



July 2022

Welcome to my monthly newsletter

East Suffolk beaches among the best

Our beautiful beaches have once again received national awards, ranking them among the best in the country.

Four of East Suffolk's beaches have been awarded Blue Flags and Seaside Awards this year.

Both Felixstowe (Felixstowe South and Pier) and Southwold (Southwold Pier) have received combined Seaside Awards and Blue Flags, while the beaches at Lowestoft South of Claremont Pier (bathing/resort) and Kessingland (non-bathing) received Seaside Awards. Although we all know our beaches are wonderful and Shingle Street continues to have a special place in our hearts.

Eighty beaches met the high standard required for a Blue Flag across the country, while 128 beaches received Seaside Awards, and 57 beaches are proudly displaying both Blue Flag and Seaside Awards.

This is the third consecutive year in which Felixstowe has received the Blue Flag, while it comes as a welcome return to Southwold, which was last awarded a Blue Flag in 2018.



Another step towards environmental aims with dedicated officer role appointment

This Council has stepped up its commitment to delivering on environmental ambitions by appointing a dedicated lead officer to help shape policy in the fight against climate change.

The new Environment and Climate Change Lead Officer will be responsible for advising the Council on environmental strategies, policies and initiatives, and their contribution to national, regional and local goals.

Acting as a champion for environmental issues, the Lead Officer will also raise awareness of the impact of emerging environmental issues and the difference the Council can make.



In January, ESC demonstrated its commitment to delivering against its environmental ambitions by approving the additional funding required for the new post.

The Council has now confirmed the appointment of Paul Mackie – bringing with him more than 15 years of experience in the environment sector to this important new role.

Paul spent seven years working with East Suffolk Council as part of Coastal Partnership East, raising more than £75million of investment for projects to help make our coastal communities resilient to climate change.

As well as advising colleagues and partner organisations on the Council's Strategic Plan objectives, strategies and associated work concerning climate change mitigation and adaptation, Paul will work closely with Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor James Mallinder.

Platinum jubilee

I had a really busy four day weekend, starting with ringing for a wedding in Hollesley which was a great start to the bank holiday event.

Then over the bank holiday coffee and cake mornings, tea dances and afternoon teas and even a village fete

Due to the nature of the weekend lots of things happening all at once

Landmark café opens doors on Felixstowe's South Seafront



The eagerly anticipated opening of an acclaimed new café has been met with celebration in Felixstowe, as part of the continued wider redevelopment of the town's South Seafront area.

The strikingly designed contemporary venue opened its doors to customers at the entrance to Martello Park – after the building's architects, Plaiice Design Company, were 'Highly Commended' at the Riba Suffolk Design Awards 2022.

The £1.5 million landmark project was funded by ESC, with grant funding of £950,000 from the Government's Coastal Communities Fund and a further £30,000 from the Coastal Revival Fund.

It's the latest development in a wider project of ongoing regeneration in the South Seafront area, following the arrival of new homes, a play area and parking at Martello Park, as well as further investment in the refurbishment of the two public shelters and the long-term maintenance of its historic Martello tower centrepiece.

Working alongside ESC, Plaiice Design and the Kitchen @ Group on delivering the project were Barnes Construction, Superstructures and Gill Associates.

Helping to deliver affordable homes in East Suffolk

A new planning document has been adopted to help guide the development of affordable homes being delivered across the district.

This Council has adopted a new Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which provides guidance to support the implementation of planning policies on affordable housing.

The new document includes guidance on the design of affordable housing, legal agreements and carrying out local housing needs assessments. It will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications going forward.

[View the Affordable Housing SPD, and supporting documents, including the Consultation Statement and the Adoption Notice.](#)

Physical copies of the documents are also available at ESC's Customer Service Centres and at all libraries in the district.



Housing improvement programme making progress

ESC is making progress with a detailed improvement programme following the authority's decision earlier this year to report itself to the Regulator for Social Housing.

The Council's review, which encompasses information dating back to East Suffolk's predecessor authority Waveney District Council, is considering how we set our rental charges, to ensure we meet the requirements set out in the nationally recognised 'Rent Standard'.

The Council previously explained that some tenants, who moved in after 2014, may have been incorrectly charged a higher rent. An independent, external audit of every rent account is now underway, and this will identify which tenants have been affected and calculate any overpayments that should be credited back to the rent account.

The review is also looking at all aspects of Health and Safety related to our properties, including Fire Risk Assessments, Asbestos Management, Water Safety, Gas and Electrical Safety as well as the management and maintenance of equipment including Lifts and Stairlifts.

Following the Council's decision to report itself, the Regulator has considered the information provided to them by East Suffolk and has now shared its findings. As anticipated, they confirm breaches of Housing Regulations, and their findings have been published in the form of a [Regulatory Notice](#).

The Regulator for Social Housing acknowledged that the Council acted in an appropriate manner, understands the issues fully, has taken appropriate advice and has developed a detailed plan to address all issues in a timely fashion.

Misc

I am working with communities' dept. and the leader to developing a fund to assist residents with the cost of living crisis more details of this when available

James Mallinder

Deben Ward

Environment Portfolio holder