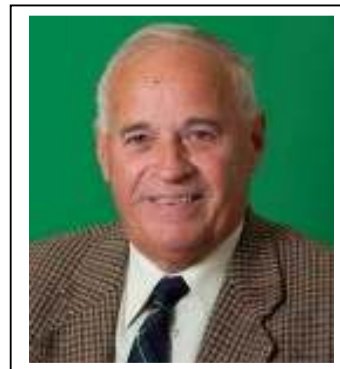


Parish Report June 2015

Councillor

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Public can learn more about revised Gas Works plans for Clare

Earlier this month people raised concerns over emergency access during the works at a heated public meeting which was attended by some 200 members of the public. National Grid's works to upgrade nearly half a kilometre of gas mains are due to start on July 13 and will involve the closure of Cavendish Road. The energy company says after listening to concerns by local people about the proposals it has reviewed them and put forward amended plans to Mary Evans, Suffolk County Councillor for Clare, and Alaric Pugh, St Edmundsbury Borough Councillor for Clare, as well as to officers from both councils.

The revised plans include:

- Keeping Cavendish Road open to traffic until July 17 when term ends at Stour Valley Community School. The first week of the gas renewal work – from July 13 to 17 - will take place under temporary traffic lights. National Grid and Suffolk County Council are liaising with those schools whose term ends the following week, with arrangements being put in place where there are school bus pick-ups within Clare.
- Aiming to complete work in Cavendish Road within four weeks, rather than the original seven weeks, working extended hours and using additional staff.
- Plans in place to allow emergency service access into Cavendish Road while the road closure is underway.

The new plans also include an agreement with Stour Valley Community School for the school's turning circle to be used by public bus services during the school holidays, with a revised timetable to enable bus users to walk the closed section of road. And to prevent HGVs entering the town, electronic variable message signs will be stationed at key points in the Clare area warning of the road closure and diversion, and there will be communication with major haulage companies known to use Cavendish Road. National Grid will be sharing its new proposals for the work with residents and businesses and answering questions at two events being held at Clare Town Hall on Tuesday. During the day, from 10am to 5pm, people will be able to stop by and learn more about how the work will be carried out and raise any issues with National Grid and its contractors, tRIIO. This will be followed by an evening meeting starting at 7pm and running until 8.30pm.

While Cavendish Road is closed, the following diversion route will be in place: A1092 towards Long Melford, A134 towards Bury St Edmunds, A1302, A143 towards Haverhill, A1017, and then the A1092 towards Clare. Traffic management measures will also be necessary for Church Lane for three weeks during August. Businesses affected by the work may be eligible for compensation. To find out more visit www.nationalgrid.com/uk/gas

For more information about the works contact National Grid customer services on 0800 096 5678.

West Suffolk Hospital looks to add an extra 400 parking spaces to its Hardwick Lane site

West Suffolk Hospital is looking to introduce an extra 400 car parking bays at its Bury St Edmunds site in a bid to reduce existing pressures on spaces. Parking problems in and around the Hardwick Lane site had been a long-running issue, and had led to a number of measures including a park and ride scheme for hospital staff at Bury Rugby Club and the introduction of parking restrictions in nearby residential streets. The proposal for the extra spaces is included within the draft masterplan for the Hardwick Lane site, which is going before St Edmundsbury Borough Council's cabinet on Tuesday.

A hospital travel plan report, which was prepared in 2014, said there are more than 1,400 spaces on site, however it was operating “at capacity”. The last time spaces were increased substantially was in 2004 when 260 were added. The extra 400 spaces would be in an area of woodland abutting the rear gardens of residents in Sharps Road. The masterplan is supported by a tree survey and ecological assessment, and heritage trees would be kept. The report, which is going before the borough’s cabinet, says any harm caused by the loss of trees would be “outweighed by the public benefit that the additional spaces would bring”. As an alternative, the trust considered decked parking, but felt this might be viable as part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the hospital in the future.

If it is approved, separate, detailed planning applications for each of the developments outlined in the document would be required at the appropriate time and before any work could take place. This would include the creation of additional car parking and the development of a cardiac catheterisation lab. The trust is still investigating the feasibility of a potential move to the western side of Bury and expects this work to be complete early next year.

Suffolk County Council’s Leader is Listening in Bury St Edmunds this weekend

On Saturday 20th June, Leader of Suffolk County Council, Cllr Colin Noble begins his series of Suffolk High Street events, visiting the Arc in Bury St Edmunds. Colin will be available between 10am and 2pm to listen to your views and answer any questions you may have for him. I

f you have something on your mind and want to ask Colin about local matters or anything affecting your life in Suffolk, please come along and say hello. On Saturday in Bury St Edmunds, Colin will be joined by Suffolk County Council’s cabinet member for Communities and Bury St Edmunds resident, Cllr Sarah Stamp. Colin will also be visiting:

- Lowestoft on Saturday 4th July 2015, The Britten Centre 10am – 2pm
- Haverhill on Saturday 18th July 2015, Market Hill 10am – 2pm

More people take up free health checks in Suffolk and Essex

Public health chiefs have welcomed new figures showing almost two thirds of eligible people have taken up the offer of a free health check in Suffolk over the last two years.

More than 234,000 people in the county are eligible to have a check, which can detect those at risk of developing conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. According to Public Health England (PHE) figures, a total of 89,465 have been offered the test since 2013 and of these, 56.5% – 50,531 people – have taken it up.

The health check initiative tests a range of different measurements, including your BMI, cholesterol and blood pressure. They can then be told on the day what their risk of developing certain conditions are, how they can combat it and whether they should take any immediate action. The overall aim of the assessment is to identify and intervene earlier to improve people’s health and wellbeing by helping to reduce their risk of serious and potentially avoidable conditions. According to PHE, 14.9% of adults in Suffolk have high blood pressure and 65.3% are obese or overweight. The health check is available to people aged 40-74. For more information, visit www.nhs.uk/NHSHealthCheck

Raising the Bar Spend set to reach £1.8m in bid to rapidly improve schools

Suffolk County Council is set to almost double the amount being spent on improving schools performance after Ofsted said the authority had been “too slow” to act. A total of £968,676 has been spent since 2012 on Raising the Bar – the council’s flagship programme aimed at raising education standards. Now a further £800,000 is being lined up to bolster the funds in an attempt to drive up the number of ‘good’ and ‘outstanding’ schools.

Figures released through a Freedom of Information request reveal about 70% of the £968,676 spent between 2012-2015 was on supporting schools. About a quarter – £232,493 – was spent on promotion, events and an inquiry by RSA (Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce) which launched Raising the Bar and produced the *No School an Island* report.

Ofsted's report of the council's plan to improve schools, published last month, found not enough schools were supporting each other – with headteachers expressing concern they did not know where to access "good-quality support" or have opportunities to work in collaboration.. Schools in Suffolk receive £4,241 of Government money for each pupil each year, whereas schools in some London boroughs get £8,594 per pupil. Graham White, secretary of Suffolk's NUT branch, criticised the council for spending millions on closing middle schools and setting up a two-tier system, in its School Reorganisation Review (SOR).

The council meets on Tuesday to vote on the proposed £800,000.

From Isolation to Independence: How Good support can transform young adult carers lives

Small amounts of support can transform the life chances of young adults carers, says Julie Thurston, in this piece for Carers Week. The 2011 census identified more than 375,000 young people aged 14–25 who provide unpaid care and support for a friend or family member with a physical illness, disability, mental health problem or addiction. However, many young adult carers remain hidden from view, and it is estimated that the total number is at least twice that of the officially recorded figures.

The negative impacts of caring on young adults, which often increase as they grow older, can have significant and long-term negative impacts on their self-confidence and self-esteem, their engagement with education and employment and their overall physical and emotional wellbeing

Previous research has found that young adult carers:

- achieve lower GCSE grades than their peers – the equivalent of achieving 9 Cs instead of 9 Bs (Source: *Hidden from view*, The Children's Society, 2013); .
- are more likely to be Neet (not in education, employment or training) than their peers at the age of 18 (Source: *Hidden from view*);
- are more likely to report "not good" general health and suffer mental ill health in later life (Source: 2011 census).
- are more likely to have already suffered bullying at school – 2/3rds of young carers are bullied (Source: The Princess Royal Trust for Carers [now Carers Trust]/Children's Society, 2010).

We also know they are often socially isolated and suffer from low-confidence and low self-esteem. In Suffolk, we have been seeking to address these issues through Suffolk Family Carers' young adult carers service, set up six years ago and commissioned by Suffolk County Council. Every young adult carer that is referred into our service receives an assessment and a package of support is offered based on individual need. This can include one to one support, invites to social activities and residential trips.

Our aim is to help empower the young people to make decisions about their own lives and build some of the skills that will improve their life chances. While the type of services available will vary from area to area we hope that the introduction of new entitlements from April 2015 for young adult carers under the Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014 will raise the level of support across the board for them. The Children and Families Act 2014 creates a duty on councils to assess young carers and then consider whether they need support that the council may provide.

Under the Care Act 2014, councils must, when assessing an adult, consider how their needs impact on the rest of the family, including children and young people. Where a young person is caring for an adult, councils must assess the needs they are likely to have on turning 18, if there would be a "significant benefit" for the young carer in doing so. Any such assessment should consider the young adult's health, education and recreational needs as well as their future aspirations. On turning 18, these young adult carers will be eligible for support if they meet the Care Act's eligibility criteria for carers.