

February 2019 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Green light to develop more specialist education placements in Suffolk

On 29 January 2019, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet agreed recommendations to move forward with creating more specialist education places in Suffolk. Suffolk will need between 300 to 400 places for children with additional needs between now and 2020, and this figure is likely to continue to increase. The demand for specialist education places in Suffolk is rising rapidly due to the county's population growth, advances in medicine, and the increasing complexity of specialist needs. The recommendations include three new special schools and 36 specialist units attached to existing mainstream schools, which combined will create over 800 new specialist education places in the county. Following the approval of the recommendations, the proposal to borrow up to £45.1 million to fund the new places will now go to the county council's Capital Strategy Group to be reviewed. If agreed, the decision will go back to Cabinet in the Spring for final sign-off so the recommendations can be rolled out. SCC is committed to ensuring all of Suffolk's children and young people are able to attend a good local school, one that meets their individual needs and supports them to achieve their full potential regardless of the challenges they may face. This decision will help to create hundreds of more specialist school places across the county, reducing our dependence on placements outside of Suffolk, which come at a high cost, and transforming the experience of education for our children and young people with SEND.

Suffolk's roads warming to £300,000 thermal patching technology

Suffolk Highways is celebrating road repair success following a £300,000 investment in Nu-phalt Thermal Patching technology. The investment, which has been funded from the extra £9.67 million received from central government in the autumn, has aided the county's Highways teams to carry out more effective, longer-lasting repairs to Suffolk's road surface. Over the last month, Suffolk Highways has deployed three thermal road repair machines which have repaired approximately 1,700 potholes county-wide. The process includes an eight-minute heating cycle of the road surrounding the defect allowing for the existing road surface to be heated to 200 Celsius. The surface is then raked, topped up with bitumen binder and pre-heated material, then compacted. This all takes place within the service's much-favoured 15-minute temporary closure. The process does not require excavation of the highway, meaning no dust or noise, and better still, no waste material. The result also means there are no surface joints, which can be prone to faster deterioration. Beyond the investment in Nu-phalt Thermal Patching technology, the £9.67m of funding will enable a programme of work. This includes improvements and repairs to the pavements in the town centres of Stowmarket, Felixstowe and Haverhill and drainage work to solve long-term flooding problems on the A12 – Wangford bypass, the A143 – Bury St Edmunds Compiegne Way, and the A1120 – Cedars Link Stowmarket. The funding will also be used for better quality, long-lasting white lining on the: A146 Lowestoft, A1092, A1021, A1141, A1095 and A1120. On rural roads, when preparing roads for next summer's surface dressing, the funding will allow for work to clear drains and gullies, cut back hedges and cut grips.

10,000 Suffolk homes say 'no' to cold callers on their doorsteps

Suffolk Trading Standards recently gave out its 10,000th No Cold Calling sticker, just four years after launching the campaign. The stickers are placed on a homeowner's front door to declare that the resident does not want uninvited traders to call at their property. The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008, state that traders who approach a resident after having seen the sticker, are committing an offence. Further details on No Cold Calling zones and how to get a No Cold Calling sticker can be found at www.suffolk.gov.uk

Places available for "life changing" Great East Swim programme

The Great East Swim programme is ideal for anyone who would like to become more active and is ready to make that change in their life. There are 96 places available on the 2019 programme, which starts in March and culminates on the 22 June 2019 at the Great East Swim at Alton Water reservoir near Ipswich. The programme is open to individuals who are aged 18 years and over who are not currently physically active. The programme take place at Crown Pools in Ipswich and Haverhill Leisure Centre, Haverhill, between March and June. This will be the eighth year that the programme has been run, during which time over 370 individuals looking to make a positive change to their health and wellbeing have completed the challenge of swimming either half a mile or 1 mile in open water at the Great East Swim. Individuals who sign up for the programme will receive an extensive package of support which aims to provide them with the confidence, stamina and self-belief to complete their personal challenge and become active for life. To apply for a place on the programme, people can visit www.suffolkspport.com/greastswim

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