
September 2022 District Councillor report for Ousden Parish Council

[West Suffolk bids for UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#)

[Plans to invest £1.9 million](#) to further strengthen the West Suffolk economy, improve job opportunities, town centres and rural areas as well as support community groups – have been sent to Government.

The move follows a meeting of West Suffolk Council who agreed the investment plan for the area's £1.9 million share of the Government's £2.6 billion Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) should be sent to Westminster.

The new national funding is designed by Government to support the implementation of its Levelling Up White Paper as well as "to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK". It is also a successor to EU Structural Funds now that the UK has left the European Union.

West Suffolk with other authorities in the county has had to meet Government's rules, engagement stipulations and a tight timeline so communities and businesses will benefit from this funding.

In order to 'unlock' West Suffolk's allocation of £1,934,467 over three years, the Government required all authorities to submit an investment plan to Government by 1 August 2022.

[Phase two discretionary Council Tax Rebate Grant \(\[westsuffolk.gov.uk\]\(https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk\)\)](#)

We've opened our second phase of discretionary grants to help residents who weren't eligible for the Government's [#CouncilTaxRebateGrant](#). This is money to help households with rising cost of energy bills.

You can find out more including who can apply and how at [Phase two discretionary Council Tax Rebate Grant \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk) Please feel free to share this link and the following graphic.



**Phase two
Discretionary
Council Tax Rebate Grant**

Includes:

- Care leavers
- People who were in temporary accommodation
- People living in Houses of Multiple Occupation
- People in other accommodation who pay the energy bills but have their Council Tax paid by their landlord.
- Households who haven't been eligible for the rebate grant but are experiencing exceptional financial hardship

Subject to eligibility criteria
More details on our website

West Suffolk
Council

West Suffolk one of the best in the UK for helping residents receive Council Tax grants

Earlier this year, under the Government's main Council Tax energy rebate scheme, households in Council Tax bands A to D received £150 to help with the increased cost of energy bills. West Suffolk Council administered the scheme locally, working with Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) to pay more than £9 million of the grant to more than 62,000 eligible households.

ARP administered the payments on behalf of its five council partners, including West Suffolk Council. The latest data, just out, shows by the end of June that West Suffolk along with other ARP partners were part of the 11 councils who achieved 100% of its scheme payments

– placing ARP authorities in the top 4% of the 308 English councils. The partners were the only five councils in the East of England to have paid 100%.

Next came the discretionary scheme which targeted households who weren't eligible for a grant under the main scheme but who already received a reduction to their Council Tax due to income or a disability. ARP recently made the last of its automatic payments to eligible households under the discretionary scheme, using up more than 80 per cent of the five partners' discretionary pots.

Yet more work is now being done to encourage residents who have not yet received a rebate payment and are suffering financial hardship to make a claim.

This outstanding achievement is the result of a huge team effort between ARP and several teams across the council to design, run, publicise and deliver the schemes – helping make a real difference to West Suffolk communities.

**Update on
Council Tax
Rebate Grant
to help with rising
energy bills**

West Suffolk
Council



A new report shows West Suffolk Council is on course to reach its aim of net carbon zero while taking a lead in helping businesses and communities do their bit to tackle climate change.

[The report](#) to Cabinet explained how the work the Council is doing to tackle climate change is bringing other benefits such as reducing fuel bills, and improving health and well being.

West Suffolk Council is a member of the influential UK100 group, the UK's only network of climate ambitious local and regional leaders committed to delivering Net Zero ahead of the Government's 2050 target and tackling air pollution. Aligning the policies on clean air and climate will save lives and money, and West Suffolk is calling for Government support to deliver cleaner air, warmer homes and a more secure future for our communities.

The report focuses on the council's environmental achievements over the financial year 2021 to 2022, while it was supporting businesses and communities through the pandemic. In 2010, the baseline for emissions measurement, showed the council and Abbeycroft Leisure together produced 8215 tonnes of CO₂e. In 2021-22 this has reduced to 4859 tonnes.

The report shows that:

- Emissions down 41% compared to 2010 baseline and down 15% compared to 2019-20
- Renewable energy generated up 138% compared to 2012 and up 41% compared to 2019-20
- Total owned vehicle emissions down 13% compared to 2010-11 baseline and down 9% compared to 2019-20

- Business travel down 68% compared to 2010 baseline and down 51% compared to 2019-20
- Total water consumption down 43% compared to baseline and down 35% compared to 2019-20
- Total West Suffolk House waste down 58% compared to 2012 baseline
- The recycling rate 82.34%, up 51% compared to 2019-20
- Total West Suffolk House waste down 56% compared to 2019-20
- During 2021-22, we held six Green Flag status parks
- Public electric vehicle (EV) chargers installed by WSC can support 67 EVs charging at the same time
- Energy delivered to drivers powered 353,170 miles
- 318 trees and 560 hedge plants planted during 2021-22

Overview of environmental performance during 2021-22



Suffolk launches £150,000 Match Funder scheme for community action on the climate emergency – Green Suffolk

The fund will support community groups with up to 50% of the cost of their climate change project, to a maximum of £10,000.

The Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Funder has been set up by the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership (SCCP), which includes West Suffolk Council, to contribute towards the vision of a carbon neutral Suffolk by 2030.

It welcomes applications on a range of projects or events from installing solar panels and insulation, to promoting walking and cycling.

There is no deadline for applications, they will be considered on a first-come-first-served basis until all the fund has been allocated. More information and the simple application process is available at www.greensuffolk.org



West Suffolk has been part of a record-breaking year for the nationally acclaimed Green Flag Award, as the scheme marks its Silver Jubilee.

This is the third year that West Suffolk Council has celebrated six of its parks and open spaces winning the award. The Council has had at least one Green Flag every year for the last 13 years.

The award is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces and is an added attraction for the towns and areas the flag winning facilities are in or nearby.

The six West Suffolk parks that have been awarded a Green Flag this year are:

- Abbey Gardens Bury St Edmunds
- Nowton Park Bury St Edmunds
- Brandon Country Park
- East Town Park Haverhill
- West Stow Country Park
- Aspal Close Mildenhall

This follows the Abbey Gardens in Bury St Edmunds being rated the fifth top free attraction visited in the country.

Parks and open spaces play a vital role in supporting the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors as well as protecting the local heritage and environment.

West Suffolk Council's parks and open spaces join green spaces as diverse as the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, Woodhouse Park in Peterlee and Chiswick Old Cemetery in London.

Follow this link (highlighted in blue) on YouTube to see the shareable film about it: [Green Flag Awards 2022 celebration - YouTube](#)



[Download](#)

[Strong demand for new apartments at town centre redevelopment \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk)

New apartments in the redevelopment of the former Post Office in Bury St Edmunds are now on the market – with nine out of the 12 of them already under offer.

West Suffolk Council is behind the redevelopment at 17-18 Cornhill, Bury St Edmunds, which was vacated by the Post Office in 2016.

The redevelopment keeps the Victorian Cornhill front, bringing it back into use, widens Market Thoroughfare at ground floor level by more than 50 per cent to 3.8m, and creates a new commercial frontage onto St Andrews Street South.

It includes two ground floor commercial units with 12 apartments above. Those apartments are being marketed by Bedfords Estate Agents. Offers have already been accepted for six of the apartments.

This investment by the Council follows the views expressed by the public in the town centre masterplan and is part of the authority's aim to support town centres, economic regeneration as well as providing a range of housing.

For more on the project visit www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/cornhill



Follow this link (highlighted in blue) on YouTube to see the shareable film about it: [The Old Post Office - July visit - YouTube](#)

[Local businesses and people attended the Haverhill](#) Skills and Job Fair in July.

The event, delivered in partnership by West Suffolk Council and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) was open to the general public and followed on from the success of a similar fair in Newmarket earlier this year.

Some 17 local employers and training support providers attended, all with job vacancies they were keen to fill. There were a variety of positions available to jobseekers, from nurse apprenticeships to welders.

Skills and Jobs Fairs are part of West Suffolk Council's support as it is a priority for the council to support skills development and boost economic growth and Skills and Jobs Fairs are part of that work.

Putting Suffolk on the big screen

Public Sector Leaders have agreed steps to continue to attract filmmakers to the region – putting Suffolk on the big screen.

Since investing in Screen Suffolk in 2016, the county's profile has rocketed, with filming days in the region increasing from around 30 days a year to over 800 – and Suffolk landscape and locations featuring in recent blockbusters such as Yesterday, The Dig, The Personal History of David Copperfield, which was filmed in Bury St Edmunds and Downton Abbey, plus hit TV series such as BBC 4's The Detectorists. The county's scenery has also attracted brands such as Burberry, Barclays Bank and Marks and Spencer to film adverts locally – bringing an estimated direct spend of £11.5m into the Suffolk economy.

Suffolk Public Sector Leaders (SPSL) Group – which includes West Suffolk Council, the county's local authorities, Suffolk Police, the Integrated Care System and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) – the partners agreed to extend the current contract with Screen Suffolk by five years and invest a further £16k per year.



New approach explored to bring cinema to Newmarket ([westsuffolk.gov.uk](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk))

West Suffolk Council is supporting the Jockey Club's aspiration of finding a way to bring a cinema to Newmarket following positive public feedback for the concept of developing screens in the Subscription Rooms.

Due to rising costs from the pandemic and cost of living increases, West Suffolk Council has accepted that its original scheme for building a cinema at The Guineas is no longer viable.

In 2019, following extensive research, the council had produced a fully costed and designed business case for a four screen cinema, two restaurants, car parking reconfiguration and public realm works in Newmarket town centre, adjacent to the Guineas Shopping Centre and multi-storey car park. In agreeing to progress each stage of the project, councillors were clear that the business case must be financially sustainable.

In March 2020, Covid-19 hit with widespread economic impacts and the council focused on providing support for local businesses and communities. The business case has now been updated to include the market impacts of the pandemic and cost of living rises. This shows that construction costs have risen, while audience levels and rent levels have fallen making the scheme financially unviable.

However, the council still aims to help bring a cinema to Newmarket and is sharing the information, reports and commercial contacts it gathered during the process with The Jockey Club.

The Jockey Club held a consultation in the Newmarket area and the concept of a boutique cinema at the Subscription Rooms had 85% support from the public who took part.

Below is an artist impression of what a new entrance to the cinema could look like from the High Street, Newmarket - Credit: The Jockey Club.



[Funding for Budding Young Hospitality Students \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk)

West Suffolk Council has secured £10,000 worth of funding from Suffolk Growth for a project focused on changing perceptions of the hospitality sector and the visitor economy in West Suffolk.

The funding from Suffolk Growth is for a project focused on changing perceptions of the hospitality sector and the visitor economy in West Suffolk.

The project, 'Choose Hospitality', will be delivered in partnership with West Suffolk College and local hospitality leaders to celebrate the varied career options on offer within the sector.

In addition to the project inspiring young people into the industry and training new generations of talent to support local businesses with recruitment issues, 'Choose Hospitality' will help young people gain cooking skills to allow them to make food on a budget which is particularly important with the current cost of living crisis.

To inspire and support young people looking at a future in the hospitality sector, those starting a relevant apprenticeship or study programme at West Suffolk College are to be offered a 'Welcome to Hospitality' incentive payment of £300. This grant can be used by students to cover some of the costs of buying uniforms and equipment, and to help with travel costs.



For those aged 10 to 15 years there is Junior Chef, an introductory stage programme specifically designed to give young people a chance to experience working in a professional kitchen. Whether they fancy a career as a chef or just want to have fun, it is a brilliant opportunity to learn new skills and techniques. Part of the funding will be allocated to providing bursaries for this programme.

[The junior Chef Competition \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://westsuffolk.gov.uk) is now open

Budding young chefs aged 10 to 15 years can enter our competition to win a funded place on an eight week cookery course at West Suffolk College.

To enter all they need to do is tell us what they love about food and upload a picture of their favourite dish that they have cooked.

The lucky winners will have the chance to cook up a storm each week, learning new skills, techniques and recipes in a professional kitchen. They could discover a future career path, or simply use their new knowledge to show off at home to family and friends. In each session, they will be cooking from scratch with fresh ingredients. In the final week, they will cook and serve a two course meal to up to four invited guests.

More information and how to apply can be found at [West Suffolk College: Choose Hospitality - Junior Chef Competition, 1 August to 31 August 2022](https://westsuffolk.ac.uk/choose-hospitality)



CALLING ALL JUNIOR CHEFS
ENTER TO WIN AN 8 WEEK COOKERY COURSE AT WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE FOR 10-15 YEAR OLDS

CHOOSE HOSPITALITY

To enter tell us what you love about food and upload a picture of your favourite dish that you have cooked.

Competition entry closes on Wednesday 31 August.

Find out more and enter at wsc.ac.uk/choose-hospitality

Logos at the bottom include: European Union, VENI PARTNERSHIP, Suffolk Growth, West Suffolk Council, and WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE SIXTH FORM.

Our markets have been making their mark as young traders have made it through local, and regional heats.

[Young Traders compete in local heats of the Young Traders Market 2022](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk)
([westsuffolk.gov.uk](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk))

West Suffolk markets hosted two local heats in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill for the National Market Trader Federations Young Trader Competition 2022.

Some 20 traders, all under 30, took part across the two markets, with two overall winners and ten highly commended. This is part of the Council's work to grow its markets as part of improving the local economy as well as the health and wellbeing benefits they bring. The competition helps to encourage new and young traders as well as highlight their businesses.

The young traders were judged on their products, customer service skills, professionalism and how they interacted with the other market traders. Cllr Robert Everitt, Cabinet Member for Families and Communities, West Suffolk Council and Chris Morris, Senior Reporter, Bury Free Press judged the Bury St Edmunds entrants and Cllr John Burns, West Suffolk Councillor for Haverhill East and Cllr Paul Firman, Haverhill Town Councillor and long-standing market trader judged the Haverhill entrants.



The winners and those highly commended from these competitions went through to a regional heat in Bury St Edmunds held on Wednesday 27 July. Which saw Sophie Clarke, 25, from Mildenhall, who runs Sophie Clarke Designs crowned winner of the regional heat.

You can read more about the heat and those taking part as well as the media coverage by following the link below.

[Mildenhall designer scoops the Young Trader of the Year regional competition in Bury St Edmunds \(suffolknews.co.uk\)](#)

[Councils awarded £60k for gum busting clean up \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

West Suffolk Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are among the first of 40 council areas to receive cash from chewing gum manufacturers to help remove the mess left when gum is left on the street.

The money comes from a fund established by the [Government's Chewing Gum Task Force](#), established with major gum manufacturers including Mars Wrigley and Perfetti Van Melle, to tackle chewing gum stains.

The successful £59,940 bid was made jointly by the three councils. It will pay for specialised equipment that will leave paving close to its original condition, training for staff, and measures to stop gum being dropped in the first place.

The Council has made protecting the environment a priority and this is a great opportunity to tackle gum pollution which is a blight and uses precious resources to clean up when people could dispose of it themselves.

Behaviour change is a large part of the campaign. Proven signage will be displayed in freshly cleaned areas and the scheme will be kept under review to see how effective it is. Initially the Council will target high-traffic hotspots before moving on to work to a district wide programme.

The schemes builds on work done in West Suffolk town centres over the winter and spring using 'Welcome Back' funding.



[Red Lodge blue badge abuser prosecuted and ordered to pay £3,504 as part of council initiative \(suffolknews.co.uk\)](https://www.suffolknews.co.uk)

An individual has been prosecuted as part of an initiative by Councils in Suffolk to tackle the abuse of the Blue Badge scheme.

Peter Harrell, of Jasmine Road, Red Lodge, pleaded not guilty on 27 May 2022 at Ipswich Magistrates to altering a blue badge with the intent to deceive, contrary to section 115 of the Road Traffic Act 1984. During a trial on 10 August 2022, Mr Harrell was found guilty and fined £660, and was also ordered to pay investigatory and legal costs of £2778 and a surcharge of £66.

Mr Harrell was parked on the Access to Guineas Service Road in Newmarket in November 2021 when a Civil Parking Enforcement Officer (CEO) from West Suffolk District Council noticed that on the badge on display in Mr Harrell's vehicle the expiry date had been tampered with and the photo defaced and told him that it would be seized.

Mr Harrell told the CEO that the badge belonged to his mother, but an investigation by Suffolk County Council's Counter-Fraud Service found that she had passed away in August 2020 and the badge had been cancelled the following month. It should then have been returned to the council's Blue Badge team.

[How to HAF happy, active children this holiday \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://westsuffolk.gov.uk)

Film making, adventure, dance, horse riding, creative arts, sports, swimming and outdoor cooking are among the free, fun activities on offer to families in West Suffolk this summer.

West Suffolk Council is working with a range of partners across district to help families through the summer holidays as part of the Government's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. Eligibility for free places is based on children and families who are on benefits-related free school meals or pupil premium or where there is an identified need (such as being in care, bereavement, or if they are homeless). Other places are available at a small cost.

A wide variety of sessions are on offer, in and around Brandon, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Mildenhall and Newmarket. Visit [West Suffolk - holiday events](#) for full details.



Our teams have continued to work through the heatwave to deliver essential services such as emptying bins. To help the teams during the high temperatures the Council has run a successful social media campaign asking people to make sure their bins are out from 6am. Communities have been responding positively to the message with only one complaint of a missed bin during the highest temperatures. People have also been giving bottled water and frozen lollies to the crews, who have been so grateful they have helped make a film thanking residents and reminding them how to help them with bins out by 6am. The graphic

below and link to one of the latest examples of a Tweet is part of the campaign and can be shared by anyone.

https://twitter.com/West_Suffolk/status/1557012599350468609?s=20&t=-44R8gYS_7Hed4IW5TNTHQ



Follow this link (highlighted in blue) on YouTube to see the shareable film of our crews thanking residents for helping them ["Thank you" from West Suffolk Bin crews - YouTube](#)



Bank Holiday bin collection changes - one day late

Bin collections in West Suffolk will be one day late during week beginning Monday 29 August because of the bank holiday.

There will be no bin collections on August Bank Holiday Monday 29 August. All bins due to be collected that week will be emptied one day late. This means bins due to be emptied on Friday 2 September will be collected on Saturday 3 September. Please make sure you have your bins out by 6.30am on the morning of collection.

You can check your collections online <https://maps.westsuffolk.gov.uk/>

Please feel free to share the link and graphic below.



Don't lose your voice ([westsuffolk.gov.uk](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk))

We are asking residents to keep an eye out for our annual canvass communications, to help the Council make sure we have the right details on the electoral register.

The Council is contacting over 80,000 households with easy instructions to follow to ensure residents are registered and able to have their say at elections. Please feel free to also share this message.

The annual canvass, which is a legal requirement, is currently being carried out and ensures that West Suffolk Council can keep the electoral register up to date. It helps identify any residents who are not registered to vote so that they can be encouraged to do so.

West Suffolk Council is responsible for voter registration and administers all elections and referendums in the district. The next scheduled elections will be in May 2023 for district, town and parish councils.

This is the third year the council will be contacting households by email and text messages, where this information has been supplied by electors. Postal forms will be sent during August and September to households where this information is not held. Personal visits to non-responding households will then take place in the autumn.



Mike Chester



District Councillor for the Chedburgh and Chevington Ward
Chair of West Suffolk District Council