

Parish Report September 2014

Councillor

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Positive First Ever GCSE results recorded at Clare School

Stour Valley Community School in Clare has seen its first ever set of students complete their GCSEs - and the school's head is 'delighted' with many of the results.

Year 11 at Stour Valley, which opened in 2011, is made up just 37 students and they the first to have come through the Suffolk County Council Schools' Organisational Review. Students worked exceptionally hard throughout their courses and, with the benefit of a 'no study leave' policy, were able to receive support from their teachers right up to the day of their final exam, achieving 58% A* to C grades. All students have met, and many exceeded, the national expectation for this year group.

The school's head teacher Christine Inchley said she was particularly delighted with results in Maths and Science, where 25 per cent of all grades awarded were A* and A grades - 87 per cent of students also achieved A* to C grades in English Literature. Mrs Inchley added: "We are confident that all of the students who joined Stour Valley in year nine in 2011 have developed into well qualified, mature and confident young people who are well equipped to take on the next stage in their lives. We are proud of them all."

Outstanding results were achieved by a number of students, including Sebastian Hawkins who now has 11 GCSEs, 8 of them at A*/A grade, and Gaia Johnstone who is the proud owner of 10 GCSEs, 8 of them at A*/A grade. Keith Haisman, chair of governors, said "Stour Valley Community School has always been about providing high quality education in the rural community. The Governing Body is delighted with the success of all students as they take their next steps on their career path.

Gypsy and Traveller sites consultation stopped

Leaders respond to alternative proposals and public feedback. A public consultation seeking people's views on where to create three official Gypsy and Traveller stopping sites in Suffolk has been stopped. The consultation, launched last week, identified seven potential sites - with the aim of selecting three in the areas where unauthorised encampments usually occur.

However, following a number of landowners coming forward with other potential sites and early feedback from councillors and residents, Suffolk's council and policing leaders have decided to halt the current process to enable it to be reconsidered. It means the seven sites previously identified have therefore been dropped and a fresh list of sites will be worked on prior to public consultation.

Speaking on behalf of the elected leaders of Suffolk's eight councils and Police and Crime Commissioner Tim Passmore, Councillor Mark Bee, Suffolk County Council's leader, said: "The case for creating short stay stopping sites has been well established and we've found a great deal of general support for what we, as public sector bodies in Suffolk, are trying to do to help solve the issue of unauthorised encampments in Suffolk. But what's more important is making sure we have the right sites to consult the public on. A number of alternative proposals have been put forward and, in the interest of making the best decisions for Suffolk, they need to be looked at. That is why we've taken the early decision to stop the current consultation today and develop a fresh approach. This is absolutely the right thing to do to ensure we make the right decisions for Suffolk. We're committed to working with all partners and communities to take this issue forward."

All councillor briefings, public drop in sessions and public meetings organised by Suffolk County Council to support this process will be cancelled. No timescales have been set for when a new consultation will be launched.

Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) Leader Local Development Strategy: Heritage Coast and Wool Towns

The submissions of a Local Development Strategy for LEADER funding that include the two AONBs will be submitted on 5 Sept. If approved, funding will be delivered through a Local Action Group where EU contributions need to be matched from the private sector. The AONBs have been involved in developing opportunities for investment to support farm diversification; rural tourism; productivity; rural services and cultural and heritage activity. Useful information at gov.uk website.

Councils join forces to oppose £200m Eye Power Station

Parish councils have formed a working group to oppose plans for a new £200m power station for Eye airfield. The Parishes Working Group has been formed by the parishes of Palgrave, Thrandeston, Yaxley, Thornham Magna and Parva and Eye Town Council to represent the views of villagers in time for the public consultation's final submission date on September 4.

David Burn, chairman of Thrandeston Parish Council and a member of the working group, said: "The group exists because we are very concerned that this represents over industrialisation of a rural area and while we recognise that we live next to a disused airfield, large chunks of which can be classified as a brownfield site, development has been piecemeal up until now. We regard this as too large for that site to sustain and it reduces its capability of attracting more employment."

A decision on Progress Power's plans for the 299MW gas-fired station is due to be made by the government, but the villagers are concerned about the impact on the countryside from a development they feel would be more suited to more industrialised parts of the country, such as the Thames Estuary. Suffolk County Council's cabinet has backed the power station plan "in principle," but with concerns about the impact on the countryside. The construction of an electricity sub-station 1.5kms away has also attracted criticism from opponents because of the effect on the rural area. Other concerns included light pollution, a loss of heritage and archaeological sites, the impact on house prices and a reduction in the amount of land available for housing developments.

Peter Brooke, a co-opted member of the working group, from Thorndon, said the power station would be visible for miles around. He added: "I think it is just a totally inappropriate area. There are other industrial areas that would be used to a development of this nature."

The gas power station is expected to operate for no more than 1,500 hours a year and will feature five stacks, each of up to 30m in height, providing power for 400,000 homes.

Council to decide on £3 million investment in Eastern Relief Road Project

Leading councillors are to decide a £3 million investment in the much heralded Eastern Relief Road in Bury St Edmunds. St Edmundsbury Borough Council's cabinet is being asked to approve one of the last pieces of funding for the £15 million project on Tuesday September 2. In return, the authority will receive either land, a share in the development profits or both.

The road, connecting Skyliner Way in Moreton Hall to junction 45 of the A14, will allow for the expansion of Suffolk Business Park onto 68 hectares of land which the council says will create upto 15,000 jobs. It also paves the way for 500 new homes and a secondary school on Moreton Hall. The project has received £10m from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and Suffolk County Council plans to contribute £2 million.

Cllr John Griffiths, leader of St Edmundsbury Borough Council, said: "Rather than merely loaning the money, we are considering investing in the success and the future of this project, achieving a healthy return in the process." A final decision on the funding will be made by the full council on Tuesday September 23.

Missed the Green Deal? Suffolk Energy Action is open for business

The Home Improvement Fund may be closed to new applications but if you are a Suffolk resident you can still get up to £6000 of funding for home improvements. The Government's Green Deal Home Improvement Fund, which offered grants to make homes more energy-efficient, closed last month after the £120m allocated for it ran out in six weeks due to a surge of applications.

Suffolk residents can still get funding for home improvements, thanks to a successful bid to central Government of £5.7 million for the Suffolk Energy Action scheme. This scheme will provide funding and advice for the installation of energy efficiency improvements to help all Suffolk homeowners and private renting tenants save money. The primary focus will be on homes that could benefit from solid wall insulation as 45% of heat in a home will be escaping through the walls if they are not insulated.

Over the next few months, local councils, community groups and partners such as Rural Coffee Caravan are holding roadshows to help raise awareness about the scheme. Officers will be on hand to answer any questions people may have about making their homes more energy efficient.

Current roadshows dates in Suffolk with Rural Coffee Caravan:

1,8,15 September Lowestoft Asda AM/Library PM
26 September Haverhill Market 08.30-15.00
30 September Newmarket Market 08.30-14.30
8 October Debenham, outside Neaves Butchers 0900-16.30
16 October Sudbury Market 8.30- 1600
24 October Haverhill Market 09.00-16.00

The Suffolk Energy Action team will spend a week in different areas on a rolling programme which started on 14th July and runs until 17th November. Councillor Beccy Hopfensperger, cabinet member for localities and environment said: "Suffolk Energy Action is part of our ambition to create the Greenest County and support the growth of a green economy in Suffolk. Insulating your home could save you hundreds of pounds each year in reduced energy bills, and as summer is nearly over, now is the time to start planning ahead!"

By joining the scheme, Suffolk residents can get a heavily discounted assessment at £29 which will identify potential improvements. They will then receive options and advice for funding, which could be up to £6000 towards the cost of the installation.

Cashless Payments now available with the Endeavour Card

Young people aged 16–19 can now use cashless payments with their Endeavour Card when they pay for a single or return fare on Ipswich Buses. To get started cardholders are asked to register their card first on the [Endeavour Card website](#). Please have your 18 digit card number and postcode available. After you have registered you can start to top-up your card in a similar way to the Oyster Card used in London.

The Endeavour Card, launched in 2013, is for any person aged 16-19. It is valid for any single or return adult journey, 7 days a week, on participating bus operators. Cardholders receive a minimum discount of 25% off full price adult bus fares only. You can also register for trips in blocks of 10; however the 25% discount will not be applicable or travel on the Park and Ride service in Ipswich.

Young people can apply up to 1 month before your 16th birthday and no less than 1 month before your 20th birthday. There is no fee. The participating bus operators are:

Anglian Bus	Border Bus	Carters	Chambers	Coach Services Limited
First Bus	Galloway	Ipswich Buses	Stephensons	Suffolk Norse.

It is anticipated that other participating operators will provide cashless payments facilities in the future.