

From Cllr Keith Robinson

And

Cllr Jmaes Reeder

November 2020 Monthly Parish Newsletter



Visit suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus for health advice, service changes, business support and schools' guidance.

Keep up to date on the latest guidance on Covid-19 from central government here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Current infection rates and pressure on county's hospitals among reasons for Suffolk entering tier two restrictions

Suffolk's current COVID infection rates, local hotspots and pressure on hospitals are among the reasons why the county will enter tier two local restrictions on Wednesday 2 December.

Following today's decision by central Government to place Suffolk in the High Alert tier, public sector organisations in Suffolk have set out their goal to get the county out of local restrictions as quickly as possible. They have also moved to help residents, business owners and employees to understand the restrictions that will apply across the county, and the reasons for them.

Whilst Suffolk has so far seen comparatively lower levels of infection than elsewhere in the region and country, the current infection rate (85 cases per 100,000 people) is more than double what it was when Suffolk entered tier one on 14 October (35 cases per 100,000 people). At the beginning of September, there were just five cases per 100,000 people. Parts of Suffolk, especially in Ipswich and Hadleigh, are seeing much higher numbers of positive COVID cases than anticipated. This all puts pressure on Suffolk's hospitals, which need to protect Suffolk's vulnerable residents whilst still treating non-COVID patients. There were 116 COVID patients in Suffolk hospital beds as at 23 November.

Stuart Keeble, Suffolk's director of public health, said:

“I fully understand that many people will be disappointed that Suffolk has not emerged from the national restrictions in a lower tier, or indeed no tier at all. I am too. Suffolk has done well at keeping our infection rates lower than many other areas in the country, and for that I would like to thank people for what they have done.

“The facts facing us today are clear however. With current infection rates and pressure being put on health services, we need to do more of what we have been doing. We need to stick with it.

“We know what we need to do to get Suffolk back on track. Every one of us needs to keep following the rules to stop the spread of COVID-19. We need to ensure our hospitals can continue to care for people who urgently need help, including those without COVID. We need to be responsible today for a better tomorrow.”

Rachel Kearton, Suffolk’s deputy chief constable and chair of the group of public sector organisations leading the fight against COVID-19 in the county, said:

“This week’s news about the success of COVID vaccine trials shows us clearly that there is light at the end of this tunnel, but there is still some way to go.

“Suffolk has been at the forefront of following Government guidance and it is precisely that which has kept infection rates relevantly low for so long.

“Now is not the time to give up and deviate from our course. Now is precisely the time to keep following the rules and stop the spread of COVID-19, so that we can get back to the social freedoms we miss so very much.”

From Wednesday 2 December 2020, people in Suffolk will be able to:

- Meet a maximum of six people from other households outdoors.
- Go to pubs and bars operating as restaurants with people from your household or support bubble, consuming alcohol but only with a substantial meal,
- Go shopping but whilst wearing a mask in indoor public spaces and respecting social distancing rules.
- Attend schools, college or university.
- Make use of early years childcare.
- Go to the gym or leisure centre, while following their guidance.
- Get a haircut or personal care treatments, while following their guidance.
- Stay overnight with their household or support bubble.
- Attend a wedding, civil partnership or wake of up to 15 guests or funerals of up to 30 mourners.
- Attend entertainment and sporting events, while following their guidance and capacity limits.
- Visit places of worship, whilst following their guidance.
- Take part in exercise classes or organised adult sport outdoors.
- Visit a loved one in a care or nursing home, if allowed locally and while following their guidance.

Until the position changes, we will not be able to:

- Meet people from other households or support bubbles indoors.
- Visit pubs and bars not serving food.
- Stay overnight with people from another household or support bubble.
- Exercise indoors with people from another household or support bubble if there is any interaction between them.

Everyone is encouraged to work from home and limit their journeys where possible.

Lowestoft's Gull Wing secures Government approval, work to start in the new year

Construction of Lowestoft's Gull Wing bridge will get underway early in 2021, following final approval of the scheme on Wednesday 25 November by the Government.

The Gull Wing project team at Suffolk County Council received official confirmation that its full business case has been approved, meaning that the £73.39m funding from the Department of Transport can now be accessed.

With this final milestone now reached, the contract with building and civil engineering contractor, Farrans, will be signed. Other formalities such as formally acquiring land can also be completed, paving the way for construction work to start in the new year.

Councillor Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, said:

"I'm delighted with the announcement from the Government today, which means that the Gull Wing is go.

"With this news, the final step in our application to build this bridge is now complete. We can now access the funding, sign the construction contract, and start building the bridge.

"Any doubts are now over, and we will get spades into the ground early in the new year to build Lowestoft's third crossing."

Peter Aldous, Member of Parliament for Waveney, said:

"This news is extremely welcome and is a real positive boost for the residents of Lowestoft. I'd like to commend Suffolk County Council on their commitment to this project and to the town. The official processes are now complete, and we will see construction start in the new year. Our skyline is about to change forever, for the better."

Councillor Steve Gallant, leader of East Suffolk Council, said:

"It's great to hear that work on the Gull Wing can now begin. Lowestoft and the region should be proud of all the ambition and vision being developed to support local residents and businesses, from the town's Masterplan to the flood defence works. The Gull Wing will be iconic and be a statement of intent for the future of the town."

Archaeology surveys have already taken place on site and further preliminary groundwork will continue in the coming months, to allow construction work to begin in the spring of 2021. The Gull Wing is planned to open in the summer of 2023.

Help us to help you this winter

(Press release issued on 24 November on behalf of Suffolk Resilience Forum)

Suffolk residents are being urged to support their physical and emotional wellbeing this winter and to get help early if they have any concerns.

As we head into winter, with ongoing restrictions on our daily lives related to the Coronavirus pandemic, it is vital to know what support is out there and to seek help if you need it.

Dr Mark Shenton, chairman of NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Professor of Integrated Care at the University of Suffolk, said:

“The NHS is open to support people’s physical and mental health needs, and it’s important no-one puts off seeking help as that could lead to the condition deteriorating.

“You can seek help in a number of ways, such as NHS 111 by telephone or online. Your local pharmacy is a very good source of advice, with many open long hours and you don’t need an appointment to speak with the pharmacist. GP practice staff are there to help, and we urge you to make contact by ‘phone or online. Once you contact your practice, someone will get back in touch with you. It might not always be a GP; it could be a physician associate, a nurse, pharmacist or physiotherapist, depending on your medical need.

“There are lots of online resources to support your mental health available from Wellbeing Suffolk and, if you need to talk, Suffolk has a 24/7 mental health support line, First Response, meaning you can speak to someone anytime on 0808 196 3494.”

Support is still in place for anyone who is struggling with emotional or physical wellbeing due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The Covid Hub acts as a gateway to local services which can provide support for a range of issues related to emotional and physical wellbeing. If you need ideas on how to look after your and your family’s mental health and wellbeing, **visit COVID-19 information hub** at healthysuffolk.org.uk/covidhub.

Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health, said:

“As we head into the colder months of the year, faced with ongoing restrictions on our daily lives in the effort to control the Coronavirus pandemic and save lives, it is vital that we take steps to look after our physical and emotional wellbeing.

“This year has brought new challenges; we have all needed to adapt to a new ‘normal’. We must remember that this is a marathon and not a sprint and small changes to our daily routine can help us to feel better and more able to cope with an ever-changing environment.

“If you, or anyone you know is struggling, please remember that support is still available. Visit the Covid Hub to find the right help for you.”

Initial report published about SEND services during the COVID-19 pandemic following Ofsted and CQC visits to local authorities

On 23 November, an initial report was published by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on the support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suffolk was visited by Ofsted and the CQC in October, as one of eighteen local authorities taking part in the study. The purpose of the visits is for Ofsted and the CQC to gather evidence to inform future national improvements for children and young people with SEND across Education, Health and Care. This was not an inspection of Suffolk County Council or Health Services.

The overall aim of these visits was to:

- Support the local area to understand the impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Find out what has worked well for children and young people during this time, what the challenges have been, and what lessons have been learned.
- Work with the local area to identify opportunities for improvement that address the challenges faced by children and young people with SEND.
- Highlight best practice case studies and share insights nationally to promote whole system learning.

The voices of children, young people and families were gathered through case studies and via a survey. Ofsted and the CQC also spoke to the education health and care professionals who work with young people with SEND.

Mary Evans Cabinet Member for Children’s Services Education and Skills said:

“The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about challenges for everyone, but for children and young people with SEND it has been a particularly difficult time.

“SCC’s SEND team and colleagues from across the system, including Suffolk Parent Carer Network, have worked tirelessly to support families during this uncertain time and I would like to thank them for their hard work.

“We were pleased to take part in the visit and share what we have learnt over this time. The findings of the report will help us to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and young people with SEND across the UK and identify opportunities for improvement.”

Ofsted and the CQC provided the local area with a letter that summarises the visit and provides more detail on the specific information shared with the visiting team; it reflects the Suffolk response during the pandemic. [Read Area SEND interim visit - Suffolk letter here](#) (PDF, 148KB).

Suffolk was part of the first six visits which took place in October. [Read the overall report from the first six areas visited here](#).

A national report will be published in spring 2021, reporting the learning from visits across all eighteen areas.

Call for contributions to new Pride in Suffolk's Past exhibition

22 November marked the birthday of Benjamin Britten. As well as being one of the most celebrated British composers of the 20th century, he was also an inspirational contributor to Suffolk's LGBTQ+ History. So, what better reason to announce the next stage in Suffolk Archives' Pride in Suffolk's Past project.

The project, which started in 2019, set out to discover and share the hidden stories of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender non-conforming people in Suffolk's past, while also collecting stories from this thriving community today.

The next stage in the project will see the new exhibition gallery at The Hold, on Ipswich waterfront, host a special display from February to April 2021. Although notable individuals such as Benjamin Britten are featured, the exhibition will also reflect the experiences of ordinary people, and crucially the LGBTQ+ community in Suffolk today. As a result, the project team are inviting contributions of objects, such as memorabilia from your first Pride parade, or photographs of your wedding day, that could be incorporated into the display. Anyone with personal items that could be exhibited should email sharing.suffolk.stories@suffolk.gov.uk.

[Contemporary stories are also being collected through an online survey](#), which will feed into the exhibition and help create a archive for the future.

For just a taste of what is to come in February, [visitors can explore the initial Pride in Suffolk's Past online display](#), which was created in support of Suffolk Pride earlier this year.

Councillor Paul West, Portfolio Holder for Heritage, said:

"It is wonderful to see this Sharing Suffolk Stories project progressing to its next stage, demonstrating the positive effect the National Lottery Heritage Fund investment in Suffolk Archives is having on outreach work. I am looking forward to seeing what contemporary contributions are received to complement the stories researchers have already uncovered in the archives."

This project forms part of Sharing Suffolk Stories, the countywide National Lottery Heritage Fund supported programme of activities which enables communities to discover more about the history of where they live and to share it in new and engaging ways.

Investing in Suffolk Trade as UK exits EU

As the end of the UK's transition period for exiting the EU draws closer, Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders (SPSL) continue to pay close attention to progress.

As part of their meeting on 20 November, SPSL heard more about how Suffolk is preparing and proactively planning to support future economic growth by strengthening Suffolk's trade offer.

Throughout the transition period, which began when the UK left the EU on 31 January 2020, SPSL have maintained a keen focus on local issues through the work of the county's Brexit Task Group, which was set up to understand and plan for the support and potential mitigation local businesses and residents may need.

As part of this, on 20 November, SPSL agreed to invest £490,000 over the next three years to support the continued strategic growth of Suffolk's economy and business community, and to support future local and regional business interests.

The money will be used by Suffolk Chamber of Commerce to strengthen Suffolk's trade offer as Trade Advisors proactively represent the interests of Suffolk's businesses and communities by showcasing local products and services. They will also identify, encourage and foster relationships with EU businesses, provide tailored advice and support to Suffolk businesses looking to enter international markets, and protect local business interests which need to operate under the new rules following the UK's exit from the EU.

The Suffolk Trade team will comprise the two existing Trade Advisors who were recruited to support Suffolk's efforts in March 2019, when Suffolk Public Sector Leaders agreed to invest £243,600 as part of Suffolk's allocation of Government funding. The latest round of funding will enable the extension of these Advisor roles through to 2023.

The £490,000 is made up from the following amounts:

- £350,000 to be used from the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders' pooled business rates budget.
- £140,000 to be used from Suffolk's allocation of the Government's Brexit funding.

As well as covering the employment costs for two Advisors, this funding will in time be used to recruit a further member of the Suffolk Trade team and will cover operational costs for communications, events and web-based information that will be used by the team to support local businesses and foster relationships with international markets.

Councillor Matthew Hicks, Chair of Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group, said:

"This is an investment in the future prosperity of Suffolk's economy and our communities. Its benefits will stretch far beyond Suffolk's boundaries, supporting business supply chains that cover the rest of the UK. The ambition of Suffolk Public Sector Leaders has always been to work collaboratively to minimise the risks posed by the EU exit and maximise the opportunities presented by the change in relationship with international markets.

"As the EU Exit transition period ends, the UK's relationship with the EU will change and it is natural for many of us to feel a degree of anxiety and uncertainty. The Suffolk Trade team will continue the great work of the existing Trade Advisors, demonstrating the importance that Suffolk Public Sector Leaders places on maintaining a buoyant local economy and ensuring Suffolk businesses are best placed to drive inclusive growth, which is a key aspect of Suffolk's COVID-19 recovery plan.

“The progress of this service will be reported back to Suffolk Public Sector Leaders on a regular basis to ensure the resources are being used in the most effective way to support businesses and communities across Suffolk. In the longer term, we hope to see the return on investment reflected in the levels of new inbound and outbound investment and business across the eastern region and in Suffolk. This includes growth in employment and skills.”

Chief Executive of Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, John Dugmore, said:

“We are delighted to be working alongside Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and, at a time when business confidence is at a historic low because of COVID-19 and EU withdrawal, this opportunity will help our trade team promote and enhance Suffolk’s offer to the world, drive growth and investment, and help our businesses navigate the new norms ahead.

“Thanks to the work of the Chamber’s Trade Advisors, Suffolk businesses feel more prepared for EU withdrawal having had access to further information, advice and strategic counsel. As part of the 53 accredited chambers in the UK, but also 60 chambers worldwide, we have the links to help Suffolk businesses grow on the international stage and help the county recover from the crippling effects of COVID-19.

“Our research to date indicates that Suffolk exports nearly half a billion pounds per annum and it is therefore vital that we continue to support businesses post 1st January. Key issues will include the UK’s new border operating model, supply-chain resilience, access to new markets, and arrangements with freight forwarders and those in the logistics/shipping industries. Our offer will now be expanded to build long-term capacity and support our many businesses looking to grow and reap the benefits of future trade agreements.”

Suffolk schools and businesses scoop national sustainable travel awards

A Modeshift STARS accreditation is awarded to a business, education or community setting that actively brings about a positive change in travel behaviour.

The accreditation complements the county council’s ‘Let’s make a change for the future’ campaign, which is encouraging residents to consider more active and sustainable travel options during the COVID-19 pandemic to avoid overcrowding the county’s transport network and, longer-term, to experience the benefits of improved health and wellbeing, less congestion and cleaner air.

The following schools and businesses have achieved their first level (bronze) Modeshift STARS accreditation, in recognition of their efforts to encourage active and sustainable travel:

Schools:

- Bosmere Community Primary School in Needham Market – for their anti-idling scheme to encourage parents to turn off the car engines when dropping off and collecting their children.

- Carlton Colville Primary School – for the work of their Junior Road Safety Officers to reduce congestion outside the school gates by promoting cycle training and providing a new cycle and scooter parking area in the school’s carpark.
- The Limes Primary School in Oulton Broad – for promoting walking, scooting, cycling and park & stride to school days. They also raised money to install a new cycle parking station at the school.
- Copleston High School in Ipswich – for the work they carried out to ensure active travel was considered as part of their recent building extension. This included cycle parking, equipment storage, and a drying room.

Businesses:

- Essex & Suffolk Water’s headquarters in Lowestoft - for their efforts in encouraging staff to travel to work by sustainable transport via their staff incentive schemes and active travel to work days.
- Bovis Homes’ Ribbans Park in Ipswich – for providing space for walking and cycling around their new development, which links with the town’s existing infrastructure. They also encourage all their new homeowners to consider the use of active travel for short journeys.
- Fred Olsen’s office in Ipswich – for increasing the amount of bicycle parking, creating four charge points for electric vehicles, and installing five new showers so that those walking, running or cycling to work can freshen up when they arrive.

Councillor Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Council and Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, said:

“I am delighted that these schools and businesses have achieved this accreditation.

“As more residents become aware of how important active and sustainable travel is during the COVID-19 crisis, and the longer term benefits, Modeshift STARS are an ideal way for local communities to join forces and make active and sustainable travel an attractive alternative.

Congratulations to all the award winners.”

Nick Butler, National STARS Accreditation Manager, said:

“We are delighted to recognise these Suffolk businesses and schools with Modeshift STARS Bronze accreditation. They have shown that they are actively providing more opportunities for greener and sustainable travel. This approach will support them in creating safer environments, improving air quality, and enhancing opportunities for their workforce in achieving healthier lifestyles.”

To find out more about how a school or business can achieve a Modeshift STARS accreditation email travelplans@suffolk.gov.uk

To keep up to date with how Suffolk County Council is making it safer and easier for residents to choose sustainable travel, visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/adviceontravel

Suffolk County Council delivers its largest digital care support project in record time

Suffolk County Council has successfully delivered the largest digital care project in its history - from procurement to delivery in just 16 weeks.

Working alongside care technology specialists, Alcove and Rethink Partners, the council delivered over 750 Carephone devices to elderly and vulnerable people, both in and outside of formal care settings, to help them, their families and care providers stay in touch during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Carephone service is provided through the Alcove Video Carephone, a simple communication device that allows people with little or no technological ability to have two-way video contact with care workers, family members and other approved service providers. The project also delivered comprehensive training to both the user and their care providers on how to get the most use from this new technology.

Real life success stories from the project include one from Jeni, an 83-year-old retired teacher who lives in Bury St Edmunds.

Speaking about her experience using her new Carephone, Jeni said:

“The other day it was such a thrill as my niece showed me her granddaughter - who is just over a year old. She walked straight across the room and I saw her on the screen. It was really lovely to see her. It was the first time she had walked, and they gave me a call straight away so I could see her do it. I have only ever seen her in person once before, so it was such a pleasure.”

This technology is helping to keep families connected, easing the pain of separation that all families have felt at some point since the pandemic started. It also provides essential welfare reassurance for the family and is helping to reduce incidents of poor mental health on both sides of the call. There are indications that this technology can have a positive, measurable impact on loneliness in older and vulnerable people.

The technology has also helped maintain and enhance the communication between care giver and care receiver. The benefits of this project continue to be felt and have provided clear insight into using this technology to improve care outcomes, especially over the coming winter.

Speaking about the success of the project and the potential for the future, Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Care said:

"The challenges of this global pandemic have been felt hardest by our vulnerable and elderly communities. Whilst those that need face-to-face care have of course continued to receive that level of care, this kind of digital enablement project is absolutely vital for the future of care delivery across the UK. We must not underestimate the positive benefits of just being able to speak to family members, care givers, and support networks when needed. Maintaining real connections with others is so vital for the mental and emotional wellbeing of residents and their families. I hope we will continue to see initiatives like this, and I am pleased the Carephone project is already having a positive impact.

I want to thank all those people who have been involved in this success story for Suffolk. Especially our tirelessly committed social care staff, care providers, Alcove and Rethink Partners, and voluntary and health partners."

Download the [infographic that explains how the Suffolk Virtual Care Response Service is being delivered](#) (PDF, 1MB)

Ipswich fire station completes temporary relocation

On 12 November, Princes Street Fire Station in Ipswich completed its temporary relocation to the Army Reserve Centre on Yarmouth Road.

The move is due to the refurbishments and improvements being made at Princes St, which will see Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service and Suffolk Constabulary share a new blue light hub in about a year's time.

Group Commander Nigel Vincent from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, said:

"I want to reassure people that the temporary fire station will be fully functional, with no loss of fire cover for the residents of Ipswich or the surrounding communities that the station presently serves.

"We have suitable bays to house the fire appliances and a new temporary building has been constructed in the drill yard to accommodate the crews.

"We're grateful to our colleagues at the Army Reserve Centre for being so accommodating and cooperative. I'd also like to thank those who live nearby for their understanding during the temporary arrangements. We have all been working hard to ensure the new arrangements will have little or no negative impact on local residents and the community."

Councillor Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection at Suffolk County Council, said:

"The Princes St refurbishment is an exciting project and will give our crews and Police colleagues a modern base to work from. We already have 16 stations across Suffolk, where Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service share facilities with Suffolk Constabulary or East of England Ambulance Service, and there are further collaborations planned.

"These partnerships enable us all to deliver savings on the cost of running multiple buildings, but also allow emergency services to work even more closely together in supporting and engaging with their local communities."

'Keep active during the latest national restrictions' encourages new County Council chairman in first public statement

A rallying cry for people to remain active was issued by Councillor Graham Newman on 10 November - his first public statement as civic head for the organisation.

Councillor Graham Newman, Chairman of Suffolk County Council, said:

“I know people are, understandably, concerned and anxious at the prospect of more national restrictions and with the onset of colder weather and darker nights the idea of being active can be daunting.

“However, I would encourage everyone, if they can, to be as active as possible over the autumn and winter months. Being active is good for both your physical and mental health and can be a great antidote to the way we’re all feeling at the moment.”

Councillor Newman was particularly keen to highlight the resources available through the Keep Moving Suffolk campaign as an important source of information and advice. He said:

“The Keep Moving Suffolk campaign website was a valued and trusted support for many people during the first set of national restrictions and will continue to be so for the weeks and months ahead. It has links to many great free tools to help people work out at home or outside in a safe way. If anybody is looking for ideas, or inspiration, then it’s a great place to start.

“As a keen cyclist I would also recommend the Love to Ride campaign. Cycling is a great way to exercise in a safe, socially distanced way. If you haven’t ridden in winter before, now is a great opportunity to give it a go.”

Tim Hollingsworth, Chief Executive of Sport England, who are concerned about recent drop-offs in activity levels across the country, said:

“Being active is a vital tool to help us cope mentally with the challenges the months ahead will bring and physically to be fitter and healthier, to boost our immunity and to ward off illness.

“We know that people face real challenges right now in their daily lives, whether that’s anxiety about the virus itself, financial concerns or uncertainty about what is or isn’t allowed. Our message is that there has never been a more important time to take some time to be physically active.”

The Keep Moving Suffolk campaign can be found at www.KeepMovingSuffolk.com and includes details and links to the Love to Ride initiative.

Home, But Not Alone phonenumber goes live again

The Home, But Not Alone free phonenumber, which supports vulnerable people in our communities who may be struggling with the impact of Coronavirus, went live again on 3 November.

The service was paused in August because of low demand and the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. However, after the announcement of the second national lockdown, the service is up and running again.

Chrissie Geeson, Chair of the Collaborative Communities Covid-19 Board and Head of Localities and Partnerships at Suffolk County Council, said:

“The phonenumber was absolutely vital during the first lockdown and it is only right that the same support is on offer.

“The phonenumber helped thousands of people and families, who often didn’t have a network of family or friends to call upon, access emergency support such as food and medicine deliveries and befriending schemes.”

The telephone number is freephone **0800 876 6926** and is staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

This Home, But Not Alone phonenumber complements The Suffolk Advice and Support Service phonenumber (0800 068 3131) which helps those with debt, benefits, employment, or housing worries. This phonenumber, also delivered by the Collaborative Communities Covid-19 Board, is staffed by the Citizens Advice Suffolk Alliance, which includes the eight Citizens Advice Bureaus across Suffolk, and Anglia Care Trust and Ipswich Housing Action Group.

Call handlers use resources and information from across many Suffolk organisations and specialist providers, which are tailored to individual needs.

Suffolk’s SEND Service celebrate winning prestigious national award

Suffolk’s special educational needs and disability service (SEND) has won a prestigious national award at this year’s Nasen awards.

Nasen is a charity that supports and champions those working with, and for, children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and learning differences. Each year, Nasen hosts an annual awards campaign, which looks to celebrate the achievements of individuals and organisations within the SEND sector.

Suffolk’s special educational needs and disability service won the David Ryan Publication Award, which recognises an innovative publication (including e-publications) that have had a positive impact on children and young people with SEND.

Suffolk won the award for the Suffolk SEND 16+ Transitions Guide. The guide, which was initially created in 2019, was developed to support young people aged 14-19 years to plan a successful journey towards adulthood. It was created following feedback from families of children with SEND, who said planning for adulthood was an extremely challenging and bewildering time.

Developed with the support and input of SEND Young Persons Network, the Suffolk Parent Carer Network, and practitioners across the sector, the guide has been so successful that in February 2020, edition two was produced and the team are now looking to offer further guidance through parent-led workshops.

The guide is being distributed to all Suffolk colleges and high schools, including special schools and PRUs, and is being used by SEND and Inclusion services in their work with young people. [The guide can be found on the Local Offer website.](#)

Councillor Mary Evans, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills said:

“I am absolutely delighted that Suffolk has won this award for our SEND 16+ Transitions Guide. The guide is an essential resource that helps young people with SEND navigate their way into adulthood and it is making a huge difference to young people’s lives.

“Winning this award is particularly special for us in Suffolk because of the challenging journey we have been on in developing our local partnership and transforming our services for children and young people with SEND. We are proud of the work we are doing to support young people in their journey to adulthood and to have our work recognised nationally will spur the partnership on to even greater achievements.

“I would like to thank everyone who worked extremely hard to create the guide, including the Suffolk Parent Carer Network and the SEND Young Persons Network.”

Julia Ilott, Engagement Hub Manager said:

“Young people told us that they rely on their trusted adults, i.e. family, teachers, tutors, and support workers, to support them through their transition into adulthood and that these people need to be well informed about the process. That is why a clear, understandable guide was needed. Young people also wanted to share their experiences of transitions in the guide to support other young people and provide information that would help them to know what to expect. We worked closely with our Suffolk SEND Young People’s Network and our SEND Champions, who had recently transitioned to college, to create some young people’s pages within the guide offering their insights and advice.”