

April/May 2025 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Council urges local people to have their say on Sea Link

East Suffolk Council is urging local residents to get involved in the next stage of the planning process for the proposed Sea Link project.

The project, which is being developed by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET), involves the reinforcement of the electricity transmission network between Suffolk and Kent.

While part of the project comprises a 122km offshore Direct Current link, a significant amount of onshore infrastructure is proposed, with landfall between Thorpeness and Aldeburgh, onshore underground cables, connection to the transmission network via either the proposed substation at Friston or via a new substation, and a 2GW converter station proposed near Saxmundham.

The onshore infrastructure will have significant environmental, social and economic impacts, both alone and cumulatively with other nationally significant projects also being proposed in East Suffolk.

East Suffolk Council has raised specific concerns regarding the project and is committed to working constructively with NGET to achieve the best possible outcomes for communities and the local environment, if the project were to be consented and delivered.

The Secretary of State has decided that the Sea Link project will be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). NGET, as the developer, is therefore required to apply for consent where the final decision whether to give permission will be made by the Secretary of State through the granting of a Development Consent Order (DCO).

The application has been submitted for examination to the Planning Inspectorate, and only those registered will be able to comment during the examination period. Organisations and individuals wishing to comment must register as an Interested Party by **Monday 23 June 2025**: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020026>

Cllr Tom Daly, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Energy and Climate Change, said: *"Whilst attending the recent roadshow event in Saxmundham, the councillors and officers present were inundated with concerns from local residents about the impact of Sea Link and other proposed energy projects on the Suffolk coast."*

"We are now approaching a significant phase of the planning process for Sea Link, and we want to ensure residents understand the proposals and their implications for the local area. Most importantly we want residents to understand how they can submit their views for consideration by the Planning Inspectorate, who will make the final decision about whether Sea Link goes ahead."

“Over the years of pre-application engagement, the Council has repeatedly called for a coordinated approach to delivering the infrastructure for Sea Link and has provided extensive responses to all consultations previously held. In all these responses, the Council has raised significant concerns that issues have not been satisfactorily addressed by NGET, including the limited amount of information shared with the Council for review and response.

“Earlier this year, we wrote to National Grid to highlight our concerns and to request that many of the issues raised were addressed prior to the submission to the Planning Inspectorate and are currently awaiting a response.

“We are now approaching the examination stage and only those organisations and individuals registered as Interested Parties will be able to submit their views to the Planning Inspectorate during this stage. Therefore, I would urge people who wish to give their views to register as an Interested Party before 23 June.”

East Suffolk residents urged to recycle their electricals as new kerbside collections roll out across the district

East Suffolk Council today unveils its plans to introduce kerbside collections of small electrical items across the whole of East Suffolk. Collections will begin in the coming weeks with the hope that 120,000 households in the local community will get behind its drive to recycle their electricals.

The new kerbside collections will enable residents to leave small electrical items on top of their wheeled bins on their usual bin collection day and items will then be collected by the refuse crew and taken away for recycling. There is no need to bag the items.

This is one of over 60 UK projects funded by Material Focus, the not for profit leading the Recycle Your Electricals campaign, who have provided £60,724 to support this project. East Suffolk Council are joining other projects around the country in making it easier for 10 million UK residents to recycle their electricals.

Following a trial of the scheme in parts of the district last year, electrical kerbside collections will now be rolled out across all of East Suffolk. Residents are advised to look out for a leaflet advising them when collections will start in their area.

Electrical collections will take place at the same time as existing household waste or recycling collections. Collected items will be sorted for recycling or where appropriate, given to local charities The Repair Shed in Martlesham and the Benjamin Foundation in Lowestoft for repair before selling the items to raise money. To try and manage demand on the service residents are asked to leave no more than 2 small electrical items, unbagged, out for collection each week. If

the collection basket on the refuse vehicle is full, items can be scheduled for collection the following week.

Residents will be made aware of how and where they can recycle their electricals through information on leaflets and on eye-catching social media featuring HypnoCat. Keep an eye out for HypnoCat, the Recycle Your Electricals mesmerising pink, fluffy mascot, who is on a mission to hypnotise local residents into recycling their electricals.

This project is part of the new 2025 funding for the Electricals Recycling Fund where Material Focus has allocated an additional £750,000. The aim of the nationwide Electricals Recycling Fund is to significantly reduce e-waste and its environmental impact by making it easier for consumers to recycle their electricals. The projects that have been funded by Material Focus include a variety of recycling methods, from kerbside collections to more drop-off points in schools, community centres, and bring banks. Overall there will be over 400 new collection points plus kerbside collections for 3 million UK residents.

Recycle Your Electricals research has shown that 80% of consumers believe recycling is a good thing, and many of us already recycle things like paper and plastic. Research has also shown that most of us have unwanted electricals we want to get rid of. On average there are at least 30 electricals hidden away in drawers in UK homes, a total of 880 million items across the UK - with a simple repair many could be donated or sold to people who could put them to good use. And yet 39% of people bin electricals, rather than recycle or reuse them leading to over 100,000 tonnes of electricals thrown away every year. The aim of these projects is to overcome these issues by making it easier to repair, donate or recycle electricals.

Cllr Sally Nobie, East Suffolk Council's cabinet member for the Environment said: "We introduced a trial of these collections to a small number of towns and villages towards the end of last year and are now able to bring the scheme to the rest of the district. We know that residents want to dispose of their electrical items properly and are pleased to be able to offer this service to all our residents."

"We are pleased to support East Suffolk Council and the new kerbside collection trial that addresses the pressing issue of e-waste." said Scott Butler, Executive Director of Material Focus. "By investing in improved collection and drop-off services and exploring new recycling methods, we are taking a significant step towards creating a more sustainable future by making it easier for 10 million more people to recycle their electricals."

To find your nearest recycling point search [recycle your electricals](#).

Reducing litter beside East Suffolk's major roads

As part of an ongoing programme of work to reduce roadside litter and improve the appearance of the district for residents and visitors, litter picking took place alongside the A14 during the week commencing 28 April, with Highways Assurance removing the litter on behalf of East Suffolk Council.

East Suffolk Services Limited, who carry out litter picking on the Council's behalf, is currently reviewing safety procedures for working beside major roads, including the A14, A47, A12 and A146 to ensure future litter picking and other maintenance can be carried out as safely as possible. The roads themselves are managed by National Highways and Suffolk Highways (part of Suffolk County Council) respectively however East Suffolk Council is responsible for litter clearance beside these roads.

Once the safety review is complete, it is expected that the Council will permanently adopt twice-yearly litter picks beside these main roads, as well as a regular schedule of litter picking and emptying of bins within laybys. This new approach will maintain a litter free network of laybys and help reduce the risk of littering in future.

GLI Cllr Sally Noble, East Suffolk's Cabinet Member for the Environment said: "We have listened to public concerns regarding the appalling amount of litter beside major roads in the district and agree that this looks unsightly and is also detrimental to the local environment. We are working with East Suffolk Services Ltd to introduce a regular programme of clearance and maintenance to ensure litter in these areas is removed and the risk of future littering reduced. Working beside these major routes is extremely dangerous and the safety of the staff undertaking this work is paramount, therefore it is essential for East Suffolk Services Ltd to have correct safety procedures in place before this work can begin.

"Litter picking on this scale is expensive, with the one-off clearance being carried out by our contractors in late April costing at least £28,000. These costs are ultimately borne by the taxpayer and most of this rubbish is deliberately thrown from vehicles using these roads. The easiest way to reduce the need for costly litter picking and associated road closures is for people to dispose of their litter properly when travelling on the roads, by using one of the many layby litter bins or by taking it home with you. East Suffolk's amazing and we can all play our part to maintain the beauty of the district for the benefit of all those who live, work and visit here."

To report concerns about roadside litter, or any matters relating to refuse and cleansing services in your area, please contact East Suffolk Council's Customer Services team: **0333 016 2000 / customerservices@eastsuffolk.gov.uk**

Investing in biodiversity with first registered habitat banks

An area of farmland is helping to benefit local wildlife by hosting one of East Suffolk's first two Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) habitat banks.

Alongside Bridge Farm, in Brandeston – and following legal agreement with East Suffolk Council – Darsham Old Hall has been added to a national register of sites available to help developers meet net gain biodiversity commitments.

Working with consultants Nature Based Farming, landowners Julian and Hannah Young established the 20-hectare 'habitat bank' to promote long-term biodiversity management while securing a reliable source of additional income.

The initiative provides a ready-made, strategically located bank of 58 units for developers to meet their statutory planning obligation to provide a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain by funding habitat creation and enhancement.

The mandatory 10% minimum requirement was brought into force last February as a condition to leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than before development goes ahead. It can be delivered via habitat creation on a development site – through green spaces such as woodland and wildflower meadows – or via local off-site banks of units like Old Hall.

Located on former arable farmland, the BNG habitat bank has been taking shape at Old Hall since 2023 as part of a programme of habitat restoration and enhancement, including the creation of significant new habitat by adding a mile of hedging and 3,000 native trees, allowing other areas go to scrub, and introducing three longhorn cattle to open up previously dense tracts of woodland to natural light and improve biodiversity.

Cllr Sally Noble, East Suffolk Council's Cabinet member for the Environment, said: "We always support and advise developers on delivering the required 10% BNG on site. Due to various reasons, it's not always possible, and that's where off-site BNG comes in.

"This approach allows us to create a bank of habitats before the loss of any nature caused by development. If developers are unable to create or enhance wildlife on-site, they can still support biodiversity in the district through a habitat bank, where the land can be restoratively farmed and actively managed over the long term.

"It's an innovative way of collaborating with local landowners to play a key role in achieving sustainable development goals by helping to ensure that developments contribute positively to our environment."

Cllr Mark Packard, Cabinet member for Planning and Coastal Management, said: "I'm delighted that we have been able to secure Section 106 agreements to secure delivery of biodiversity requirements and allow our first two habitat banks to be officially listed on Natural England's national BNG register.

"We need to build 916 homes a year in East Suffolk to catch up with current demand and it's important that any development contributes positively to the local environment."

Julian Young, of Darsham Old Hall, said: "People need houses. Nature needs unspoilt space. Those two facts cannot – and must not – be mutually exclusive.

"As we build houses, we have to carve out space for the natural world, and this can only happen if the economics work. Biodiversity net gain sites like Darsham Old Hall go some way to making this possible."

Nature Based Farming founder, Pete Thompson said: "Nature recovery and food production does not have to be a binary choice. Nature Based Farming uses a complementary approach that restores habitats while continuing to produce food. Darsham Old Hall is an excellent example, combining the production of walnuts and cobnuts with the return of large herbivores to the land to support our habitat management approach."

If you are a developer looking to purchase Biodiversity Units for your development, or a landowner interested in setting up a BNG Habitat Bank, please contact the ESC Ecology team at ecology@eastsuffolk.gov.uk for more details.

Supporting young people with mental wellbeing

Primary school children across East Suffolk will shortly receive a new resource to help support their mental wellbeing.

Developed by local parent and author Jen Rose, and funded by East Suffolk Council's Community Partnership Board, *Me (and My Mind)* aims to be a relevant, accessible, and supportive resource for children during a key transitional stage in their lives.

Over the coming weeks, every Year 6 pupil across East Suffolk will receive a copy of *Me (and My Mind)* – an engaging, interactive colouring journal designed to support young people in beginning to understand and manage their mental health. This unique resource (each with its own pack of colouring pencils) is fully funded by the Community Partnership Board.

The journal offers a fun and creative way to help children explore who they are, understand their emotions, and learn strategies to recognise and manage when they might not be feeling ok. They are designed to complement PHSE lessons in schools and can be used in class, in smaller groups, or individually. They are also suitable to take home and be shared with parents, carers, and family members.

Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism said: "The Community Partnership Board together with other public, voluntary and business sector partners work together to find solutions to local issues. With mental health challenges among young people on the rise, this project is a vital step in equipping them with the knowledge and skills to care for their mental wellbeing."

This initiative reflects East Suffolk Council's ongoing commitment to supporting young people's mental health and fostering resilient communities.

Suffolk Councils deliver report to Government: Best for democracy, delivery of services and meeting diverse demands of county

Suffolk's five district and borough councils have united to present an interim plan which would revitalise local government and put the needs of local communities first. A clear message is being sent to Government that multi-unitary authorities are vital in Suffolk, for services to work and for residents to be heard, in a county with a range of rural, coastal, industrial, agricultural and urban demands.

In response to the Government's English Devolution White Paper Suffolk Borough and District Councils have worked together to look at the best unitary solution for the county, while taking into account Government guidance.

The Councils are clear: a one size fits all 'mega-council' covering a vast geographical area could not possibly focus on the competing needs of three-quarters of a million people as effectively as two or three unitary authorities.

In a joint statement, the leaders of Suffolk's borough and district councils said: "Multiple unitary authorities will produce services designed with residents in mind to meet local need, drive improved outcomes, create value and save money in a sustainable way.

"Our joint proposal demonstrates that a one size fits all mega authority will not solve the existing issue of large countywide services that will continue to drain money, requirement improvement and potentially lead to further cost cutting. Crucially, more than one unitary authority is the best way to meet these issues and would ensure strong democratic representation as one would be too remote for residents to be heard.

"It is the best solution to ensure decision makers, and the communities they represent, would be as close together as possible. This ensures that services are designed and delivered in a tailored way built on local knowledge to meet the unique need of an area, its residents and businesses. It creates new councils able to deliver both value for money and better outcomes.

"This is a generational change to the way local government and services are delivered and something we should seize. It is a real opportunity to think holistically about how services such as leisure, housing and social care could help residents to thrive. This is about starting with a blank page and not simply bolting existing council services together.

"Our collective solution is the best way to deliver great services and value for money. It makes sure the 'local' stays in Local Government for Suffolk."

The interim report says multi unitary authorities will provide:

- Cost effective and high-quality services for Suffolk residents
- Long term financial sustainability
- Economic growth and support to local industry
- Stronger democratic representation, community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment
- Governance and support systems which can adapt to future aspirations and sustainable growth
- Ambitions to drive progress, innovation, and long-term success
- Structures to support and enable thriving communities and economies.

It also supports a more balanced solution for the governance of the Mayoral Combined Authority which is being set up next year for Norfolk and Suffolk.

This interim report does not constitute a final decision, and councils will have further time to develop options to redesign and reinvigorate Local Government for the future. Critically, the views of local communities will be at the heart of this work.

Cllr Deborah Saw, Leader of Babergh District Council, Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council, Cllr Neil MacDonald, Leader for Ipswich Borough Council, Cllr Andy Mellen, Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council Leader and Cllr Cliff Waterman, Leader of West Suffolk Council signed the interim proposal sent to Government.

You can read the report at: tinyurl.com/573r5d2k

Wild spaces return to support nature across East Suffolk

A conservation scheme which will create over 100 spaces for the benefit of wildlife is returning for another year, with a new name and a brand-new look.

116 wild spaces will be left to grow during the spring and summer as part of East Suffolk Council's 'Nature at Work' scheme, which is being delivered in partnership with environmental charity Groundwork East.

New signs have been installed on council-owned land across the district to help identify the wild areas where grass cutting will be limited to twice per year for the benefit of pollinators such as bees and butterflies. The signs feature a QR code directing people to further information about the scheme, including how residents and community groups can get involved. A map of all the sites is available online, and photos from the locations will be added throughout the year; to view this, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/5d63wvy9>

Additionally, Groundwork East will be visiting local schools to help them create their own Nature at Work sites in their school grounds, and later in the year, Groundwork East will be working with town and parish councils to build awareness of the sites. Town and parish councils will be encouraged to help monitor the sites to better understand what species are present and how the sites are changing.

GLI Cllr Sally Noble, East Suffolk's cabinet member for the Environment said: "Nature at Work aims to respond to the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis by supporting nature at small-scale community sites across East Suffolk. We are delighted to be bringing this scheme back with a new refreshed look and a renewed focus on supporting local schools, town and parish councils and community groups to get involved. Since the 1930s, the UK has lost over 97% of its wildflower meadows and grasslands which has had a devastating effect on the species that depend on these habitats for food and shelter.

"I would encourage people to check the online map and find their nearest Nature at Work site, and to use the resources on our dedicated webpage to find out more about the importance of leaving spaces to go wild and learn how to get involved in your own garden."

Ten East Suffolk schools will be supported by Groundwork East to create native wildflower meadows and habitats for wildlife on their school grounds. These spaces can then be used for learning activities, encouraging future generations to be conscious of and inspired by the natural world.

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