

## **August 2014 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks**

### **Suffolk and Norfolk strike waste deal**

A landmark deal which will see waste from Norfolk turned into energy in Suffolk, has now been signed. The agreement between the two authorities will see 40,000 tonnes of Norfolk's residual household waste turned into electricity at Suffolk's new Energy from Waste (EFW) plant in Great Blakenham. The agreement is subject to Defra approval, but waste is expected to start being delivered to the plant in August. Both councils stand to make savings of around £1million each over the course of the two-year deal. Under the new agreement, the waste will be transported to the Suffolk plant in eight HGVs per day, using the designated lorry routes across the two counties' road networks. The EFW site is able to handle up to 269,000 tonnes of waste a year. With SCC committed to sending 170,000 tonnes for treatment, the spare capacity was always going to be filled by waste transported from elsewhere in eastern England. As a result, this deal doesn't increase the total amount of waste going to the site, or the number of lorries transporting the waste. What the deal does do, is ensure that the county council benefits directly, both in terms of the arrangements, and with around £500,000 annual savings for the two years of the deal.

### **County council agrees to consult on the future of Suffolk's children's centres**

A review and public consultation looking at the future of children's centres in Suffolk has been agreed by SCC. Councillors were asked whether or not they support a proposal to run a twelve-week survey seeking views on potential changes. The majority of councillors voted in favour of a review and consultation to take place. During the meeting it was also announced that Frank Field MP would be providing his expertise to the county council in this review. The cost of running or maintaining some of the buildings is disproportionately high when compared to the number of people using it. The county council is determined to find more effective value for money, wherever possible. The services themselves will continue, although may be delivered from nearby children's centres, other local community facilities or via home visits direct to the families that need support. This approach will help those that, for transport reasons, struggle to get to children's centres. Any final decisions will be made by county council's cabinet in December 2014, following analysis of the consultation responses.

### **£5.7million fund to help energy efficiency at home**

SCC has joined forces with the district and borough councils to offer a new energy efficiency service, Suffolk Energy Action. With a grant of £5.7m from the government, the scheme will provide funding and advice for the installation of energy efficiency improvements. A primary focus will be on homes that could benefit from solid wall insulation, as 45% of heat in a home will be escaping through the walls if they are not insulated. Insulating solid walls could save people up to between £300 and £600 per year. Suffolk residents will be able to get heavily-discounted assessments on the energy performance of homes, which will identify potential improvements. They will then receive options and advice for funding, which could be up to £6000 towards the cost of the installation. Local councils are working with community groups and partners like the Rural Coffee Caravan, who will be in Debenham outside Neaves Butchers on Wednesday 8th October, to help raise awareness of the scheme within the local community. For more information about funding go to [www.suffolkenergyaction.org](http://www.suffolkenergyaction.org), call 0800 840 90 90 or email [info@suffolkenergyaction.org](mailto:info@suffolkenergyaction.org)

### **'Reducing the Strength' campaign hailed for cutting crime**

Crimes committed by street drinkers have dramatically fallen thanks to a nationally-acclaimed campaign to banish super-strength alcohol from being sold in Ipswich. More than 100 out of around 140 retailers across the town have taken the pledge not to sell low-cost, high-volume alcohol and signed up to the 'Reducing the Strength' campaign. According to figures in Suffolk's first Health and Wellbeing annual report, the pioneering initiative has led to a 43% reduction of crime committed by street drinkers in a year. Reducing the Strength was launched in September 2012 as part of a multi-agency strategy to eradicate the anti-social problem behaviour of street drinkers which has serious effects on consumers and communities. It was set up by police and partner agencies including the East of England Co-op, Suffolk Constabulary, Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk County Council and is backed by the *Ipswich Star* and BBC Radio Suffolk. Reducing the Strength won national recognition for being the "most innovative scheme" in the country in the first year after its launch.

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