

Framlingham Ward A summing up of the last 12 months

May 23 to May 24 Vince Langdon-Morris, District Councillor



A promenade of wildflowers at Thomas Mills High School

It's been a year since District Council elections, here's a quick sum up of the last 12 months!

A Splash of Colour, Wildflowers: Working with the Town Council, East Suffolk Services and the Swift and Wildlife Group (Sam, with support from John) we have managed to establish **seven** small wildflower sites across the town: *The Mowbrays x 2, Unitarian Meeting House, Station Road x 2, Victoria Mill Road and Castle Brooks.*

Our expanded wildflower trial this year is based on a successful wildflower experiment, planted at the Mowbrays in 2023. We have removed small areas of grass and planted wildflowers, designed to add a splash of colour, attract birds and insects (especially bees) and reduce the large areas that need constant mowing.



Sam & John planting Wildflowers at the Mowbrays



Ringling Blue Tit Chicks at 7:30 am in Castle Brooks Park, Mum's Dads and kids looking on.

Castle Brooks Park: Since covid began in 2020, this park in Fram has been a haven for our community and wildlife. Isolated parts of the park are rewilding and carefully placed bird boxes have seen over 80 blue tit chicks, fully fledged and ringed since 2021. Each year local children attend and delight in **early** morning chick ringing sessions (at 7:30 am, well before school 😊). Recently, we have added a small wildflower site and planning for a small orchard in the future.

Framlingham Town Council: I note the ongoing infrastructure repairs and temporary lights (piping systems, drainage, road repair) across the ward. My only concern about these much-needed repairs, is that the companies doing the work really need to let our Town and Parish clerks know what they are doing. We very often have little idea what these construction works are for.

The town council is planning to review the Neighbourhood Plan, and hopefully this is how we can manage and strategize future house planning across the town, especially Victoria Mill Road, which has outline planning permission. Also, the recent Barwell Homes consultation, which is not included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Flooding: I'm sure we all remember where we were on Friday, 20th October last year. I was at work in Melton and listened in disbelief to my wife (on a poor mobile phone line) describing that she was trapped in our flooded car on Brook Lane and could not open the doors to escape, due to the depth of the surrounding water. *My incredulous reply, What! Can you please repeat that!*

For so many of us, what unravelled was a disaster. My international emergency career experience kicked in and I drove from Melton to Framlingham in truly off-road driving conditions. What ensued was four hectic days, bunkered down in the Fram town council office, which served as a 'central base' working closely with Town Councillors, East Suffolk Council, East Suffolk Services, HOUR community and many town residents. As our community facebook page detailed the plight of Belted Galloway 'cows' in the Mere, people began to realise that the Town Council website was the central information focal point for 'people'. Over the ensuing days we slowly managed to bring much needed emergency assistance to people in their flooded homes. Our community, and also the 'HOUR' community were magnificent, offering their services to fix and clean homes, donate quantities of bedding, cleaning materials, food and set up the village hall as a 'rest centre' for displaced people (mainly from the Elms) the list goes on.

By the following Monday things had settled back into a new form of 'normality' with nearly 120 homes damaged across the floodplain in Framlingham. The close working relationship I have with my fellow District Councillor, Owen Grey, was invaluable (his family were also badly affected). Owen somehow managed to tour and visit our surrounding parishes/village officials, collecting and documenting the damage done. He collated this, and we signed up to a joint letter distributed to our local MPs and county councillors, to help to coordinate and provide assistance.

In the aftermath, we are all licking our wounds and trying to learn from what happened. I've worked in climate science Worldwide and seen first-hand what is happening to our warming planet. We must address the over-consumption of resources, widespread pollution, ongoing societal inequality (both nearer to home and globally) and most importantly our behaviour, that are driving these concerning changes. Our laws need to change, to better embrace, adapt and mitigate against the realities we face together.

The Town Council has now established a **Flood Resilience and Recovery Working Group**, completed a Framlingham Flood Risk Assessment, and attended two well attended public meetings. The group will soon test a newly developed emergency response plan. I also hold the Cabinet Member portfolio for *Resources and Value for Money* at ESC. In February 2024 I managed to agree the establishment of a *Resilience and Emergency Response Fund (RERF)* of £500,000 (see appendix). This fund is targeted at future emergency events, designed to provide immediate support to our Town, Parish Councils and charities across the district (*it is not meant to supplement longer term central government support*) for the set-up of temporary rest centres, provide skips and short-term accommodation for affected residents.

I continue to work with government agencies, charities, district/county councils to develop a wider overview and improved management of our river catchments (for us the Deben, Alde, Ore). Watch this space.

Planning: There is one significant outline planning application remaining to be constructed, i.e. Victoria Mill Road (35 self-builds) approved in 2022. Bellway homes recently presented a housing proposal for over 100 houses off Station Road (which is not in the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan). The Town Council is now preparing to review the Neighbourhood Plan. In my view

we have overachieved on our housing quota (set out in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan) and we now need investment in the towns infrastructure, most importantly in future flood protection.



Maypole Dancing on Victoria Mill Road Greens

Post Office: The Town Council, with my support, has been in contact with the Post Office and Royal Mail Sorting. Happily, our refurbished Post Office has re-opened, but unfortunately this is not the case for our sorting office.

Royal Mail Sorting have responded to our official Town Council letters, with a typical private sector response (**for what is in my view a public service**), that transferring our posties to Saxmundham has realised significant efficiencies? What they forget to mention is the significant multiplier effects of a fully functioning Post Office in a town like ours! Then the small matter of 40 metric tonnes of additional carbon dioxide added to the atmosphere, by moving our posties to Saxmundham?



What a metric tonne of CO2 looks like, times this by 40

Banking: Since the closure of our Barclays Bank, the pop-up bank is operating in the Crown Hotel and continues to open on Mon, Tues, Wed. and half day, Thursdays. Please use it if you are a Barclays account holder.

The **Be Well Bus** has made its second, well attended, visit to Framlingham (Tues. 7th May). The theme of the latest visit was *'Dying Well'*, part of *'Dying Matters Awareness Week'*. Marie Curie and NHS staff were on hand to answer residents' questions, and our local PC turned up as well. I'm very supportive of this initiative and we will advertise future visits. In future, the bus promises to have a health check machine on board (testing blood pressure, diabetes, and cholesterol).



Parishes: Easton: Well done getting the Neighbourhood Plan ready to be voted on by ESC Full Council. Let's hope those 'affordable' houses get built, including renewable technologies and robust flood defence to protect both houses and the wider village. **Brandeston:** The monthly pop-up pub in the village hall is up and running and very well attended. **Earl Soham:** Hope the bin collection is improving! **Great Glemham:** Negotiations still in train for the proposed solar farm. **Saxstead:** let's hope that the road signage is soon installed! **Sweffling:** let's think about those wildflower gardens in the coming year! **Cretingham, Monewden and Hoo:** I look forwards to seeing you at your next parish meeting and still think you have the finest road signs in the ward!

Appendices

Framlingham Ward March /April 2024 Newsletter4
 Framlingham Ward Newsletter - January 2024.....8
 Framlingham Ward News - August / September 202311
 Framlingham Ward July 2023 Parish Report.....13
 East Suffolk Council Press Release 20-5-24. Half a million pounds for communities in new emergency response fund16

Thanks to everyone who came to the very well attended Public Flooding meeting on 21st February at the Castle Community Hall. A follow up meeting is planned for 24th April, with a presentation by the Flood Risk Assessment consultant (see invite below).



The Flood Resilience group has been meeting regularly at the Town Council offices, and we recently worked through a comprehensive first draft Framlingham Emergency Response Plan, which we plan to ‘test’ in the near future!

A flyer for the Annual Parish Meeting & Flood Report. It features the Framlingham Town Council logo at the top left. The main text reads "ANNUAL PARISH MEETING & FLOOD REPORT". Below this, it lists the meeting details: "MEETING TO INCLUDE: A presentation with findings from our Commissioned Flooding Report, An update from Framlingham's Flood Resilience & Recovery Group, An Annual Report from Framlingham Town Council, Plus Reports from other Charities & Community Groups within the town". The meeting is on Wednesday, 24th April 2024, from 6.30 for a 7PM start to approx. 9pm at Porter's Theatre, Framlingham College. It also provides Zoom access information and registration details: "To register your attendance PLEASE EMAIL: DTC@FRAMLINGHAM.COM OR CALL 01728 720 183 www.framlingham.com".

As mentioned, the Flood Risk consultant is near to completing the risk assessment. The draft is being reviewed and is set for release soon. The Town Council will convene the second public meeting at the Porters Theatre, Framlingham College (kindly offered by the college, to facilitate a larger public gathering). This meeting will again provide a forum for community discussion about the results of the flood assessment, and what needs to happen next to protect our town!

Please note that Framlingham Town Council requires participants to register attendance by email, via dtc@framlingham.com or phone in to the council offices on 01728 720183. If you do not rsvp, it is challenging to prepare and cater for the number attending.

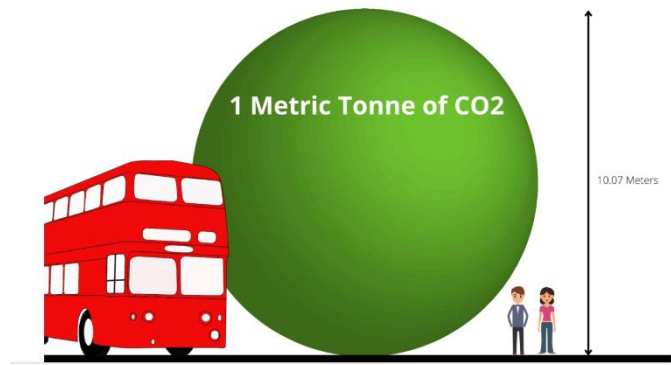
Framlingham Sorting Office: The Town Council wrote a letter on 17th January to Royal Mail Sorting, signed by the

Town Council chairman and myself, expressing our serious concerns about the closure of the sorting office (note this is a private company, separate from the Post Office and who made the decision to move to Saxmundham, including our posties)!

A response was received from Royal Mail on 1st February, stating that since moving to Saxmundham they have seen “an improvement in quality of service for our customers” due to local managers being able to draw on a wider number of postwomen / men. That ‘delivery efficiency’ is at a high level (99.7%) and the impact on customers in Framlingham is extremely small. So according to Royal Mail, the new business model and efficiency figures stack up, and there is no need to reverse their decision to move back to Framlingham.

There is however the small issue of the significant economic multiplier effect / benefit of having a sorting office in our town. Or the tiddly annual rental charge of £24,000 for the sorting office (which is 'small change' to this company, but very important to our sub post office business) and finally the small matter of an additional 40 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide issued into the atmosphere by this move. Note, it is Royal Mail's stated objective to be a net zero business by 2040. But yet again the 'warm heart' of the private sector and profit overturns an important public service need.

What does 1 metric tonne of CO2 actually look like?



Support after Storm Babet: The government funded support schemes for residents and businesses (many of these in Framlingham ward) closed on 25 January 2024. The East Suffolk Council finance team distributed flood relief funds as quickly as possible, after complying with government criteria, administering payment of:

- 264 Community Recovery Grants applications from residents, totalling £132,000. A total of £181,805.82 of Council Tax Discount was also applied to approved applications as per the scheme guidance.
- 34 Business Recovery Grants of £2,500, totalling £85,000.

Please note that [Suffolk County Council](#) is responsible for the government [Flood Recovery Framework](#) that makes grant funds available to communities (following specific storm events that results in severe flooding). An element of this framework is the Property Flood Resilience £5,000 grant as mentioned, administered through Suffolk County Council. I am aware that many ward residents have applied for these grants. In addition that there are several residents in need in further need of assistance from Suffolk County Council, especially highways, in regards to the ongoing impact on their properties during the recent flooding.

HOUR Community support: For the last two years HOUR has been asked to distribute Household Support Grants to those in need, with community funds provide by the Department of Works and Pensions. Last year HOUR received £30,000 and this year £10,000, which we used to buy Coop vouchers and distributed to 60 families in need.

Following the dreadful floods on Friday, October 20th, HOUR launched a further funding appeal, and were amazed by the generosity of local people and businesses who donated just over £30,000. These funds are being distributed to flood affected residents in March 2023.

HOUR would like to say a BIG thank you to everyone who volunteers and works for them, to their funders and Trustees, without whom they would not be able to provide the support that they do for those in need in our community. If you would like to volunteer or need support, please contact us on 01728 440511 or email admin@hourcommunity.co.uk

[Suffolk's Flood Risk Management Strategy](#): Please see this link, recent publication and supporting documents. This is a valuable tool to help us understand and manage flood risk in our county. The strategy summarises the information available on the risk of flooding in Suffolk and ways to manage the risk. The document has been published by the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership, made up of all relevant Risk Management Authorities in Suffolk.

The activities identified in the strategy can only manage flood risk. *It would not be possible, even if there were unlimited money available, to protect all properties from any flood risk. Instead, efforts need to be made by all partners, organisations, and householders alike, to reduce flood risk in practical ways.*

Sometimes this involves focussing not just on decreasing the probability of flooding, but also its impact, making sure that the properties and households can cope in the event of a serious flood.

Thomas Mills and Framlingham College Eco Councils: Teachers and students at the environment councils at both schools have met and agreed to partner in establishing wildflower meadows this spring. I've been able to use my District Council 'Enabling Communities Budget' to provide some funding to Thomas Mills High School to set-up of these meadows. It's great to see young people so interested in the health and wellbeing of both our communities and our wildlife.

I'm also working with the Swift and Wildlife Group in Fram to expand last years wildflower plots across the town in the coming spring. This is agreed with the local authorities, and we hope to establish both annual and perennial wildflowers, replacing the need for **widespread**



mowing in future, and provide a rich habitat for birds and insects!

The picture to the left is what has been achieved along many roads in Rotherham.

The East Suffolk 'Be Well' Bus: The 'Be Well' bus rolled into Fram on Tuesday, 24th February.

This is an NHS initiative, using a re-purposed covid bus and funded through an Integrated Care Board. The bus will continue to visit sites across East Suffolk, including Framlingham, providing a variety of health services. I am following up with the bus management team to find out about its next visit, what is on offer, and what services can be added. I will coordinate and communicate this information working with and through Framlingham Town Council and website.



Field to Fork: Grow for it! Residents encouraged to grow their own: Field to Fork aims to encourage people in East Suffolk to grow their own food and improve their health and wellbeing. This is the second year of this successful programme, with residents, young and old, being encouraged to grow their own vegetables. 1,500 growing kits were distributed to primary schools last year, and this year, 1,900 kits will be made available, each containing compost pellets, vegetable seeds and free access to Groundwork East's online GROW Programme. Each growing kit was packed by Poppys Pantry staff, in Melton.

Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: *"We want to help people feel more confident with growing their own fruit and vegetables, which can help save money and help people make healthier food choices. The growing kits were well received last year, and we are looking forward to seeing everyone's produce as the weather warms up."*

Next month, a small grants scheme will open to support community farms, allotments, and gardens to help people get involved with growing their own food. The Field to Fork scheme will provide grants of up to £2,000 to help engage local people with 'grow and eat' projects that will feed communities and help people stay active and connected.



Framlingham Ward Newsletter - January 2024

Local WhatsApp Groups

Since 2020 Framlingham has been affected by two emergencies. In March 2020, as covid raised its ugly head, my neighbour in Castle Brooks (also a Fram Town Councillor) suggested our community set-up a WhatsApp group to help each other through the pandemic.

Since that time our small covid WhatsApp group has remained operational, it continues to communicate and help each other out in all sorts of ways (including a meet up for Christmas eve drinks).

For me this is a really positive sign of community collaboration and resilience, out of what was a very bad experience for all of us. After three years, through covid and flooding emergencies, our small community group is still cohesive, we willingly continue to meet and help each other out. See picture, a recent example of cardboard boxes delivered by neighbours, after a WhatsApp message asked for help to pack household items away, whilst the interior of the house gets painted!



Barclays Bank Pop Up and Framlingham Post Office Sorting Office

Barclays: I dropped into the Crown Hotel last week and chatted with the staffer running the pop-up bank. She told me lots of customers continue to use the pop-up, which is good news as this helps to ensure we do not lose any more financial services (especially given the recent flooding which so severely impacted our Post Office).

Post Office: After the horrible floods on 20th October, our Post Office has had to temporarily relocate into Bulstrodes shop (off the town square) whilst their flood damaged premises on Riverside are renovated. Unfortunately this has led to yet another business loss for our town. Royal Mail (*which is a separate, private company from the Post Office*) has decided to move its letter and parcel sorting operations from Framlingham to Saxmundham, including moving all of our posties!

Members of the Town Council, working with our MP and myself, are trying to bring our sorting office back to Framlingham Post Office. There are plenty of good reasons why Royal Mail Sorting should do this:

- Discontinuing Fram sorting operations and moving us to Saxmundham is going to cost us and Royal Mail (*and our planet*) far more than just simply remaining in our town (*the rent cost to Royal Mail is approximately £25,000 annually. Note that Royal Mail generated over £12 billion in revenues in 2022, this is a tiddly sum by comparison but has a very large impact on our town* ●).
- Some back of the envelope calculations to try and represent the true “cost” to us. We have on average 7 posties working daily around Framlingham. According to the AA's mileage calculator the distance between Framlingham and Saxmundham Post Office is 7.67 miles. Assume 15 miles a day for a post van going back and forth. *Ergo*, 105 miles per day delivering post for 50 weeks equalling 36,750 additional miles annually. At 45p a mile that's £16,537 alone. According to ‘*My Climate Carbon Calculator*’ this mileage equals to **20.1** metric tons of carbon dioxide lost to the atmosphere annually.
- Most of our posties are based in and around Framlingham, so this requires a half hour drive each way to Saxmundham daily, so **double** all the figures shown in the point above!

The decision by Royal Mail to move our sorting office from Framlingham to Saxmundham has an enormous social, financial and climate **cost** that far outweighs the minimal annual expense and multiple benefits of simply staying put! See this link part-and-parcel-the-economic-and-social-value-of-post-office.pdf (onepostoffice.co.uk) for more detail about the multiple benefits of having a fully functioning Post Office in our town.

East Suffolk District Council and East Suffolk Services Ltd

This weekend I was contacted by a resident about a large deer carcass lying on the B1116 approach to Framlingham. Over the past few years I have noticed the carnage of roadkill, there are so many dead animals lying uncollected on the side of the road. I will follow this up with the District Council to see what can be done about collection and how to make reporting more obvious on the council website. If you would like an animal removed please report it via customerservices@eastsuffolk.gov.uk. This will be passed on to the relevant council agency. Please also see below some other useful Council contacts.

Weather related incidents occur more regularly during the winter months – however there is a range of information and support available should you be affected.

If you are faced with an emergency situation outside of working hours (including the weekend), which requires an immediate Council response, please call our 'out of hours' number: **0800 440 2516**.

Please do not call this number during normal working hours as it is diverted to other services, and **ONLY** call in the case of an emergency (such as further flooding or homelessness).

Closely follow flood warnings and alerts from the Environment Agency and take action if advised - www.gov.uk/check-flooding

If you have a powercut - call **105** or report it online: www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut

For fallen or overhanging trees – if there is an immediate danger, please call Suffolk Highways on **0345 606 6171**.

Report non-emergency fallen trees or debris on the road to Suffolk Highways - highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk

For dangerous structures call **01394 444219** or **0800 440 2516** outside of office hours.

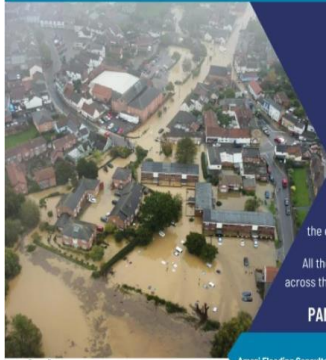
Report flooding to your property - www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage

Sign up for flood alerts - www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

The Met Office provides very useful advice about staying safe in a storm - www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice

Citizens Advice East Suffolk advice line: **0808 278 7866** (Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm)

FRAMLINGHAM FLOOD RESILIENCE & RECOVERY GROUP Storm Babet- What Happens now?
Building a Stronger, More Flood Resilient Community Together



PUBLIC FLOODING MEETING & WORKSHOP

What can be done to mitigate the effects of future flooding locally?
All those affected in Framlingham and across the Ore Valley are invited to join us

PANEL TO INCLUDE:

LEIGH PARRATT
Amazi Flooding Consultant commissioned to write report for FTC

AARON DIXEY
Area Flood Risk Manager, Environment Agency

MATT HULLIS
Head of Environmental Strategy, SCC

BEN MCFARLAND
Head of Conservation, Suffolk Wildlife Trust

TO REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE AND/OR SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL PLEASE EMAIL:

DTC@FRAMLINGHAM.COM
OR CALL 01728 720 183



Please note: Numbers are limited

SUNDAY
21st January 2024

FROM
3:00PM - 5:00PM

VENUE
Castle Community Rooms

Priority will be given to questions submitted in advance.
We hope to run this as a hybrid meeting with online access. Please keep an eye on our website for the login link
www.framlingham.com

Framlingham Flooding

Public Meeting, Castle Community Rooms

The Town Council has agreed to use Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) funds to employ a consultant to do a flood risk assessment of Framlingham. This was agreed to speed up the process (as Suffolk County Council estimates an 18-24 month timeframe to do the same). Please see the invitation.

Framlingham Flood Resilience & Recovery Working Group

This recently formed working group (including Town & District Councillors, Local Organisations and the public) has met regularly at the Town Council offices. Several key actions have been discussed and agreed:

- Fram Town Council agreed to fund a consultant (fully approved by SCC) to complete a flood risk assessment. I repeat, this decision was taken to speed up the flood risk assessment processes.

- Convening a public flooding meeting will provide a forum for wider discussion, questioning and public input into the flood assessment terms of reference,
- The working group has compiled a draft Framlingham Emergency Response Plan, which will be tested in the near future.

Storm Babet funding support

East Suffolk District Council has worked closely with Suffolk County Council to distribute flood relief funding, received from several central government ministries to affected residents and businesses as quickly as possible (in accordance with strict government / ministerial criteria). As at the 8th January the following has been disbursed:

197 East Suffolk residents out of 215 applications received by the Council have been paid the £500 Community Recovery Grant and received Council Tax Discount as per the scheme guidance.

33 applications received from businesses by the Council, 2 have been paid a £2,500 Business Recovery Grant. It should be noted that Government eligibility criteria (which the Councils are obliged to follow) is much more extensive than that which supports residents applications. The processing of business applications takes far more time.



I have followed up with council staff to discuss the issue of time taken to provide emergency support to residents. Navigating layers of institutions and rules (from a central ministry down to Town Council) is complex and slow. In my view (and this is supported by Council Officers) what we really need is a more flexible “Resilience Fund” held at District and County Council Level. Climate change events, in my personal view, are set to increase in the future and support and funding needs to be locally held, and far more flexible and quickly accessible.

Thomas Mills and Framlingham College Eco Councils to collaborate



I’m working with the Swift and Wildlife Group to establish small wildflower beds across Framlingham this coming spring. Teachers and students at the environment councils of both schools have now met twice and agreed to partner in setting up even more wildflower gardens. Students from both schools have shared their eco projects and agreed to collaborate.

It’s great to see young people so interested in the health & wellbeing of our planet & do things to foster the well-being of both people planet.



Suffolk County Council - Highways

Driving out of Parham last week on my way home from work in Melton I had the misfortune to hit a pot-hole, which bashed the suspension of my little car. Note, you can report damaged roads and potholes on the SCC Highways website portal and receive a reference number ([see link](#)). I’m happy to report that after reporting, the pothole was repaired the very next day ● .

Framlingham Ward News - August / September 2023

August has been quiet, but East Suffolk Council activities are really picking up in early September.

Framlingham: Barclays Bank. I spoke with a regional bank official this week, who told me that a 'pop-up bank' is now established in the Crown Hotel. It will be open 3 ½ days a week for customers. He stated that the pop-up had had a busy first week. I will seek and share more information soon.

Wildflowers: After discussion with East Suffolk and Framlingham Town Councils it has been agreed to set up small wildflower growing patches across Framlingham. This will be done in conjunction with Fram Town Council (the sustainability grouping) and led by the Swift and Wildlife group.

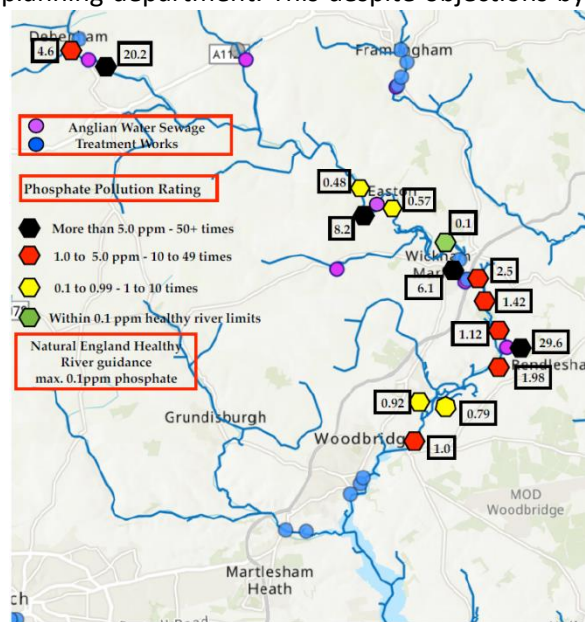
Housing: I met with Suffolk County Council highways officials to discuss a Section 278 survey, required to be done before any road alterations can be done to Victoria Mill Road. Depending on a pending appeal to the Secretary of State by the developer (to return from the current outline planning allowed for 35 new houses to the (rejected) 49 houses) this will hopefully be a while before it is started!

Brandeston: I'm working on supporting parish councillors, concerned about their local pub which was recently sold and altered to be a residential dwelling. An East Suffolk Enforcement Officer has visited the pub, I will follow up and report back soon.

Cretingham: Retrospective planning permission was granted for Corner Farm to change its farm building to commercial use by East Suffolk Council planning department. This despite objections by both residents and Fram councillors. We hope that the rules and regulations that pertain to the use of farm building as commercial units is adhered to in future.

Water Sampling: As many of you may notice effluent is again in the news. On 29th August changes were made to regulations for house building. Government has announced plans to alter existing EU law removing requirements of 'nutrient neutrality' across affected catchments in England. This basically means that polluters must demonstrate / mitigate the impact of future effluent discharges on the environment.

Phosphates: The map to the right demonstrates phosphate levels in the river Deben, as you can see it's not great.



This slide shows an E. Coli water sample done in Wickham Market on 11th July. The retired Professor of Biochemistry (who did this test) stated it was 3,500% above the maximum allowed in a watercourse 😞. I'm personally appalled that decades have gone by with our rivers being heavily polluted. We must start considering the impact of our actions on our environment and our future wellbeing!

Green / Liberal Democrat / Independent (GLI) Group News

Pylon plan not supported by Suffolk County Council. SCC is not supporting latest proposals by the National Grid to install 114 miles of electricity pylons across the county, as part of the "Norwich to Tilbury" project. A number of objections have been raised about the 33 mile stretch which would run

through Suffolk, which includes cabling under the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. SCC is pressing for an offshore solution to be fully researched and considered.

Onshore facility proposal for Suffolk Coast: Suffolk County Council was disappointed to learn that the LionLink interconnector project from National Grid Ventures has identified an alternative landfall at Walberswick, with cable routing making its way to the north of Southwold. The Lionlink project aims to connect multiple offshore wind farms in the North Sea, instead of individual wind farms connecting one by one to the shore. The project is a joint venture between the UK and the Netherlands, supplying energy to both countries. The Council will study the details of the new proposals and will prepare its response to the National Grid's second public consultation, which opens on 8 September.

2023 Tour of Britain Cycle Race: The world's best cyclists will be taking to the roads of Suffolk on 7 September, including Tour de France champions. This fifth stage will start in Felixstowe at 10.45am and go through Kesgrave, Ipswich, Hadleigh, Needham Market, Stowmarket, Framlingham, Leiston and Woodbridge, finishing back in Felixstowe around 3.30pm. For route details / timings, please see plans for Stage 5 on the Tour of Britain website: <https://www.tourofbritain.co.uk/stages/stage-five/>

New Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre: The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Training Centre at Wattisham has had a £1.3m upgrade and was formally opened on 24 August. This includes a new tactical firefighting facility to simulate incidents firefighters may be faced with and help them prepare for the dangerous work they undertake in the community.

Social Worker of the Year Awards 2023: Suffolk County Council's social workers and social care teams have been shortlisted for six awards at the annual Social Worker of the Year Awards. This is the only major national awards event for social work in England, attracting hundreds of entries every year and reaching millions of people with positive stories of outstanding social work. We are proud of our social workers, who work so hard to help people in often challenging circumstances. Winners will be announced at the awards ceremony in November this year.

Support for Ukrainian refugees moving to private rented accommodation: In May, SCC announced a one-off £2,000 support grant for Ukrainian refugees moving on from their host into their own accommodation. The Independent Living Payment is available to any Ukrainian refugees moving into private rented accommodation after 1 April 2023. Guests must have been living in Suffolk for a minimum of 2 months and be registered on the Suffolk Homes for Ukraine scheme to be eligible. This funding can be used for any associated housing costs, including furniture, moving costs or travel to work. The support can be used towards accommodation (furnished or unfurnished) and accommodation can be in Suffolk or out of county. Ukrainian guests can apply for the Independent Living Payment and completing the application form on the Suffolk County Council website: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-engagement/support-for-refugees/support-for-ukraine/ukraine-information-for-guests>

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Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/suffolkgli_group/

Facebook: [Suffolk GLI - Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent Group | Facebook](#)

Website: [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](#)

Cost of Living help advice: <https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support: <https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>

Framlingham Ward

July 2023 Parish Report

On 10 July, Owen Grey (District Councillor) chaired the first Audit and Governance Committee of the new term. The meeting was an opportunity for me to scrutinise the work of the Council and officers. I've called for swifter action on commercial rents to ensure the Council isn't overcharging local businesses and expressed concern on the slow response to tackle asbestos in those remaining social housing units yet to be surveyed throughout East Suffolk. In September I hope to quiz the Council's external auditors and have urged ESDC to work hard and fill gaps in our own internal auditing capacity so we can ensure every facet of the Council's work is properly scrutinised and delivers value for money.

On 14 July I attended the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel (where we voted in a Green chair) and quizzed the Police and Crime Commissioner. There remain large gaps in the provision and presence of community policing, and this is something I will work with the Panel over the coming months to address.



Vince Langdon-Morris (District Councillor)

Green Spaces: **Wildflowers**

Sam T has grown a patch of native flowering plants just off the Mowbrays! Well done, let's expand these lovely wildflower sites across Fram.

Castle Brooks park - Another great year for blue tits chicks, fledged and ringed (20 this year, 75 since 2021).



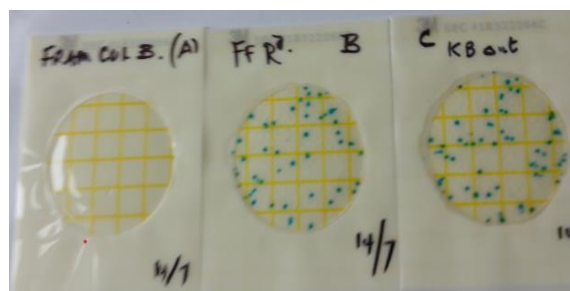
At 7:45am, on a fresh May morning, Tim (surrounded by mums, dads and excited school kids) ringed the chicks. The look on the children's faces was indescribable, as he expertly and safely secured lightweight rings onto tiny legs. Our information board (funded by small grants from Unitarians and Town Council) is also now up and running.



Parish news: The Fram Green and Lib Dem Councillors have worked together to attend parish council meetings and will continue to do so. We have also combined our Enabling Community budget to support PC initiatives in Parham, Brandeston, Cretingham, Monewden and Hoo 😊. Saxstead continues to host Essex &

Suffolk water tankers (according to the drivers, trucked in from a covered reservoir in Carlton Colville) to top up the Dennington water tower. I'm following up to find out just why local water demand is exceeding supply?

Effluent: Our 'wee' River Ore is still being contaminated with E. Coli (see slide, blue dots are very bad) and we simply cannot keep trashing our environment like this. Slide **A** is near the Mere and clear 😊. But **B & C** are at pipe discharge points below the town and 6-7 times over the maximum limit 😞 (Wickham Market recorded 35 times over the maximum allowed 😞)



Fram Banking: After hundreds of years our last 'physical' bank closes its doors on Friday, 25th August. I've been in contact with Barclays and they have identified a 'pop-up bank' for 3 days a week near the

town square (we await their announcement). Although very welcomed, this will not be for cash banking, which from now on will be from the Co-op ATM, Co-op shop/cash back and Post Office.

Housing: Stats: Suffolk Coastal Local Plan states 486 new houses to be built in Fram by 2036. By 2023 we have 480 new houses of all sizes and prices and more on the way. Few have renewable technology fitted as standard, none are zero-carbon? Average value is £377,500 and between 50-60 properties advertised in Rightmove daily (for sale and let). Dangerous sections of road are being created, most worryingly the pinch point on the rural Victoria Mill Road. Protected green spaces and agricultural land are being built over. Our towns infrastructure needs far more investment and we have received over £1 million of community infrastructure levy to do this, great. However, offset this against private developers, estimate £40-50 million profit since the 2017 Fram Neighbourhood Plan?

East Suffolk Council GLI Group

Helping Families Access Affordable School Uniform

Community groups, organisations and town and parish councils are invited to apply for funding to help provide school uniform to East Suffolk families in need.

The East Suffolk Uniform Bank grant scheme provides funding for community groups to open a new uniform bank or expand an existing uniform bank. Once operational, donations of new or pre-loved good-quality uniform, sportswear and school equipment can be made to the banks, which will then be made available to families who may be struggling to afford uniform.

GLI Member Cllr Katie Graham, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: "School uniforms are a necessity but can be expensive, and many families, particularly in rural areas, struggle to purchase affordable school uniforms and school equipment. Uniform banks step in to provide good quality uniform to those in need and are also a valuable resource for those looking to do their bit to address the global problem of textile over-production and waste. Currently, an estimated 1.4 million items of school uniforms are discarded every year."

Applications are welcome from community and voluntary groups, organisations and town and parish councils. Dependent on capacity and need, successful applicants may be encouraged to also offer interview clothing and prom wear to assist families with older children. Grants are available for up to £3,000 and applications close on 28 July.

For further details, please contact gemma.fraser@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Improving Access to Private Rented Housing

A new scheme, which will help East Suffolk residents to better access private rented housing, has been launched.

Approved by East Suffolk Council's cabinet on Tuesday 11 July, a new lettings partnership – East Suffolk Lettings – will be created, along with the introduction of a new Guaranteed Rent Scheme, to increase residents access to the private rented sector and minimise the use of temporary accommodation. East Suffolk Lettings will encourage landlords to work with the Council, by charging a lower rent, at Local Housing Allowance or within 10%. Landlords will be offered a financial incentive based on the difference in cost between what they would have been able to charge, compared to the lower rate they are charging.

GLI Member Cllr David Beavan, East Suffolk's Deputy Leader and cabinet member for Housing said: "Many more people face homelessness this year as private rents rocket, mortgages soar and landlords look to sell. After a slow building programme and right to buy sales, we sadly

just do not have the houses to offer to prevent or relieve homelessness, which is our statutory duty. This imaginative letting policy, devised by our great housing team, will certainly help. Any homeless person housed is a victory but the war against the housing crisis continues unabated. We must find a way to provide more homes that people can afford to live in.”

Funded through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the scheme will be offered on a two-year pilot basis and if successful will become a permanent service.

East Suffolk Services Limited Launches

As part of its commitment to seek the best possible value for money for residents, businesses and all local stakeholders, East Suffolk Council agreed to create a ‘Local Authority Trading Company’ (LATCo) in the Autumn of 2021, enabling it to play a more direct and influential role in how important services are delivered.

The company, now called East Suffolk Services Ltd (ESSL), operates as an ‘arms-length’ commercial business, separate to the Council and is responsible for delivering crucial council services such as waste and recycling collection, grounds maintenance and street cleansing.

GLI Member Cllr Rachel Smith-Lyte, East Suffolk’s Cabinet Member for the Environment, said: “I’m really pleased this is happening and we want the new company to be a great success for our staff, customers and communities. It will maximise efficiency and seek to deliver the highest possible standard of services after, of course, a smooth transition.”

“The decision to create East Suffolk Services was taken in part to help us deliver environmental changes, such as new fuels, more efficient vehicles and different approaches to waste management. This commitment could not be more timely, and we will work together to achieve our ambitions in this area.”

GLI Member Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council said: “The Council wants to deliver improvement that benefits council taxpayers, and an incredible amount of hard work has gone into the creation of East Suffolk Services to ensure it is ready to commence trading. East Suffolk Services aims to provide a more flexible service and respond quickly to local issues.”

The Tour of Britain: Suffolk Stage

Suffolk will be hosting a full stage of the prestigious race, with Felixstowe seeing the start and finish of stage five on Thursday 7 September. Over 100 of the world’s best riders will weave through our gorgeous countryside, with Kesgrave, Framlingham, Leiston and Woodbridge all featuring. The anticipation has already begun, with a media campaign showing race-related imagery projected onto Framlingham Castle, Orwell Bridge and an Apache helicopter at Wattisham Airbase. Previously over 400,000 people watched the Tour of Britain as it visited Suffolk, generating over £8.5 million of economic benefit for the county. East Suffolk Council is an official partner of stage five.

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

East Suffolk Council Press Release 20-5-24. Half a million pounds for communities in new emergency response fund

A new fund has been established to provide immediate, short-term financial support to East Suffolk communities affected by future emergency events.

In February, as part of the 2024-25 Budget setting process, East Suffolk Council created a Resilience Reserve in response to the severe disruption caused by Storm Babet last October. Now, Cabinet members have agreed how this £500,000 pot will be managed, through a newly established Resilience and Emergency Response Fund (RERF).

The RERF is designed to ensure East Suffolk Council can be more flexible and responsive to cover reasonable additional costs incurred by town and parish councils during an emergency event.

In the aftermath of Storm Babet, East Suffolk Council established the East Suffolk Flood Recovery Group, that provided a physical presence in Framlingham and Wickham Market to assist and deal with affected residents enquiries and clean up in the aftermath.

Although longer-term grants were available under central Government's flood recovery framework, a gap was identified to support the immediate and urgent needs of residents and communities; for example, provision of skips through East Suffolk Services to remove damaged household items and costs (food, bedding, clothing) for displaced people using the emergency centre set up in Framlingham's Community Hall.

East Suffolk Council's Cabinet member for Resources and Value for Money, Cllr Vince Langdon-Morris said: "The severe disruption and flooding caused by Storm Babet last October has had a significant and ongoing impact on the lives and livelihoods of many East Suffolk residents. In our district alone, 320 properties were directly impacted by the storm.

"Winter storms are predicted to increase in frequency and severity as we come to terms with the effects and impacts of ongoing climate change.

"As much as we cannot sit back and allow climate change to irreversibly worsen, we must try and support communities affected by its ongoing impacts, including flooding from rising sea levels, prolonged rainfall and intense storms.

"This fund can bring significant relief for our residents at a time of need and empower our district council to act quickly. But, importantly, the RERF is a short-term resource and is in no way a replacement for central government support."

Examples of support that could be provided by the fund include temporary accommodation costs for up to 48 hours, disposal costs for damaged furniture, carpets or flooring, and support for voluntary groups to assist and co-ordinate recovery activities.

In addition to the RERF, a dedicated council officer will be appointed, to build upon our existing emergency response capacity, providing a communication, co-ordinating and enabling role for our town and parish councils, communities and residents before, during and after future emergency events.