

## January 2015 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

### **New gritters join Suffolk highways' winter response**

Nine new Econ gritters have been purchased in the last few months to replace ageing ones in SCC's highways fleet and a further 29 gritters have been upgraded significantly improving the winter service provided across the county. 39 of these gritters have an attachable snow plough along with three mini-gritters which are designed for areas with weight restrictions, such as bridges. Also, as part of the highways contract, Kier MG can call on additional vehicles, should they be required. There are 112 operators ready to help keep the county moving when temperatures drop and when there is snowfall. There are 1,225 miles of priority-one gritting routes which are treated in advance of predicted ice or snow. In all, the 34 priority-one gritting routes taking two and a half hours to complete. When ice or snow is forecast to persist beyond 9am, a further 845 miles of priority-two routes will be treated, so long as gritters are not needed on the priority-one roads. Further information on priority one and priority two routes can be found on the county council website: [www.suffolk.gov.uk/salting-gritting-and-snow-clearing](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/salting-gritting-and-snow-clearing). We know how important it is to keep Suffolk moving during the cold winter months. The purchase of these new gritters is a sign of our determination to do all we can to ensure this happens.

### **Suffolk's energy-from-waste facility now open – on time and on budget**

Construction of Suffolk's energy-from-waste facility has been completed on time and on budget, fulfilling its purpose of putting the county's waste to good use. Since testing of equipment and procedures began in June, the site at Great Blakenham, has been taking in the waste that can't be recycled from homes and businesses across Suffolk, and beyond. On Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December the testing phase was successfully completed, and the facility was handed over from the building contractors, to SITA UK, who will run it for the next 25 years, on behalf of SCC. The site has brought a number of benefits to the local community. During construction over 100 Suffolk firms won contracts, worth around £13.5 million, to supply goods and services to the site and it has created 47 new jobs on site and a further 200 jobs could be created if the proposed greenhouse project, using surplus heat from the site to grow tomatoes, goes ahead. The completion of Suffolk's energy-from-waste facility is a massive achievement. Not only will it make a big difference environmentally, enabling us to avoid landfill and the accompanying emissions, it will save Suffolk tax payers £8million a year, and, as stated, makes a positive contribution to the local economy.

### **UK's first-ever youth employment centre celebrates 500 sign-ups in first month**

MyGo, the UK's first-ever dedicated youth employment centre celebrated its official, grand opening last month, with 500 sign-ups to the service. The MyGo centre at Fraser House in Ipswich which opened for business on Monday 10 November, offers all 16-24 year olds in Ipswich and the surrounding area free training, career and employment support. The project is pioneering a new approach to helping young people get into work. Led by businesses, local councils, New Anglia LEP and Jobcentre Plus; this programme supports aims to halve youth unemployment in the greater Ipswich area over the next two years. The project is funded by money unlocked through the Greater Ipswich City Deal - the government's flagship programme to devolve power to local authorities and businesses to put them in control of economic opportunities and challenges. We are committed to working with our partners to support young people as they seek a foot on the career ladder.

### **Pioneering scheme will keep people warm this winter**

Help is at hand to keep Suffolk people warm this winter thanks to the *Warm Homes Healthy People* scheme, which makes it cheaper for vulnerable people and families to stay warm over the colder months. Each winter, one older person in the UK dies needlessly every seven minutes from the cold – that's 200 deaths a day that could be prevented. Keeping warm in the colder weather is essential to prevent colds, flu and more serious health conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and the consequences of falls. Alan Murray, SCC's cabinet member for health and adult care said: "There are around 350 excess deaths each winter in Suffolk and many could be prevented by keeping homes sufficiently insulated and warm. This project is an excellent example of how we can work together in Suffolk to support vulnerable people over the colder months. Since its launch in 2011, Warm Homes Healthy People has gone from strength to strength and I am confident will continue to deliver invaluable support to keep people warm and well." To self-refer to the project, eligible Suffolk residents can contact 0845 037 686 for free advice and support. GPs and other health professionals can refer people by secure email [warmhomereferrals@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:warmhomereferrals@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk)

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