WEST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILLOR SUSAN GLOSSOP

RISBY PARISH COUNCIL

Annual report 2025

Committees on which I serve.

Development control
Overview and scrutiny committee
Officer's appeal committee
Staff consultive panel
West Suffolk Rural Bus Service panel

Outside bodies

West Stow Anglo Saxon Village Trust
Feoffment Trust

85% Attendance record for all Council meetings

Council tax April 2025 – 2026

Band D £203.67 increase of 11p per week 5.85 per year extra

Band A £3.90 per year extra

Band B £4.55 per year extra

Band C £5.20 per year extra

Locality budget spend April 2024 -April 2025

Risby Wildlife group	Duck crossing signs	£273.50
Culford village hall	adaptations to the hall	£750.00
Lackford Lakes	East Anglia Story telling events	£250.00
Suffolk Willd trust	creation of footpath Flempton to West Stow	£1,200.00
Risby brownies	support for activities	£326.50

The groups listed below have received a grant offer through the Decarbonisation Initiative Fund

Culford Club- solar PV and battery storage system, grant value £5,000

Culford Village Hall- solar PV and battery storage system, grant value £7,666

Lackford lakes visitors centre- air source heat pump and LED lighting. Grant value £8,000

St Giles church Risby-new heating system. Grant value £10,000

West stow and Wordwell club- now looking at solar PV. Grant value £5,000

Risby village hall were offered a grant, but have since withdrawn their interest due to other funding priorities

Planning Applications

Planning applications are of importance to residents several individual planning applications have been made. Most applications have been approved enabling people to build extensions or make alterations to their property. Not all applications go smoothly however, and I would strongly advise people wanting to put in an application to talk to the Parish Council who make comments pertinent to each application. It is worth having pre-application advice from Planning Officers. I am also readily available to discuss any individual plans with anyone in the village and I frequently act as a go-between between resident and Planning Officer to try to resolve any problems on an informal basis.

The Steel stock application was a large piece of work for the parish council and the residents' group however the application was refused which was welcomed by the residents however there is now an appeal which has been lodged by the company for a hearing in front of an inspector.

Garden Waste Collection

The cost of a brown bin £53 per year for 2024

link for signing up on line: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/gardenwaste

Issues raised by the Community

Many of the issues have been highway issues which the Suffolk County Councillor are responsible for. There has been concern raised about the speeding of the traffic and the very large lorries using the roads through the villages and not the directions diversion routes when the A14 has been having refurbishing work carried out overnight.
Fly tipping
Speeding traffic through the villages
Maintenance of public rights of way
Dog fouling
Flooding has been a big issue
Public footpaths overgrown with weeds
The use of the byways by 4x4's and motor bikes

Flooding has been a major problem with need for better management of ditches and drains being maintained to deal with the excessive water.

Devolution

The Government's plans for devolution, which are set out in the English Devolution White Paper English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth - GOV.UK includes the creation of mayoral authorities and the reorganisation of Local Government.

The Government invited areas to apply by 10 January 2025 to be part of its Devolution Priority Programme which would see mayors elected in May 2026. County or unitary councils are the only authorities that can request this. Suffolk County Council made the request as well as asking to postpone their May elections.

Angela Rayner MP, the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, confirmed in parliament Suffolk will be part of the Devolution Priority Programme which would see a Mayoral Authority set up covering Suffolk and Norfolk. It is expected that mayoral elections will take place in May 2026.

In addition, it agreed to Suffolk County Council's request to delay its elections in May 2025.

Suffolk County Council has released a statement in response to the latest announcements by Government Suffolk on the fast-track towards complete council restructuring and devolution - Suffolk County Council

Government has written to all two tier areas nationally regarding Local Government Reorganisation.

Whatever solution comes forward from Local Government reorganisation it must benefit West Suffolk's communities, the focus must make sure we keep the local in Local Government.

Update

Councils invited to submit interim plans by the 21st March 2025

Consultation deadline 13th April 2025 led by the Government

Final detailed business proposals submissions 26th September 2025

Election of Mayor for Norfolk/Suffolk 26th May 2026

Shadow unitary elections May 2027

New unitary April 2028

Solar for business

We have made an agreement with Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to offer companies in their area access to our successful Solar for Business initiative.

This is a pilot between the three councils to help support businesses save money, reduce their impact on the environment and of course provide and income to support council services.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils asked if we could extend our initiative into their area to support their businesses and their environmental ambitions. West Suffolk Council will retain the income from any projects delivered in their areas and, of course, the scheme remains open to West Suffolk businesses.

Businesses can reduce their carbon emissions and save money on energy bills by signing up to have solar panels provided and installed on their premises, for free.

Electricity generated by the panels is then sold to the business at a rate lower than their current tariff and help reduce energy bills.

Solar for Business has been running successfully in West Suffolk for nine years – helping more than a hundred companies to save a total of around £700,000 and 2,000 tonnes in harmful CO_2 emissions per year.

Businesses across Babergh and Mid Suffolk will now also be able to sign up to the scheme.

To be eligible, businesses must be within West Suffolk, Babergh or Mid Suffolk's district boundaries, and must have a minimum electricity consumption of 5,000kWh per year. For a firm paying 25p/kWh this would mean electricity bills of around £1250 per year.

To find out more about the scheme, businesses can email: environment@westsuffolk.gov.uk, call 01284 757631 or visit: www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/solarforbusiness

This pilot is a great example of councils working together and using our local knowledge and expertise to deliver initiatives tailored for our local businesses. It also is part of our strategic priority for sustainable growth and environmental resilience.

Housing Pathway Service

The aim of this new service will be to help house and support vulnerable people and to further West Suffolk Council's work in preventing and reducing homelessness.

The new West Suffolk Housing Pathway will be tailored to individual needs to help people who need support either in sustaining accommodation or to maintain independent living.

This will include support for people with learning difficulties or mental health needs, people battling drug or alcohol addiction, homeless people and ex-offenders. It will also help people who are working but who need additional support.

The launch of the new service by West Suffolk Council, follows directly on from the aims and actions set out in our Housing, Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which was shaped through public engagement and adopted late last year.

We have secured 39 beds – all previously supported with Housing related Support (HRS). The new service will offer three levels of support from accommodation only through to high level care for people with complex needs who may pose a risk to themselves and others.

Our continued emphasis will be on homelessness prevention while also breaking the pattern of repeat homelessness that sadly happens for some of the people we help.

As agreed last year, the new housing pathway service is backed with £200,000 a year of funding from the council's housing reserves.

The new service follows on from changes by Suffolk County Council to only fund HRS for people to whom it has a statutory responsibility.

While the changes to HRS were initially due to take effect on 1 April 2024, Suffolk Public Sector Leaders provided interim funding for a year to allow time for the district and borough councils to look at alternative provision.

Through this new service we are helping the most vulnerable people in our communities while also working to deliver on some of the key aims set out in our strategy to tackle and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping.

The use of Glyphosate

Following the ban of using Glyphosate by West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council the control of weeds was a very big problem with many complaints of the state of the areas being overgrown with weeds.

SCC Highways took the decision to reinstate its use of Glyphosate weed control from 01 April 2024 on the basis that nothing else they have trialled works anywhere near as effectively.

Programme details can be found here - Weed control - Suffolk County Council

West Suffolk Council has also reinstated the use of Glyphosate on its land.

The strategic priorities for the administration of West Suffolk Council

Affordable available decent homes

Environment resilience

Sustainable growth

Thriving communities

Work on the next local plan for 2024 – 2040

The consultation on the inspectors modifications has been completed the new West Suffolk local plan will be adopted in Summer 2025.

Local tax reduction scheme

This scheme will be extended for another year from the 1st April 2025. This is a means tested scheme that aims to support residents in financial hardship in light of the cost-of-living crisis. The reduction is a 100% on the Council tax reduction scheme and lasts for one year only.

C**ontact details for your District Councillor**

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