

County Councillor Report



Parish Councils, July 2025

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Devolution Survey Closes on 4th August – SCC continues to work with Norfolk County Council concerning plans for both Local Government Reorganisation and formation of a combined Mayoral Authority. A survey is open for residents to comment on the Council's plans for local reorganisation. Refer to www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution, email devolution@suffolk.gov.uk, ring 0345 603 1842, or visit any of Suffolk's 45 libraries.

SCC believes that a new single local council is the simplest and most cost-efficient option for Suffolk. The council argues that any alternative would have to justify the implications of breaking up critical services like social care, education and highways. A single unitary council would be able to work more effectively and provide a stronger voice when it comes to collaboration with a regional mayor.

The cost of breaking Suffolk into two or even three – as proposed by Suffolk's district and borough councils - would cost £7 million to £13 million more than a single new council (circa £19m), and in the longer term would result in very little savings or none at all in the case of 3 new unitaries.

School Transport - Parents can as of 1st July apply for spare seats on school transport for the academic year 2025/26. Parents of children who are not eligible for SCC funded school travel, may wish to buy a spare seat for their child to travel to and from school on a vehicle that SCC has arranged for eligible children. Refer to [Spare seats - Suffolkonboard](#)

County Music Service Applications Open - Applications for the 25-26 season for County Music Groups (Suffolk Youth Orchestra, Suffolk Youth Wind Band and Suffolk Young Strings) are open. Members can attend rehearsal weekends, a residential course and a European music tour. The programme is aimed at musicians of grade 4 and above, aged 21 and under. Express interest at <https://suffolkcountymusicservice.co.uk/take-part/county-music-groups/>

SCC Hosts NSIP Conference at The Hold, Ipswich on 11th June - The Council and other speakers raised concerns that proposed changes to the NSIP regime were not suitably robust to manage the significant changes which NSIPs can bring to host communities, particularly with the proposed replacement of a statutory duty for pre-submission consultation with statutory guidance. Delegates from across the country attended the Conference to hear speakers from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), legal experts, and industry leaders discussing the emerging Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

Armed Forces Week was Celebrated the last week of June – Suffolk now has an Armed Forces Commissioner, Andrew Smith. There will be events throughout the week culminating with the Suffolk Armed Forces Day celebration, which takes place on Saturday June 28 from 11am to 4pm at

Christchurch Park's Mansion Lawn in Ipswich. Mr. Smith says: 'As the new Armed Forces Commissioner for Suffolk, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of Suffolk's Armed Forces Community, the Armed Forces Covenant Board, and the many supporting organisations who have made me feel so welcome in my new role.' Contact him with enquiries about any of the military cadet programmes or queries about armed forces support or activities.

Brecks Fens Festival Launch on 9th August at Brandon Country Park - Many events are planned for all ages over a 2-week period, most are free. The festival recognises the work of the Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers Landscape Partnership Scheme. It includes local groups and organisations working with nature in the Brecks, as well as outdoor activities.

Mapping Major Infrastructure Projects - An interactive map of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) in Suffolk is now available [here](#). This is embedded on the [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects \(NSIPs\) in Suffolk](#) webpage (which also contains more details on NSIPs). At release, we have included all NSIP Order Limits in polygons where we have received written permission and otherwise as dots (bordered in black), located at the centre of the NSIP. Also included are Town & Country Planning (District Council) Solar Farms as yellow dots.

EcoPower Solar - an inaugural meeting of the EcoPower Suffolk Community Liaison Group (CLG) is planned in July where terms of reference will be agreed, date to be confirmed.

National Grid Pylon Scheme The County Council's position remains in opposition to the current scheme and contends that less damaging alternatives to the project have not been properly considered. Information is available on – nationalgrid.com/norwich-to-tilbury

Eight MPs in East Anglia have written to Energy Secretary Ed Miliband to express their concerns about National Grid's proposed pylon line for the region. Their letter claims a presumption in favour of pylons was followed 'rigidly and blindly', without proper scrutiny or consideration for other options. [Suffolk MPs urge Energy Secretary Ed Miliband to explore alternatives to National Grid's pylon scheme](#) Sunday, 18 May, 2025

Please get in touch with me if you have questions or comments: Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk
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