

Parish Report November 2014

Councillor

Richard Kemp

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



Suffolk prepared for Fire Service strikes this bonfire weekend

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) will be operating a reduced service but is ready to protect the county during the four day strike action.

There will be four continuous days of strike action from 31 October at 6pm until 4 November at 6pm. With firework displays and bonfires planned across the county this weekend, Suffolk's fire fighters are intent on spreading vital fire safety messages and encouraging people not to take any unnecessary risks. SFRS is strongly advising people to attend official, organised celebrations, but is issuing the following advice for those who are having celebrations of their own:

Before you light the bonfire, check that children and animals are a safe distance away

- Never leave bonfires unattended
- Never light bonfires in unsuitable weather conditions, particularly wind
- Never use flammable liquids to start the fire, and never burn dangerous rubbish such as aerosols
- Have only one person in charge of lighting the fireworks, and use eye protection and gloves
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions on each firework. Read them by torchlight – never a naked flame
- Light fireworks at arm's length using a safety firework lighter or fuse wick
- Never go back to a firework once lit
- Keep a bucket of water nearby
- Put used sparklers hot end down into a bucket of sand or water
- Never throw used fireworks on a bonfire

Councillor Colin Spence, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for public protection, said; "Given the reduced availability of firefighters and fire appliances during these periods of action and the potential for increased risk created by bonfire and firework events and people using candles, the public are strongly encouraged to be extra vigilant and safety conscious. We highly recommend that families attend organised and safely managed public events and that safety advice regarding bonfire and firework safety is reviewed and followed very closely. In addition to bonfire and fireworks safety messages, simple common sense precautions such as testing smoke alarms, not using Chinese lanterns, keeping an eye on food cooking, driving carefully and looking out for vulnerable neighbours and friends will reduce the risk of fires and other accidents."

Senior officers within the county's fire and rescue service expect to have at least 20 fire engines available during the four day strike. 999 calls will continue to be answered as normal and the nearest available fire engines sent to emergencies. These will be crewed by firefighters not taking part in the strike action. No further strikes have been announced at this stage by the Fire Brigade Union.

Suffolk Trading Standards are urging the public to only buy fireworks from legitimate traders. Any shop keeping fireworks must have a licence and follow strict guidelines on safe storage and re-sale, including not selling to people under the age of 18.

Trading standards officers are urging people to contact them if they have any concerns about fireworks being sold on 03454 040506. They should not be sold from vehicles, market stalls or car boot sales

Babergh Leader asks for calm on possible Headquarters move with Mid Suffolk

The leader of Babergh has called for the council and Mid Suffolk not to rush proposals which could see their headquarters scrapped.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk district councils have voted to further examine plans which would see an administrative hub developed with satellite offices providing services. The councils are expecting millions of pounds in cuts in the next parliamentary term and so are looking at ways to save money.

Jennie Jenkins, Babergh's leader, believes it is "unlikely" the council will move from its headquarters in Hadleigh to Mid Suffolk's home in Needham Market or vice versa to create the hub. If that option is ruled out it only leaves proposals to create the hub either at Suffolk County Council's Ipswich base or somewhere in the "Ipswich Fringe" area.

Mrs Jenkins said: "It's not economical (to keep things as they are) because we have got staff in both offices, we have got a management board travelling to both offices and members in both offices. For the staff in particular, their working relationship would be much easier if they were in one building. It's unlikely that we will move into either headquarters, we need to take a fresh look because a merger was not voted for. We have got plenty of time to make what will be an important decision and nothing must make us rush that."

A final decision on whether to go ahead with any of the proposals is expected after the next district elections, in May 2015.

Suffolk secures £350,000 Signs of Safety funding

One of ten local authorities to secure Department for Education funding in England Suffolk County Council has been successful in securing £350,000 to improve the quality and effectiveness of our work with children and families. The county council is one of ten local authorities benefitting from Department for Education's Innovations Project grant of £4.7 million to implement Signs of Safety practice across Suffolk's children's services.

The programme for implementing Signs of Safety in Suffolk began in February 2014. To date, over 1000 staff from within children and young people's services and partner agencies including the police, schools, the voluntary sector, health and housing have received initial training.

Feedback from families who have experienced the changes in the way Suffolk County Council is working has been very positive. The county council chose Signs of Safety as the preferred model due to the long track record of success the programme has brought worldwide. Councillor Gordon Jones, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for children's services, said:

"Our duty to protect our children and young people in Suffolk is undoubtedly our top priority as a county council. Our staff work tirelessly, day in, day out to ensure this group remain safe and supported. The Signs of Safety framework is well-esteemed and internationally recognised and helps us to work alongside families to enable them to make positive changes. This money will allow us to align policies and systems so that we can work as efficiently and effectively as possible. This funding will allow us to build on and accelerate practice in Suffolk and allow us to deepen our work with world-class experts who are committed to making transformational changes for the difficult, complex and contentious work of keeping children safe and helping struggling families."

Terry Murphy, the lead child protection consultant working with Suffolk over the past year, said: "Suffolk is gaining more momentum and getting earlier results than I have seen anywhere else internationally with their implementation of Signs of Safety. By applying it to all children's services and taking a strong and comprehensive approach to implementation, they are setting a great example for how to bring about better outcomes for children and families in England."

New Recycling Service launched

You can now recycle more than ever in Suffolk.

A new service, designed to make recycling even easier, will go live next week with Suffolk residents being given the chance to recycle even more at home.

The new enhanced household recycling service means that residents can now recycle:

- food and drink cartons
- aerosol cans
- books
- metal pots, pans and trays

From Monday 3 November these new materials will be collected alongside the usual items of:

- paper
- card
- cans
- foil
- plastic bottles, tubs and trays

Residents can even recycle textiles in their recycling bin as long as they are in the special bags provided by the council.

Cllr Andrew Nunn, chairman of the Suffolk Waste Partnership said: "I am delighted to be able to announce our new enhanced recycling service. The people of Suffolk are amongst the top performers in the country with 53% of our waste already being recycled. However, there is still more we can do and this new service will help people recycle even more"

The Suffolk Waste Partnership estimates that more than 18,000 tonnes of material that could be recycled from home gets thrown away costing taxpayers hundreds of thousands of pounds. Cllr Nunn continued: "It's also important to remember that recycling can help protect Council services in these times of austerity. When people put recyclable items in their rubbish bin it costs approximately £80 more per tonne for the council to collect and dispose of it, totalling £1.4 million every year. So by recycling residents are not only helping the environment but also helping to make Suffolk taxpayers' money go further."

The new 4.5 year contract between the Suffolk Waste Partnership and Viridor has made this enhanced service possible. Graham Warren, Viridor's Southern Regional Managing Director, said: "We are very pleased to continue our long association of service within the county of Suffolk. We will continue to work with our partners in the Suffolk Waste Partnership to enhance recycling performance throughout the county."

Residents are also being asked to make sure their recycling is clean, dry and loose when placed in their recycling bins. This helps to ensure the materials are easily separated when they arrive at the sorting facility. A leaflet explaining the new service will be delivered to all homes countywide from the Monday 3 November.

£100,000 funding aims to get Suffolk moving

A new grant scheme encouraging people to get active and enjoy Suffolk's natural environment has been announced today by Suffolk's Public Health team. 'Getting Suffolk Moving' is a £100,000 pot to which the county's voluntary groups and community organisations can apply to fund projects to promote walking, gardening, volunteering, swimming and anything else that boosts physical activity in the outdoors.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality. An estimated 50% of Suffolk people do no or very little active recreation, which can have costs to personal health and the county's health services alike.

Councillor Alan Murray, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for health and adult care, said:
"I'm pleased to announce this new fund, which has been set up to prompt a range of projects to get people more active while enjoying the wonderful outdoors, wherever they live in Suffolk. Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health, reducing your risk of disease in later life, controlling your weight and even contributing to positive mental health. Through our commitment to become the most active county in England we're encouraging Suffolk's public to get involved in walking locally, enjoying the garden, managing local green space or rediscovering cycling."

The fund is primarily aimed at voluntary organisations and community groups. It is being administered by Suffolk Community Foundation, which has a strong track record for managing funds to benefit communities.

Each bid must consider the following:

- Projects that increase everyday opportunities to be active, without the need to purchase specialist equipment or join a club
- Initiatives that remove barriers to participation so that everyone can get involved
- Ideas that can be adopted and work elsewhere in the county
- Projects that have long-term benefits and can be sustained

Stephen Singleton, Chief Executive of Suffolk Community Foundation, said:

"I'm excited about the potential that this scheme has for delivering a legacy of increased physical and mental health. We've already seen plenty of interest from voluntary groups with schemes in mind that need financial input to get off the ground.

"I know from experience that small sums of well targeted funding can have a huge impact, which is why I have every confidence that this scheme will make a difference by getting people more active."

The scheme is open to bids of up to £5,000, but larger amounts may be considered where projects can demonstrate exceptional contributions to increase daily activity.

Applications can be made online at www.suffolkcf.org.uk

Success for first ever Suffolk Skills Show

Suffolk businesses turned out in mass to support the first ever Suffolk Skills show; a skills and careers event reaching over 4000 young people. The event set out to engage with Suffolk's young people and provide and insight into the career opportunities available to them locally. The show which took place at Trinity Park in Ipswich targeted those between 11 and 24.

The businesses exhibiting at the event worked hard to ensure those attending left with their eyes opened to the many career streams across Suffolk, some which they may never have considered. There were many interactive indoor and outdoor stands showcasing opportunities in energy, IT & technology, finance and business services, creative digital, agriculture, construction, motor vehicle, advanced manufacturing, ports and logistics as well as HM Forces and a 'have a go' area where attendees were able to try their hand at new skills.

Councillor Lisa Chambers, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for education and skills, said:

"This event was designed to make it easier for businesses to be proactive with young people currently in education, or those who are considering their options when leaving school. The event captured young people's interest at a stage in their development where it makes a difference, it's important our young people know about the wide range of local career options available to them. I firmly believe this approach of businesses engaging directly with young people creates a real change in their aspirations and understanding around the importance of their school education when entering the world of work. I'm hugely proud of the hard work that went into today's first ever Suffolk Skills Show. The event presented an unmissable opportunity for local businesses to show their willingness to support our ambitions through Raising the Bar."

Ian Twinley, Chairman of Suffolk Skills Show Experience, said:

"As a Suffolk community we are hugely indebted to the businesses that have made this event such a success."

Gary Shoesmith, Education Liaison Director at Willis and Suffolk Skills Show Experience exhibitor, said: "Willis has thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to engage and connect with a very large number of motivated and interested students from Suffolk schools. We have already identified several candidates for the future school leader programme job roles at Willis."

Niki Rousseau, EDF Energy's Sizewell B Power Station Community Liaison Officer and Suffolk Skills Show Experience exhibitor, said: "EDF Energy is delighted to be involved with the event today, it was a fantastic opportunity to speak with a large number of students about the career prospects within the nuclear industry, especially engineering. We were also able to engage with them on how important Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects are for this line of work and share with students detail around engineering apprenticeships available within our industry."

Those unable to make the event during the day were encouraged to come along for a drop in session in the evening to explore options available to them locally; giving them an opportunity to talk to employers, colleges, training providers and advisers about their future careers.

Suffolk's Blue Light Partnership awarded nearly £5m funding

Government grant to help increase the number of shared bases in Suffolk for fire, police and ambulance services. The grant of £4.94 million follows the submission of a joint-bid, led by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, earlier in the year to the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Councillor Colin Spence, cabinet member for public protection said:

"This is really great news for Suffolk. Over the last two years, we have worked with our partners to create four shared fire and police stations which are located in Ixworth, Elmswell, Debenham and Framlingham. Ambulance crews are now based at fire stations in Lowestoft and Brandon. This national funding will support the co-location of our front-line blue light services at further locations across Suffolk. Work will continue to establish the possibility of further shared blue-light bases across the county. Improvement works have just started in Woodbridge, where we are creating a shared base for fire and police at the existing fire station. Now that we have received confirmation of the grant funding we can now start to discuss our plans in greater detail with our partners."

The national funding will be provided in 2015 to help establish more shared bases in Suffolk. The collaborative approach creates long-term financial savings for all parties and it will help the partners work more closely together in the community.

Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore said:

"I am absolutely delighted that once again, the government has recognised the tremendous track record Suffolk's emergency services have for sharing facilities. This generous grant will enable us to get on with the building work to provide better value for money and services for us all in Suffolk".

Matthew Broad, Operations Director for the East of England Ambulance Service said:

"This is fantastic news. The funding will provide a springboard to move forward our property plans and it creates an exciting opportunity to build upon what is already a very productive working relationship with our colleagues in fire and police".

The potential 3 year programme could bring the number of blue light shared fire stations to 12 out of a total of 35 Fire and Rescue Service buildings.