

## County Councillor Report



### Stuston Parish Council, October 2023

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**Flood Recovery** - Staff from local authorities and other organisations, co-ordinated by the Joint Emergency Planning Unit, have been working on responses across the county. For many households this is a long and difficult process. Please refer to the following page on our website: [Flood Recovery information for Suffolk - Suffolk County Council](#). Government funds are available for those whose premises have been flooded internally, the County Council is working with districts to distribute funds. Please report these instances with photographs and relevant dates to: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/report-a-highways-issue>

Suffolk County Council is designated as Lead Local Flood Authority, and has a duty to collect information and undertake investigations into “significant” flood events. Flooding problem areas and blocked drains should also be reported to the Suffolk Highways web site with a photograph:

**Consultation - Council Budget** - Suffolk County Council seeks views from Suffolk residents, businesses and local communities, as it decides on its 2024/25 budget this January. [An online consultation](#) has been launched about the budget and on council tax. Please do participate.

**Consultation – Suffolk Libraries** – a 13-week two-part consultation is open until **Friday 26 January 2024** to seek views on the future of Suffolk’s library services. A competitive Tender Process will follow with a new contract awarded in November 2024. A key focus is the council’s Library Outreach services and the three mobile library vehicles. These serve at least 500 stops across rural Suffolk each month and consideration needs to be given to their replacement. Outreach services include Pop-up Libraries and a home library service run by volunteers. Please do respond to this consultation if you value the current services or have ideas on how they might adapt on: <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/about/news/suffolk-county-councils-library-consultation-process>

**Bus Service Improvements** - £3.6million is available over the next two years for enhancements to the current passenger transport network. Some of this goes to bus companies to support existing services, and some into design work on Bus Priority schemes. Parishes have been invited to participate in BSIP meetings to discuss investment, the next being 14<sup>th</sup> November. Refer to: [Suffolk on Board - News / Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus: Where should the money be spent?](#)

**Highways Signage** – This is a good time to identify missing or damaged road signs as some funding is available to replace them. Please report signage to be replaced or repaired with photographs on the Highways reporting tool along with a photograph: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/report-a-highways-issue>

**Pylons Project and Grid Reinforcement** – It has been noted that exploratory drilling has already been initiated in the Upper Waveney Valley area and Wortham Ling SSSI at potential pylon locations. This has been raised with senior officers at SCC and with our MP.

Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex County Councils have jointly commissioned Hiorns Smart Energy Networks to prepare an independent report into the Norwich to Tilbury project. Leaders of the three councils are asking National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) and the electricity system planner, National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) to consider the findings. The final report is available to read in full [here](#) or <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/n2t-the-hiorns-report.pdf>

**Large Scale Solar Energy Developments** – SCC Cabinet Member Richard Rout has written to ministers objecting to the large land-take demanded by land based solar. Cllr Rout's letter can be found at: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/suffolk-cc-nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-very-large-scale-solar-farms-24-10-23-redacted.pdf>

An example of a potential large-scale array is the **Yaxley Green Energy Centre** about 450MW of PV Solar array and Battery storage. <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/14437282> (<https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/14437282>)

Other major solar proposals on land are coming forward which individually do not exceed the 50 MW threshold to be considered NSIPs, such as recently approved near Palgrave and pending near Worham; these in combination with others may well exceed the NSIP threshold however they are decided by individually by district councils. The result is that Suffolk and England are losing large areas of productive agricultural land which changes the rural landscape without the benefit of an overarching land use, food security or energy policy for guidance.

**The Government Network Review** - underpins targets for offshore wind, solar and new infrastructure; it assumes a 70% increase in demand by 2050 due to growth, electrification (EVs, heating/ cooling), and desalination. Targets include solar capacity increasing from 14.5 to 70GW by 2035 and wind from 14 to 50 GW by 2030. A Senior Research Associate at Aurora Energy said Britain would have to build as much offshore wind capacity between 2028 and 2030 as it is set to build from 2000 to 2027 to meet the 50 GW target. These targets do not take into account the actual output factors for solar and wind, which for solar are around 14.5%, and wind closer to 30% nor the necessary power distribution infrastructure. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/offshore-transmission-network-review/offshore-transmission-network-review-summary-of-outputs#the-offshore-transmission-network-review-conception-objective-and-approach>

**Shepherd's Grove, Stanton – Jaynic and Equation Developments** – Nothing new to report, the Co-Part application has been withdrawn.

Please get in touch with me if you have questions or comments: [Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk)  
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