people of Suffolk."

Speaking about his time in Suffolk, Andy Fry said: "It has been a great pleasure and an enormous privilege to serve the people of Suffolk in the role of director of public protection and chief fire officer at Suffolk County Council. It has enabled me to work with some of the most committed and talented people in the public sector. I really value the professional relationships and friendships I have developed as a result, and will miss colleagues very much indeed when I leave Suffolk later this year.

During my five and a half years here, I have been proud to be part of a successful organisation, working with my corporate management team colleagues to deliver real change for the benefit of Suffolk residents. My contribution at a corporate level has been made infinitely easier through having an utterly brilliant heads of service team in the Directorate. The support I have enjoyed from Andy Osman, Mark Hardingham, Steve Greenfield and, latterly, Sonia Whitely has been invaluable and I can not thank them enough for it. Finally I would like to say a special thank you to Councillor Colin Spence. As cabinet member for public protection,, I have found his unstinting focus on doing the very best for people in Suffolk really inspiring, and believe that an awful lot has been achieved as a result of his political leadership. It is with a heavy heart that I will leave Suffolk in the Autumn, but the fresh challenges ahead present some great opportunities for me."

A decision on what arrangements will be put in place following Andy's departure is still to be made.

Deborah Cadman, Suffolk County Council's chief executive, said: I would like to thank Andy personally and on behalf of elected members, the corporate management team and staff across the public protection directorate for his tremendous hard work and commitment over the last few years. Andy will be a real loss to the organisation. During his four years as Suffolk's chief fire officer, he has ensured that Suffolk remains one of the most efficient fire services in the country. He has also led an award winning service trading standards team, and his endeavours in developing relationships with the voluntary sector are also held as leading on the national stage. Andy has been outstanding in his leadership and most importantly delivery of change and innovation. We wish Andy every success for his future."