

June 2026 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Popular Roadshows Return this Summer

This summer, we're once again visiting towns around the district to chat to local people about our services and how they feel about what we do. We're HERE for you!

Having held our first roadshow in Halesworth in May, we will now be visiting the following locations throughout the summer:

- Thursday 2 July - Bungay
- Friday 31 July - Lowestoft
- Wednesday 19 August - Aldeburgh
- Saturday 12 September - Wickham Market

The Woodbridge roadshow is currently being rescheduled, owing to adverse weather conditions. All events are from 10am until 1pm.

Councillors and senior officers will be present to listen to local people and chat about our plans, our services and how we are looking to improve lives and outcomes not only in the towns we visit but throughout East Suffolk.

GLI Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council said: "Our roadshows are always very popular and give our communities the opportunity to speak directly to councillors and officers about any issues and questions they may have. Come and find out more about significant changes such as local government reorganisation, the new Local Plan and Better Recycling as well as the essential day-to-day services we provide. We look forward to meeting you!"

Working together to 'Protect our Hares'

East Suffolk Council is taking up the cause to help better protect one of the countryside's most iconic and graceful mammals.

As part of an ongoing commitment to conservation and restoring nature for local communities, the council is backing efforts to preserve and improve the welfare of brown hares.

Once widespread, Britain's fastest wild mammal is now a Priority Species – listed for conservation following historic population decline, especially over the last hundred years, due in part to habitat loss, intensified farming practices and changes in patterns of land use.

Despite targets in place to halt abundance decline by 2030 and reverse the trend by 2042, brown hares also face the threat of being illegally hunted with dogs – often for the purpose of gambling – and remain the only species of game in the country without statutory protection during breeding season.

East Suffolk Council is, therefore, supporting the introduction of a 'closed season' to prohibit shooting during the months when hares are pregnant or raising young, to prevent the starvation of orphaned leverets.

GLI Councillor Sally Noble, Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment, said:

"People are astonished to hear that hares can be shot during breeding season, and leverets left to starve in the fields, despite their priority status under the UK Biodiversity Plan. A closed season would help numbers recover and prevent orphaning dependent young.

"Although a Bill was introduced to the House of Lords for a closed season in 2024, there has been no further progress. Anyone who feels strongly about this should write to their MP urging the Secretary of State to introduce a closed season."

Help shape a new Local Plan for East Suffolk

East Suffolk Council is asking the public to take part in a questionnaire which will help them to prepare a new Local Plan which will guide development in the district over the next 20 years.

The Local Plan will set out a vision and strategy for the future growth and change in the district up to 2045. It will identify locations where new development can enable the provision of new homes, jobs, shops, community spaces, and new and improved infrastructure.

The questionnaire gives residents the opportunity to share their views on how the Local Plan should shape future growth in the district and respond to key issues including design quality, transport, housing, tourism, town centres, and climate change. It also asks for views on how people and organisations in the district would like to be consulted on the Local Plan during its preparation process.

GLI Cllr Packard, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Planning and Costal Management said:

"The East Suffolk Local Plan is a vital masterplan that will set out how our area will grow and develop over the next 20 years. As we prepare to consult the public on the content of this important document, we want to ensure all residents, businesses and stakeholders are informed, engaged and able to have their say in future consultations, so we're inviting as many people as possible to take part in this questionnaire. Responses to it will be invaluable in helping our team to shape the priorities of the Local Plan and to help them prepare for the next phase of the process."

Suffolk's local authorities have been working together on local plan preparation to support a consistent approach and effective cross-boundary working ahead of Local Government Reorganisation.

Responses to the questionnaire must be received by 5pm on Wednesday 29 July. Take part in the questionnaire at: **tinyurl.com/ardjrytn**

Tree planted in memory of Jo Cox

A new tree has this week been planted by East Suffolk Council outside their offices in Melton, in memory of MP Jo Cox.

Councillors joined together at East Suffolk House on Tuesday 16 June for a tree planting ceremony to commemorate her life and to mark ten years since the Member of Parliament for Batley and Spen was murdered in her constituency.

The sweet chestnut tree supplied by Greener Growth was planted by Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council, Cllr Paul Ashton, Deputy Leader of East Suffolk Council, Cllr John Fisher, Cllr Mark Jepson and Mark Pendlington, Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk.

After the tree was planted councillors and officers from the council took a moment to reflect.

GLI Councillor Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council, said:

“It’s difficult to believe it’s been ten years since Jo Cox’s life was taken. We believe that it is more important than ever to be unified despite political differences and that we debate in a respectful and civilised way that is why we’ve come together as councillors from different parties and none.

“Thank you to Greener Growth for supplying the tree and giving it the extra care it needs to be planted at this time of year. We hope the tree will act as a reminder of the importance of community, compassion and standing together, reflecting Jo Cox’s belief that we have far more in common than that which divides us.”

The hand-grafted fruit tree has been cultivated through Greener Growth’s partnership with Suffolk Probation Service and community payback teams, alongside work with Seeding Hope CIC. This initiative supports people who have been to prison to gain skills, purpose and confidence through horticulture.

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/

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

View the Well Minds East Suffolk booklet: tinyurl.com/9xhka624