

PARISH REPORT AUGUST 2026

ORWELL & VILLAGES

Council Leader Urges Communities to “Be Prepared” for More Weather-Event Emergencies

After the recent wildfires in Dunwich, which in turn followed flooding and coastal erosion issues in recent times, ESC leader Cllr Topping says it is more important than ever for towns and parishes to have clear Community Emergency Plans which detail exactly how they would respond in the event of an emergency, be it a natural weather event or otherwise.

East Suffolk Council and the county’s Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) are hosting a webinar on Emergency Preparedness and Building Community Resilience on 1 October. It is designed to help Town and Parish Councils and Community Emergency Planning Groups better prepare for unexpected events and crises, and Cllr Topping hopes as many representatives as possible will attend.

There are many community groups, towns, parishes, and wards who have produced a plan already, but there are some who haven’t and given recent events – with the increased likelihood of further emergencies due to climate change- those who have yet to prepare a plan or feel their current plans may need updating are urged to review what is needed to protect their community.

The incredible response in Westleton during the wildfires was an example of a prepared community which had plans in place should something occur. As a Council, we were able to liaise smoothly with the village hall committee and enact our rest centre operation effectively.

Representatives of local communities should complete a registration form if they wish to attend the webinar, which is on Thursday 1 October from 5-6pm. Details can be found here: www.suffolkprepared.co.uk/events/east-suffolk-community-resilience-and-emergency-preparedness-webinar/

For further information about emergency preparedness in East Suffolk and the county as a whole, please visit: www.suffolkprepared.co.uk/get-prepared/prepare-your-community

Prioritising Support for Young People in East Suffolk

East Suffolk Council has launched a new Youth Fund, offering grants of up to £2,000 for projects supporting young people in the district.

Co-created with members of the East Suffolk Youth Council, the Youth Fund will support young people across the district and safeguard their future.

Grants of between £200 and £2,000 are available, and Youth Councillors have identified several areas they would like to see projects around. These include:

- Protecting and enhancing the environment
- Sport and leisure opportunities
- Improving transport options and accessibility for young people
- Developing skills, confidence and experience to support future employment and training
- Activities and opportunities for teenagers
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Reducing financial and practical barriers to opportunities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Supporting youth facilities, clubs and safe spaces for young people
- Expanding youth provision in rural communities
- Increasing access to the arts and cultural activities

East Suffolk Community Partnership Board provided a £40,000 budget for the Youth Council to determine how it should be spent, and it was agreed that £32,000 would be allocated to the Youth Fund. The remaining funds will be used to establish projects that the Youth Councillors themselves have designed and created.

Applications for the Youth Fund grants close on Friday 2 October. More information can be found at: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-support/community-grants-and-funding/east-suffolk-youth-fund

Town & Parish Forum – East Suffolk House 16th September 2026

All parish councils should now have received an invitation to the Town & Parish forum which will take place at ESH on 16th September between 9.30 am and noon. Part of the forum will explain the very recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and how this will affect planning applications in future. More decisions will be taken by officers without input from elected members and from October there is likely to be only one planning committee covering the whole of East Suffolk. These are some of the biggest changes to planning legislation for a generation so it is important for parishes to be aware of how this will affect them.

Waste collections

The number of complaints received has reduced over the past month but there remain collection issues especially in rural parts relating to the food waste collections. On average there are in excess of 250,000 bin collections each week in the East Suffolk Council area. Whilst collection levels have improved over time and for most wheeled bin collections is in the high 90s percentage the food waste collection remain problematic at around 90%.

As you may have seen in the press a specialist waste collections “troubleshooter” has been temporarily appointed to review all the operational issues involving ESSL in an effort to bring the service back to where it should be.

On a sad note a member of the crews recently died suddenly which affected certain rounds last week. Our crews have been under severe pressure especially during the hot spells we have seen since May with increased sick leave during this period.

Please do continue to report missed bin collections via the app or online especially where your neighbours have also been missed.

Suffolk Against Fraud

Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk Trading Standards joined forces in June with businesses and community interest groups from across the county to launch Suffolk Against Fraud.

Being scammed or targeted by fraud can have a devastating impact on vulnerable people in Suffolk. It can also destroy small businesses. This partnership sees statutory organisations, local businesses, charities and community groups working together to support residents and businesses in Suffolk to help protect them from fraud.

As well as bringing together investigative resource, expertise and intelligence to tackle and combat fraud, Suffolk Against Fraud will see joined up campaigns and media messaging and improved quality of victim support.

Fraud poses a significant threat to the people, prosperity, and security of the residents of Suffolk. It is by far the most common crime and now accounts for over 40% of all offences in the County.

Regular scam alerts are placed on their Facebook page in real time. Facebook Suffolk Against Fraud.

Ease the Squeeze on Cost of Living

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk.

To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place:
www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/

As always if parish councillors need to contact either of us, please feel free to do so.

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