**April Ward Report.**

**SPR**

Examinations were due to officially close in April however PINS have recently announced that the Secretary of State has granted a 3 month extension up until the 6th July (if required).

Deadline 9 has also been extended until Thursday 15th April.

A new ‘Rule 8 Letter’ has been sent out detailing the granted extension

https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010077/EN010077-004696-EA1N\_EA2%20-%20Rule%208%20Letter%20for%20amended%20Extension%20Exam%20Timetable%20.pdf

PINS help desk 0303 444 500

**There's still time to complete your census**

Census day has passed, but it is vital those who have not yet completed, do so as soon as possible.

Sunday 21 March marked the day that millions of people across England and Wales completed key questions about themselves and their households to ensure local services in every community are informed by the best information possible.

However, for those who have not yet submitted their online or paper questionnaires or have maybe misplaced their invitation letter, there is lots of help available.

Every household should have received their letter inviting them to take part and we’ve had a great response so far. If you haven't, or you have misplaced your letter, you can request a new unique access code.

Field officers will soon start calling at households who have not completed their census. They will follow social distancing and COVID-safe guidelines, supporting people to take part. They will be equipped with PPE and will never need to enter anyone’s home.

The results from the census will shed light on the needs of different groups and communities, and the inequalities people are experiencing, ensuring the big decisions facing the country following the pandemic and EU exit are based on the best information possible, through the anonymised answers provided.

Local census support centres will be open while the census is happening. Staff will offer help for people not confident online, who don’t have a computer or need help completing on paper.

There are two dedicated Census Support Centres in East Suffolk – one at the Marina Centre in Lowestoft which will be operated by staff from East Suffolk Council's Customer Services team, and one at the Station House in Campsea Ashe, operated by the social enterprise there. These centres can offer help with completing your census form and can answer general enquiries:

* Marina Centre Census Support Centre: 01502 523523
* Station House, Campsea Ashe: 07856 810828

To complete your census, and find out how you can get help, visit census.gov.uk

## New grants to help businesses re-open safely

East Suffolk Council is preparing to process the new one-off Restart Grants to help businesses as they look to re-open.

The Restart Grant scheme, announced as part of the Chancellor’s budget, supports businesses in the non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure, personal care, accommodation, and gym/sport sectors with a one-off payment to re-open safely as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

The scheme, which is available from 1 April 2021, will support eligible businesses with one-off grants between £2,667 to £18,000. The previous grant schemes, the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG) and Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG), are now closed to new applications.

Paul Wood, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration at East Suffolk Council, said: “The Business Grant schemes has seen over £103 million paid out to local businesses in East Suffolk since the start of the pandemic.

“The latest scheme offers further support to businesses to help ensure they can re-open safely and get back to welcoming customers once again. We want to see all businesses in East Suffolk in the best possible position to recover, so we urge all those eligible to apply for this grant so they can receive the full amount they’re entitled to.”

To be eligible to receive the Restart Grant, businesses must be registered for business rates, trading on 1 April 2021 and in the eligible categories of business sectors. Full eligibility criteria can be found at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/covid-19-business-grant-funding/

It offers a grant of up to £6,000 for non-essential retail businesses and up to £18,000 for businesses in the hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym/sport sectors, depending on rateable value on 1 April 2021.

If your business has already received an LRSG grant from us, since 5 November 2020, look out for an email from us inviting you to apply. We would urge you to check your spam or junk folder before you contact us to ensure you have received this email.

If your business has not received an LRSG grant from us, since 5 November 2020, you will need to submit a full application.

Due to additional stringent prepayment checks we are required to carry out for this new grant scheme, applications may take three to four weeks to process.

Any queries on the restart grants will be handled through our dedicated team, please contact by email covid19businessgrants@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

## Council Covid-19

From Monday 29th March, the Government’s ‘stay at home’ rule has been lifted, although many restrictions remain in place ESC has stressed the importance of sticking to the rules and using common sense to stay safe and well.

The ‘rule of 6’ returns for outdoors only, enabling up to six people, or two households, to meet outside in public spaces or private gardens. Outdoor sport and leisure facilities can reopen, and outdoor organised sport is also allowed. Travel is still restricted.

The gradual easing of restrictions is very welcome however we must remain cautious as there is still a long way to go. It is understandable that people will want to meet outdoors with friends and family over Easter however everyone should think carefully about their actions and ensure they are adhering to the rules. As the vaccination programme and community testing schemes progress, there is a genuine sense of optimism however social distancing remains incredibly important to keep everyone safe and to allow us to move forwards. Whilst holidays and overnight stays are not yet permitted, there may be the temptation for some to travel to the coast and it is also entirely understandable that some local destinations will be worried about influxes of visitors. Non-essential retail and hospitality businesses are not yet able to open, the Council hopes that people will think very carefully about any plans they make for travelling and visiting in East Suffolk.

Thanks go to East Suffolk residents and the way they have stuck to the rules, which remain in place to keep us all as safe and healthy as possible. We will be living with the virus for some time and so we have to stick with it, be patient and all do our bit by following the Government guidelines so that the virus is not allowed to take hold once more.

Full details of current Government restrictions.

**Residents are being urged to help keep East Suffolk litter-free**

East Suffolk Council is asking residents to make sure they dispose of their rubbish responsibly by using the nearest bin or if full, taking their rubbish home.

As people spend more time outside, the amount of litter discarded across the district can increase dramatically. And whilst many people are using the litter bins provided at beaches, parks and other popular open spaces, others are dropping litter during their visits or are leaving rubbish besides bins which, although well-meant, is still a form of littering.

People are reminded that their rubbish is their responsibility and are asked to help keep East Suffolk beautiful by disposing of their rubbish either in the nearest litter bin or if there is not a bin, or the bin is already full, taking it home.

Kerry Blair, Head of Operations at East Suffolk Council, said: “We are continuing to work hard to keep East Suffolk as clean and safe as possible, which will include emptying bins more often in popular areas, such as along seafronts, during Bank Holiday weekends when we’re expecting to see local people spend more time outdoors. Please help us by putting your rubbish in the nearest litter bin. If there is not a bin nearby, or the bin is full, please take your rubbish home.”

## Suffolk Inclusive Growth Investment Fund announcement

The impact of Covid-19 has been significant on Suffolk’s businesses and our local economy and as we re-open, we must all - residents, the public sector, and businesses - do our part to control the virus and prevent the spread.

As part of their response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Suffolk’s Public Sector Leaders established the Suffolk Inclusive Growth Investment Fund (SIGIF), totalling £1.65m with contributions from Suffolk’s pooled business rates and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

The fund is open to projects which address the significant impact of Covid-19 on Suffolk’s businesses, employees, and our local economy. Projects must be sponsored by either a Suffolk local authority and / or New Anglia LEP.

Suffolk Growth are pleased to confirm a total of £367,292 has been awarded to three projects in Round 2 of the programme.

## Suffolk launches Quiet Lanes for residents to enjoy as lockdown eases

Now we are able to meet friends and family outdoors, Suffolk County Council is encouraging residents to explore more of the beautiful countryside on their doorstep through its Quiet Lanes initiative.

As we move into spring, we are all keen to get outside and make the most of the weather. Quiet Lanes is a nationally recognised designation for narrow, rural roads which can be shared with walkers, horse riders, cyclists and other road users. It encourages drivers to take their time when they see the Quiet Lanes sign, so we can all enjoy rural lanes with greater safety.

Quiet Lanes at Snape and Glemsford have just achieved planning consent and the initiative has another 50 proposed lanes going through planning for April 2021. A new website allowing residents to find the Quiet Lanes near them will be available in May.

We’re really pleased to have launched the county initiative in East Suffolk as Quiet Lanes help to preserve the character of country lanes, reduce traffic and speed, and encourage drivers to be more mindful of non-motorist road users, thereby encouraging more journeys on foot or bike. Not only does this support an active and healthy way of travelling, it also helps the environment and delivers a better quality of life for the local area. This is a fantastic sustainable initiative aimed at opening up more of our countryside for leisure and recreation activities and active travel. Quiet Lanes are a precious resource on many of our doorsteps. Now with this recognition, we will encourage residents to make more use of the countryside around them rather than always getting in the car, and reap the associated health and environmental benefits.

Parish Councils have been working hard together to identify and propose the network of over 300 miles of Quiet Lanes in Suffolk, which if all approved, will be the first of its size in the country.  We hope this launch will encourage more Parish Councils to get involved in the initiative in Suffolk and more counties to look at implementing the initiative nationally.

Since the initiative began in Suffolk, the Quiet Lanes volunteers have engaged 192 parishes and agreed 323 routes through some of our most treasured countryside. Parish Councils are working together to link up through the lane network in context with public consultation and local neighbourhood plans.

In 2019, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council declared a Climate Emergency. The council set up a Policy Development Panel to investigate how to cut Suffolk County Council’s carbon and harmful emissions on a spend-to-save basis, with the aim of making Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030. Now in its second phase, work is being done to explore six focus areas, including Transport and Air Quality, to which the Quiet Lanes initiative contributes through improvement to natural environmental quality.

**Have your say on planning proposals**

Local residents are invited to comment on the early stages of two proposed planning documents; one which provides guidance on environmental considerations for developers and another which will update the charges incurred for specified developments, which are then used to deliver or improve local infrastructure.

As you would have been advised East Suffolk Council is holding two public consultations in relation to emerging planning documents:

* the initial consultation to inform the preparation of the East Suffolk Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); and
* initial work on development costs, which will help inform the East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule.

The Sustainable Construction SPD will provide guidance on a range of topics including energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, sustainable transport and use of materials, to support the implementation of the Council’s adopted Local Plan policies.

This preliminary consultation asks what information should be included in the SPD. Once adopted, the Sustainable Construction SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule will set out the amount that certain kinds of development must pay to help contribute to the delivery of infrastructure in the area.  When adopted, it will replace the two current CIL Charging Schedules which cover the district.

This initial consultation focuses on the basic viability/development cost assumptions, to help underpin the preparation of a Viability Report, which will be a key evidence base for the new CIL Charging Schedule. The Council is also consulting on a draft East Suffolk CIL Instalments Policy.

View and respond to the consultation material, including supporting information.

Alternatively, you can email planningpolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk or write to East Suffolk Council, Planning Policy and Delivery Team, Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 0EQ.

If you are unable to view the consultation documents online, you may request a paper copy of the consultation documents and SPD questionnaire free of charge by contacting the Planning Policy and Delivery Team as above or by calling 01502 523029. Please note that the team are currently operating under a voicemail service. Please leave a message including your contact details and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Both consultations close on Monday 26 April 2021 at 5pm.

## New policy will encourage biodiversity

Following the success of a trial last year, council-owned cemeteries across East Suffolk will now be managed in a new way, ensuring the needs of both communities and wildlife are catered for.

A new policy, approved by East Suffolk Council’s Cabinet last month, will be used to manage all cemeteries owned by East Suffolk Council, as well as any closed churchyards whose upkeep responsibility falls to the Council.

The policy carefully balances the importance of providing accessible burial spaces for the bereaved to visit, with the need to create spaces which benefit the environment, as well as the physical and mental health of the wider community.

Most burials take place within ‘lawn sections’ and in these areas, grass cutting takes place approximately every two weeks between March and September. However, to provide essential spaces for wildlife, some older and less frequently used sections of the cemeteries will be left to grow and become ‘wild spaces’ for the benefit of conservation.

The new environmental policy is one of a suite which the Council has implemented to manage its cemeteries and the closed churchyards it has responsibility for.

Cemeteries and churchyards have a significant role for local communities and must be maintained appropriately to ensure burial spaces remain accessible for bereaved families. Our new policy adopts a sympathetic and balanced approach where we can ensure those who want to visit their loved ones can do so, whilst also providing essential sanctuaries for wildlife. These biodiversity areas will still be carefully managed and will be cut back annually to avoid them being overtaken by scrub and invasive plants. This new policy gives us the opportunity to safeguard these valuable habitats in places where they can be enjoyed by parishioners and visitors alike.

The conservation areas will initially be cut in March and then again in late summer. To ensure accessibility, the edges of main paths and routes to memorials, chapels and other regularly accessed areas will still be cut regularly.

No sprays or pesticides are used in council-owned cemeteries and closed churchyards, unless as a final resort to remove invasive species such as Japanese Knot Weed.

Signs will be in place in cemeteries explaining the maintenance policy to visitors.

The new cemetery policy is in addition to the creation of conservation areas across East Suffolk, as part of plans to increase biodiversity. Last year, 40 wild spaces were created and this year, a further 60 spaces have been identified, meaning there will now be 100 wild spaces across the district where grass and wildflowers will be left to grow.

Very best wishes

TJ & Jocelyn

**Meeting of the Cabinet**

to be held on **Tuesday, 6 April 2021** at **6:30pm**

This meeting will be conducted remotely, pursuant to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

The meeting will be facilitated using the Zoom video conferencing system and broadcast via the East Suffolk Council YouTube channel at https://youtu.be/pT8zWSJ5S6U

**Part One - Open To The Public**

***1* Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence, if any.

***2* Declarations of Interest**

Members and Officers are invited to make any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Local Non-Pecuniary Interests that they may have in relation to items on the Agenda and are also reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the Meeting if it becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is considered.

***3* Announcements**

To receive any announcements.

***4* **Minutes(188Kb)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 March 2021

**KEY DECISION**

***5***Adoption of Statement of Community Involvement

Report of the Cabinet Member with with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management

1.  ES-0720 Adoption of Statement of Community Involvement (287Kb)
	1.  ES-0720 Appendix A - Statement of Community Involvement (546Kb)
	2.  ES-0720 Appendix B - Statement of Community Involvement - Consultation Statement (988Kb)
	3.  ES-0720 Appendix C - Equality Impact Assessment Screening Opinion (166Kb)

***6* Exempt/Confidential Items**

It is recommended that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**Part Two - Confidential**

***7* Exempt Minutes**

* Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

**KEY DECISIONS**

***8* Lowestoft Post Office - Cultural Regeneration Project**

* Information relating to any individual.
* Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
* Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
1. ES-0687 Lowestoft Post Office - Cultural Regeneration Project
	* Information relating to any individual.
	* Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
	* Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
	* ES-0687 Appendix A - Lowestoft PO Cultural Regeneration Business Case
		+ Information relating to any individual.
		+ Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
		+ Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
	* ES-0687 Appendix B - Heads of Terms Agreement
		+ Information relating to any individual.
		+ Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
		+ Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
	* ES-0687 Appendix C - SCC Letter of Support
		+ Information relating to any individual.
		+ Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
		+ Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
	* ES-0687 Appendix D - Laurence Edwards Patrons Pledge Letter
		+ Information relating to any individual.
		+ Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
		+ Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

***9* Garden Waste Service - South of the District**

* Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
1. ES-0721 Garden Waste Service - South of the District
	* Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

As always, please do get in touch with Cllr Cooper the assistant Cabinet member for Planning and Coastal Management.