

Parish Report July 2014

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Suffolk people invited to get on their bikes

This month sees a celebration of cycling with a new report calling on people to take to their bikes, and a three-week cycle challenge inviting people to compete with others to win prizes.

Suffolk's first cycling strategy, launched today, sets a vision for cycling in Suffolk to increase the number of adults who cycle regularly every week from the current 13%. Pupils at the Edgar Sewter Primary School in Halesworth - proudly promoting their new town cycle map - hosted the launch with support from local cycling groups. The strategy highlights the many health benefits associated with cycling, and sets out a commitment to create a safe environment for people to enjoy cycling.

Councillor Graham Newman, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for roads, transport and planning, and Suffolk's Cycling Champion, said:

"Today's launch is important for Suffolk. Our vision involves a future in which cycling takes centre stage as a viable and even preferable alternative to driving. We have increasing pressure on our road network and want to encourage people to take to their bikes and enjoy the many benefits that this form of transport has to offer. When the culture of cycling is fully integrated into our communities, people will have every opportunity to make this a healthier, less congested and safer county in the years to come."

Meanwhile, Suffolk County Council's Public Health team, together with Livewell Suffolk, Suffolk Sport, East Coast Community Healthcare and partners, is encouraging people to sign up to the challenge, record their indoor and outdoor cycles, challenge their friends, family and colleagues and keep track of progress online at www.cyclesuffolkchallenge.co.uk

Those taking part can share their experiences on Twitter using the hashtag #cyclesuffolkchallenge, which will encourage others to upload photos of their favourite cycle routes around Suffolk and nominate friends and family to join

New team to safeguard Suffolk people

Organisations responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children in Suffolk are to form a new, single, team to make sure information needed to keep people safe is held, and immediately accessible, in one place. By the end of the summer, the organisations, including Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Police, health services, district and borough council housing services, education, Probation and the Youth Offending Service, will have come together to create Suffolk's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). It comes as the latest figures show that around 1,800 safeguarding referrals relating to children, and around 280 adult safeguarding enquiries, happen each month in Suffolk. These numbers have increased year on year over the past four years. The main advantage of the MASH is that professionals can share immediately the information their agency may have on a child or adult. This ensures that decisions taken about how to help an individual take into account all available information.

Councillor Gordon Jones, Suffolk County Council's cabinet member for children's services, said:

"Time and time again in adult and children safeguarding reviews across the country information sharing is cited as needing to be strengthened. In Suffolk, we already have very strong partnership working and this is something we should be proud of. However, there is always more that can be done. The MASH builds on the strong links agencies have by having people in the same location that can share information almost instantly to help information a response to a safeguarding referral. We have to make

sure that the actions we take in response to these are both proportionate and effective. A MASH will help us to achieve this and help reduce the number of referrals that are received because the right response was given first time. Therefore, it is essential that agencies can securely share the relevant information they have.”

Detective Superintendent David Cutler, Suffolk Police’s head of protecting vulnerable people, said: “Safeguarding children and vulnerable people is an absolute priority for the constabulary. Bringing agencies together in a shared environment will further improve the robust processes that are already in place. By co-locating services, the MASH will build on the work we already do to ensure that information is easily and immediately accessible, shared appropriately and that this leads to the best informed decisions that will make the most vulnerable people in Suffolk safer.”

Dr Ben Solway, a GP in Ipswich and child and adult safeguarding lead for the NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group, said: “There are over 2000 reported adult and child safeguarding issues reported each month in Suffolk and it is important those vulnerable people are given the best support and care. This new partnership initiative is a major step forward in ensuring all agencies are working together as effectively as possible for the good of local people.”

The Suffolk MASH has been developed as a result of learning from previous experiences, especially serious safeguarding incidents across the country. A recurring theme of these reviews is the importance of information sharing and close working arrangements between relevant agencies. The MASH model has been strongly endorsed in the OFSTED report ‘Good Practice by Local Safeguarding Boards’ and ‘The Munro Review of Child Protection’. The Care Act 2014 draft guidance also highlights a MASH which includes adult safeguarding as best practise. The MASH is being implemented in stages to make sure that the high standards of safeguarding already in place in Suffolk don’t suffer during the transition from current arrangements to a fully functioning MASH. Once fully operational, the MASH will be made up of approximately 60 professionals from across the county. The majority of these staff will be located at Landmark House in Ipswich. An information sharing agreement has been established between the agencies involved with the MASH to ensure that information is shared confidentially, proportionately and securely. Sensitive and confidential information will never leave the safety of the MASH team.

Members of the public who are concerned that a child, young person or adult is at risk of abuse, harm or neglect, should still contact Customer First on 0808 800 4005 (free from landlines and most mobiles). Further information about the Suffolk MASH is available at www.suffolk.gov.uk/MASH.

Deadline for GEM awards looms

Suffolk County Council is urging care providers who go the extra mile, to come forward and gain recognition for their exceptional care provision. Suffolk County Council is urging care providers who go the extra mile, to come forward and gain recognition for their exceptional care provision. The Suffolk ‘Going the Extra Mile’ Awards Ceremony is set to take place in January 2015. Applications are welcomed this year from care at home providers, supported living providers and sheltered accommodation providers. The Gem Awards aim to recognise and celebrate good practice and quality services for adults in Suffolk.

Councillor Alan Murray, Suffolk County Council’s cabinet member for health and adult care, said: “Its great to be able to recognise the excellent care being provided by our county’s care providers, whether that be through supported or sheltered living. It’s so important to celebrate when the quality of care being provided reaches above and beyond. It’s certainly appreciated by those in receipt of the care and their families and it’s only right that we give these providers the recognition and thanks they deserve.

Providers can enter as many of the categories as they like by completing the application form that can be found at www.suffolkas.org/dignity.

All applications will be shortlisted and then considered by a panel of judges who will select the winners. Further information will be requested following shortlisting and will be verified by the Dignity and Quality Team.

Trading Standards and Public Health team up for Child Safety

This year as part of Child Safety Week, Trading Standards and Public Health are joining forces to help raise awareness of the risks of child accidents. A poster campaign is being launched with all 44 Children's Centres in Suffolk. The campaign is focusing on the dangers posed by:

- Liquitabs - used in washing machines are very colourful and could be mistaken for sweets, they can cause significant harm if swallowed. All liquitabs should be securely stored or out of reach entirely.
- Small button cell batteries - found in children's books, toys and games – toxic when swallowed.
- Transparent nappy sacks - which can prove a choking hazard as with all plastic carrier bags should be kept out of reach
- Hanging blind cords - pose a strangulation risk. Cleats can be fitted to tie blind cords high up out of the reach of children.

Safety packs are being giving away at 4 centres in Suffolk until stocks last. The packs include home improvement safety devices such as a cupboard lock, blind cord cleat/accumulators, and blind cord warning sticker, cupboard/drawer catches.

The packs will be available from the following locations:

- Hawthorn Children's Centre, in Ipswich
- East Ipswich Children's Centre Based at: Tree House Children's Centre, Ipswich
- Kirkley Children Centre, Lowestoft
- Bury Library Children's Centre; Bury St Edmunds

Public Health Suffolk is urging parents and guardians to be wary of the risk of children having falls. A Public Health study from 2010 – 2012 showed that there were a total of 2790 ambulance call outs involving young people with 33% of those being for children up to four years old. During that time there were also 1327 admissions to A & E with 40% involving falls and 4.6% accidental poisoning.

Keep your children safe from falling top tips:

- To help prevent children climbing out of windows, remove any furniture in front of windows
- Fit safety locks to windows to save yourself the worry of your child falling out
- Change your baby's nappy on the floor – it's safer as babies can wriggle off a table or bed in moments
- Fit safety gates to stop your child climbing or falling down stairs
- Don't forget to fasten your child into their highchair every time as they can easily push themselves out when your back is turned

Councillor Alan Murray, cabinet member for health and adult care said:

"Most young children injure themselves when they do something parents don't anticipate, such as rolling over, taking their first steps or climbing. It's also easy to overlook everyday household products that can be dangerous to children if simple precautions are not taken. Making sure your child is safe needn't be hard work or take a lot of time – it's simply about taking some common sense measures".

Call for new measures to tackle worst effects of alcohol in Suffolk

Suffolk's Health and Wellbeing Board is today calling for a fresh look at the county's relationship with alcohol, An estimated 182,000 working days are lost each year in Suffolk through over-indulgence and over 3,000 people go to work with a hangover every day. The combined cost to the NHS in Suffolk for 2009/10 was £48million, with a further £15m as a result of alcohol-related crime.

These figures form part of the first integrated alcohol strategy for Suffolk, bringing together local councils, health, the voluntary sector, police and the alcohol industry to promote sensible drinking and tackle the negative impacts of excessive alcohol use. At today's Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board, hosted by BT at Adastral Park, partners will discuss the terms of the strategy and agree next steps.

The key themes of the strategy are:

- Establishing safe and sensible drinking as the norm
- Preventing further increases in levels of ill health caused by alcohol
- Improving the health of problem drinkers of all ages and their families
- Reducing the incidence of alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour
- Developing a Suffolk public health responsibility to work with local producers and suppliers of alcohol.

The strategy addresses hidden consequences of alcohol misuse such as domestic abuse, financial hardship, family breakdown, hospital admissions, mental health and crime and disorder.

The report, entitled Healthy, Safe and Prosperous: Suffolk Alcohol Strategy 2014-2022, takes a long term look at specific schemes to support economic development for Suffolk, while cutting the cost to the health service and emergency services as a result of alcohol consumption.

One such pioneering scheme which has secured plaudits for Suffolk on the national stage is Reducing the Strength, launched in Ipswich in 2012 and subsequently extended to Bury and Lowestoft with the aim to remove high strength alcohol products from retailers' shelves. The NHS has also won recognition for its enhanced GP screening service for harmful alcohol use. An accompanying action plan includes a commitment by all partners to work together to identify 'hot spots' where action may be needed to support communities, to share information and intelligence, to provide targeted information about alcohol support services available and to train staff who work most closely with those affected by alcohol.

Don't risk 'morning after' drink drive conviction urges campaign

As England gears up for the World Cup, Suffolk Roadsafes is urging everyone to be aware that they could be over the drink drive limit the "morning after".

It takes a lot longer than most people think for alcohol to pass through the body. On average it takes around one hour per unit of alcohol, though this can vary depending on a number of factors. With the later kick off times during the World Cup, there may be a risk of responsible people, who would not dream of drinking and driving, being over the limit the following morning as a result.

A poster campaign will be launched with over 700 licensed premises in Suffolk alerting people to this potential danger and providing information to help them avoid driving while over the drink-drive limit. The Win, Lose or Draw poster alerts people to the notion that "Life Goes on the Morning After" no matter what the football results.

During 2008-2012, there were a total of 372 collisions on Suffolk roads involving alcohol-related offences. In that period there were also 1508 recorded road incidents between the hours of 7am and 10am. June will also see Suffolk Police officers from the Joint Roads Policing Unit, participating in a month-long Europe-wide summer drink drive initiative. Officers are aware the numbers of people risking drink driving could increase with the arrival of the World Cup.

During the campaign, officers will be conducting roadside checks at all times of the day and night, including first thing in the morning, drivers are urged to think twice before getting behind the wheel the morning after drinking – when alcohol can still be in body. Officers will also be breath-testing anyone stopped for a motoring offence and anyone involved in a collision, in a bid to crack down on those who flout the law.

Paul Collins Area Commander for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service added:

"All too frequently our fire crews are called to deal with the aftermath of devastating road crashes which kill and maim. We are actively engaged in reducing road casualties with our colleagues in the police and Suffolk Roadsafes Partnership. The World Cup should be a time when people enjoy the spectacle, but irresponsible drink-driving endangers all other road users and is just unacceptable".

You can view the campaign poster here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/suffolkcountycouncil/sets/72157645012611211/>