



District Councillors Report to Grundisburgh Parish Council

For September 2026

Carlford and Fynn Valley Ward.

Rushmere Village, Great Bealings, Little Bealings, Playford, Bredfield, Grundisburgh & Culpho, Witlesham and Swilland, Westerfield, Hasketon, Clopton, Charsfield, Dallinghoo, Tuddenham, Boulge, Burgh, Debach, Otley.

From District Councillor

CLlr Colin Hedgley

(Colin.Hedgley@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

(I was away from 2nd to the 11th of September and am away 7th to the 10th October)

LGR

The decision to reorganise local government in Essex, Hampshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, has been withdrawn in light of new legal advice.

A statement has been issued by MHCLG (Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government) explaining this, which you can read below.

An announcement was made in Parliament. We have been provided with no further detail at this stage - however, we will keep you informed of any updates should they occur.

I would like to think that my letter to the Minister stating that the whole proposition was a bad idea forced a change of mind. But I doubt it.

REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION LAUNCHED

- **Review launched into plans to streamline local government following legal advice, to ensure it is robust and aligns with new government priorities**
- **Part of Prime Minister's determination to rewire the state and shift power into the hands of local communities to drive good growth in every postcode**
- **Decisions on reorganisation in Essex, Hampshire, Norfolk and Suffolk withdrawn**
- **Plans for 14 further areas announced will also be reviewed, alongside the two areas yet to be confirmed – Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and West Sussex**

A review of plans to streamline local government is set to be announced later today (7th September) to ensure the process is robust and aligns with the new government's plans to rewire the state.

Following updated and privileged legal advice, ministers will review plans for Local Government Reorganisation. The review – which will be announced by the Secretary of State later today in Parliament – will include decisions on Essex, Hampshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, which have been withdrawn in light of new legal advice. Plans for 14 other areas, along with Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and West Sussex, will also be reviewed and paused while this is carried out.

To reassure local leaders and communities while this review takes place, the government will confirm that local elections in May 2027 will go ahead on existing council boundaries and remains committed to effective and sustainable local government and simplifying these structures.



The government's Rewiring the State White Paper on devolution will also set out plans to rewire the country and ensure effective and sustainable local government in future.

This comes on the back of the push to shift power out of Westminster and into communities, led by No10 North.

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Angela Rayner is expected to tell Parliament today: “As we are now more determined than ever to devolve power closer to the people we represent, it’s only right that as a new Secretary of State I make sure that everything we do is working towards that plan to change Britain, without delay.

“The Prime Minister told the House last week, he was ‘prepared to look at local government reorganisation’ and he asked me as his Communities Secretary to 'do that'.

“[...] In that context, in light of legal advice, I want to satisfy myself firstly that the right process is in place, that it is robust, and of course complies with the law. And secondly, I want to fully test whether our proposals for local government reorganisation meet the priorities of a new administration and a new Prime Minister and any additional considerations.

“[...] I do not take this lightly. I recognise the huge amount of work that has already gone into progressing reorganisation in each of these areas, and I am very grateful for.

The New Bin Collection System.

I am still receiving complaints regarding bin and caddy collection. Grundisburgh, you are not alone!

The e mails come from all over Carlford ward. I am also aware that other Councillors have complaints still coming in and councillors also suffer similar “missed bins” (myself included). So, it is very much a case of keep on complaining, keep on reporting, don’t give up. (See reports further on).

But as some of you are aware that have expressed their dismay at the service provided, I think it’s more than dismay. It’s been shambolic. I firmly believe that heads should roll, but I do not think that will happen.

So, as you can see there is a long way to go before we reach acceptable figures. I would find a figure of 10 acceptable. I do hope to ask a question at the next full council meeting (along with plenty of others) However my question may be considered “unparliamentary”, in which case I will have to tone it down.

So, improvements are happening, but slowly. To quote the last three words in “The Count of Monte Cristo”. Wait and Hope.

Bins missed performance check.

Bins missed week up to 7th August.....9,352
Bins missed week up to 14th August.....18,761
Bins missed week up to 18th August.....3,500
Bins missed week up to 4th September.....10,740.
Bins missed week up to 11th September.....7,314

Performance:

- Collection performance is primarily in the 95-100% completion range, indicating that the immediate operational interventions are delivering improvements.
- Performance trends demonstrate the positive impact of additional resources, including food waste vehicles and 26-tonne RCVs.



- For the first time since BR service mobilisation, sufficient capacity was available to address missed collections and genuine missed bin reports, alongside the completion of scheduled work this week.
- Fewer catch-up crews were required Saturday and Monday because of improved in-week collection performance.

Ongoing improvements:

- Vehicle availability, including the impact of brake testing requirements, remains under review. An options appraisal is being developed by the ESSL Transport Manager to identify opportunities to improve fleet availability and minimise operational disruption.

Prioritising support for young people in East Suffolk

East Suffolk Council has launched a new Youth Fund, offering grants of up to £2,000 for projects supporting young people in the district.

Co-created with members of the East Suffolk Youth Council, the Youth Fund will support young people across the district and safeguard their future.

Grants of between £200 and £2,000 are available, and Youth Councillors have identified several areas they would like to see projects around. These include:

- Protecting and enhancing the environment
- Sport and leisure opportunities
- Improving transport options and accessibility for young people
- Developing skills, confidence and experience to support future employment and training
- Activities and opportunities for teenagers
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Reducing financial and practical barriers to opportunities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Supporting youth facilities, clubs and safe spaces for young people
- Expanding youth provision in rural communities
- Increasing access to the arts and cultural activities

East Suffolk Community Partnership Board provided a £40,000 budget for the Youth Council to determine how it should be spent, and it was agreed that £32,000 would be allocated to the Youth Fund. The remaining funds will be used to establish projects that the Youth Councillors themselves have designed and created.

Applications for the Youth Fund grants close on Friday 2 October.

Following the application period, an appraisal process will take place. A decision-making panel made up of Youth Councillors and council officers will then meet in November to consider applications and make funding decisions. Youth Councillors have been clear that they want to support a variety of projects from across the district. They are keen to see a range of different projects come forward and encourage applications from rural communities and larger communities alike.

Full grant guidance is available here: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-support/community-grants-and-funding/east-suffolk-youth-fund>.



If you have any questions about the scheme, please contact communities@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Council celebrates national environmental protection award success

East Suffolk Council's Environmental Protection Team has been recognised in the RSPCA PawPrints Awards 2026, with three awards.

On Wednesday 3 September, the team were delighted to receive confirmation that they have been awarded both gold and silver recognition across three service areas:

- Gold PawPrints Award in stray dog services
- Gold PawPrints Award in kennelling
- Silver PawPrints Award in animal activities licensing

The Environmental Protection Team has previously been recognised in the stray dog services and kennelling categories. However, achieving the silver recognition for animal activities licensing represents a new achievement. The RSPCA PawPrints Awards recognise animal welfare work across the local public sector in England and Wales. The Core Awards celebrate effective practice across Animal Activities Licensing, Stray Dog Services, Housing, Contingency Planning and Kennelling.

Core Awardees will be celebrated at the ceremony in Cardiff on Wednesday 11th November 2026.

Council funding boost helps bring show to life at the Marina Theatre in Lowestoft

Financial support from local councillors has helped fund a brilliant theatre show in Lowestoft.

The sold-out production of 'We Will Rock You', a musical based on the music of pop legends Queen, was supported by funding from the Council's Cultural Strategy Budget and local ward councillors' Enabling Communities Budgets.

£6,000 of funding was given in total, which covered the cost of the production's set, bringing it to life on stage. £2,000 of this funding was from the Council's Cultural Strategy Budget.

The remaining £4,000 was given by local Cllrs Edward Back, Peter Byatt, Janet Craig, Andree Gee, Louise Gooch, Alan Green, Graham Parker and Malcolm Pitchers through allocating an equal share each from their Enabling Communities Budgets.

And thanks to the hard work of theatre managers Sam and Karen along with the rest of the cast and crew, the venue enjoyed an entirely sold-out show across eight performances at the Marina Theatre.

Community groups wishing to apply for Enabling Community Budget funding should contact their district councillor or visit www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/enabling-communities-budgets.

Beach visitors asked to 'leave nothing but footprints' this summer

East Suffolk Council is launching a campaign this summer to reduce the amount of litter along the district's coastline. Each year East Suffolk attracts more than 12 million visitors to its beaches, with four beaches recently receiving Blue Flag and Seaside Awards, naming them among the best beaches in the country. With this in mind, visitors are being asked to leave nothing behind when visiting the area's beaches and coastal spaces.



Litter remains a significant challenge as a recent survey found that small plastic items such as plastic wrappers and bottle caps were found on 99.5% of our beaches.

Community groups interested in carrying out litter picks can register their event to borrow equipment and to request the collection of waste online at: <https://eastsuffolk.co/registerlitterpick>

The public can report any issues with dog waste or litter bins at: <https://eastsuffolk.co/binreport>

Council Leader urges communities to “Be Prepared” for more weather-event emergencies

After a year of extreme weather events, East Suffolk Council Leader Cllr Caroline Topping is urging communities to think ahead and ensure that they are ready and able to respond to local emergencies.

After the recent wildfires in Dunwich, which in turn followed flooding and coastal erosion issues in recent times, Cllr Topping says it is more important than ever for towns and parishes to have clear Community Emergency Plans which detail exactly how they would respond in the event of an emergency, be it a natural weather event or otherwise.

East Suffolk Council and the county’s Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) are hosting a webinar on Emergency Preparedness and Building Community Resilience on 1 October. It is designed to help Town and Parish Councils and Community Emergency Planning Groups better prepare for unexpected events and crises, and Cllr Topping hopes as many representatives as possible will attend.

East Suffolk Council takes its responsibility to help communities prepare for emergencies incredibly seriously and our Emergency Planning Officers and Resilience Coordinator work hard to ensure that local groups understand how to be ready for different scenarios.

We want people to understand local risks and know what resources they have available to help minimise the impact of an emergency on their community. Experience shows that those who are prepared cope better when something unexpected occurs.

There are many community groups, towns, parishes, and wards who have produced a plan already, but there are some who haven’t and given recent events – with the increased likelihood of further emergencies due to climate change – We would urge as many as possible to get ready.”

Community Emergency Plans contain a wealth of useful, practical information, which all local people can refer to and act upon. This includes establishing key emergency contacts, places of safety, skills needed and volunteering. One location which already has an effective Emergency Plan is Westleton, and their response to the Dunwich wildfires was thanks in no small part to their preparation.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service were working extraordinarily hard to extinguish the fire, we were able to support people affected in a planned and co-ordinated way. The more communities that understand and prepare for such risks, the more effectively we will be able to respond.

Representatives of local communities should complete a registration form if they wish to attend the webinar, which is on Thursday 1 October from 5-6pm.

[Community Emergency Planning and Building Resilience Webinar October 2026 – Fill in form.](#)



Find more information on the webinar here: [East Suffolk Community Resilience and Emergency Preparedness Webinar - Suffolk Resilience Forum](#)

For further information about emergency preparedness in East Suffolk and the county as a whole, please visit: www.suffolkprepared.co.uk/get-prepared/prepare-your-community

The Electrical Safety Fund is open for applications. (Advert-but it may help someone looking for money for a Village Hall etc.)

Please help share an important funding opportunity with community organisations in your ward and wider area.

Applications for our Electrical Safety Fund are now open, with £1 million available to support projects which protect people from electrical harm.

Eligible organisations can apply for grants of up to £10,000 to deliver projects that:

- Improve electrical safety education
- Remove, repair or replace unsafe electrical products
- Address electrical installation safety issues
- Raise awareness of electrical safety risks and how people can stay safe

The Fund is designed to support organisations working with people who may be at greater risk of electrical harm, including those affected by the cost of living, rising energy costs, poor housing, age, disability, or other factors that increase vulnerability.

Who can apply?

Applications are open to:

- Charities
- Public bodies, such as Fire and Rescue Services or Trading Standards
- Other registered not-for-profit organisations

Projects should primarily benefit individuals and communities particularly vulnerable to electrical risk and injury.

As a councillor, your role is important for connecting local organisations with opportunities to benefit residents. We would be grateful if you could share details of the Fund with relevant groups in your area.

Thank you for your help.

George Smith, Senior Grants and Outreach Officer
Electrical Safety First



Community Partnership

Thank you again to everyone who was able to attend the most recent Community Partnership meeting. I wanted to take the opportunity to remind everyone about the fantastic opportunity available through Suffolk New College. Project Co-ordinator, Claire Flowers, runs a 'Community Day Off' scheme, which gives students the chance to support their local community by undertaking voluntary tasks such as painting, gardening, refurbishing, catering, and much more.

The scheme not only provides valuable support to local organisations but also helps students develop important life skills, gain practical experience, and make a positive contribution to their communities. Giving our young people a strong start in life is so important, particularly in the current job market.

If your organisation could benefit from the support of student volunteers, please get in touch with Claire directly at claireflowers@suffolk.ac.uk

Many thanks,

Jessica Solway | Communities Officer (*Kesgrave, Martlesham, Rushmere, Carlford & Fynn Valley*)

East Suffolk Council

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FREE TREES

As part of the Suffolk Design Festival preparations being hosted by Suffolk Authorities, we are filling the stage with future resilient trees to compliment the theme of the festival... Future Neighbourhoods.

We are in a position to ensure these trees contribute beyond that of the festival, and would like to offer the trees to local community groups, schools, charities or projects in Suffolk.

The provision is that the trees can be collected from the Apex, Bury St Edmunds on Friday 25th September.

If you know a group, school or charity looking for trees for a future project, please complete the below form.

If demand exceeds supply, the team will review based on the project and social value these will add.

Species include..

- Pinus sylvestris
- Larix decidua
- Metasequoia glyptostroboides

If interested, please fill in the below form and the team will be in contact.

[Suffolk Design Festival 2026 – Festival Tree Donation Survey](#)