

# Framlingham – December 2024 Newsletter

Vince Langdon-Morris

District Councillor

May I start this newsletter by wishing you all a Happy Christmas and New year. It has been wonderful to work with all of you across the Framlingham ward!

## A Recent Visit to RSPB Minsmere

East Suffolk District Council supports RSPB Minsmere to achieve UNESCO World Heritage status, one of five sites nominated for World Heritage status by our government.

Minsmere is located on a globally important route for migratory waterbirds (the *East Coast Flyway*) that runs from the Humber Estuary to the mouth of the Thames with RSPB Minsmere at its heart. Our local wetlands include: Benacre to Easton Bavents, Minsmere to Walberswick and Alde-Ore/Deben estuaries.



*I recently joined a South Korean delegation to RSPB Minsmere. They visited to study our Minsmere wetlands and to consider emulating this (their country also straddles a major bird flyway)!*

Our wetlands support over 155 bird species migrating thousands of miles from the Arctic, Northern Canada, Greenland and Siberia, and many continue onward to Africa. Hence the full name, the *East Atlantic Flyway*.

More than a million waterbirds overwinter on our coastline, a global exemplar of nature conservation management and well-planned adaptation in response to climate change. UNESCO recognition would, create a lever for investment into local communities, improve their wellbeing, drive ecotourism, support infrastructure, research and educational opportunities. It also puts East Suffolk on the global map and brings it the international recognition it deserves.

## Framlingham Flood Resilience and Recovery Working Group

My thanks go to the continuing effort and time given by our Working Group. We recently hosted a visit by East Suffolk District, and Suffolk County Councils, the Joint Emergency Planning Unit and Environment Agency at our Castle Community Rooms. The event called “*Increasing our resilience to Flooding*” (see flyer) was well attended by ward residents and beyond.

An official at the event noted that Framlingham was ‘well ahead’ of other areas, and the statutory Suffolk County Council (SCC) Section 19 flood report was the first to be completed.



### Community Drop-in:

#### Increasing our resilience to flooding

Framlingham and the River Ore catchment communities

Friday 29 November 3.30pm to 6.30pm

Castle Community Rooms  
Church Street  
Framlingham IP13 9BQ

Speak to the Environment Agency, County and District Councils and your local Community groups about preparing for flooding and ways to reduce the impact on your household or business.

Find out about Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures, riparian ownership, updated flood warning service in your area, emergency planning and how a catchment-based approach can help.



The working group has recently assessed and compiled a consolidated response to the Section 19 report and also our 'Amazi' report (see this link to [Framlingham Town Council Website and reports](#)). This response will soon be finalised and submitted back to Suffolk County Council. It will also be shared widely for public review and feedback.

The Suffolk County Council [Property flood resilience \(PFR\)](#) grant scheme. As of 30th July 2024, 31 applications for PFR grants had been submitted to SCC (against 227 affected houses eligible). The grant take up has been low but there could be a pipeline of applications, where residents are still commissioning surveys and seeking quotes for work to be done? SCC is advertising the PFR grants, please apply as this funding opportunity ends in April 2025.



Castle Community Rooms, 'Increasing our Resilience to Flooding' event

Here are some pictures taken recently in Sweffling Village, the Parish and Community are working on clearing ditches running through their village.



**Resilience Coordinator.** East Suffolk District Council will welcome a Resilience Co-ordinator in the new year. The new job is designed to support our parish and town councils to build preparedness and resilience to future climate and emergency related events (we have experienced Covid and Storm Babet in the past 4 years).

I'm the ESC Cabinet Member for Resources and Value for Money and have also recently established a £500,000 Resilience Emergency Response Fund. This fund is specifically designed to provide immediate financial support to parish and town councils affected in future emergencies across our district (such as the Storm Babet flooding on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023) and will be overseen by the new Resilience Coordinator.

**Framlingham. New housing, a brief synopsis.** As many of you following the national news will know, central government wants to centralise us into larger unitary councils, removing existing County, District, Borough structures. There are also discussions to create a devolved mayoral system (combined Norfolk and Suffolk suggested). Alongside these discussions our existing District new housing numbers have been increased by Government from 900 to 1500 per annum, with a demand to 'speed' up approval of planning applications. See recent article to remove 'subjectivity', [Rayner calls in plans for 8,400-home Kent garden village](#). In my personal view housing policy has been largely defined by the private sector over the past two decades, see [Special Advisors \(SPADs\)](#) and [developers](#) links.

Our current Framlingham [Neighbourhood plan](#) was ‘made’ in 2017. We have now been asked by ESC planning to update this plan and agree further land allocations, up to 2050. Our [Suffolk Coastal Local Plan](#) is at the top of the pyramid, in what is called a ‘plan-led’ approach (*in reality this SCLP largely supersedes our aspirational and locally developed Neighbourhood Plan, which contains lots of innovation and urgently needed climate adaptation actions*). Unfortunately, of 500 new houses built thus far, virtually none have solar energy as standard or EV charge points. Instead of Sustainable Urban Development or SuD we get Sustainable Underlying Drainage, also ‘SuD’, which I can personally attest is ineffective (personal observation, Storm Babet) :-)

Post Storm Babet, our existing flood zone mapping must be urgently updated by the Environment Agency, and not used for sign-off of new planning permissions until this is done. Developers are already sensing change in future land allocation, evidenced by [Belways recent presentation](#) at Castle Community rooms (via private pre-application meetings with ESC, and encouragement to ‘communicate’ construction intentions with residents well in advance). More recently Suffolk County Council received a ‘Section 278’ application to straighten the ‘S’ bends on Victoria Mill Road, prior to beginning development of 35 self-build (non CiL paying) homes, officially allocated in our current neighbourhood plan. My concern is personal observation of what Storm Babet flooding did in this area, near the towns flood epicentre, and the absence of adequate flood alleviation in this development?

My sense is there is now real potential for planning permission to be rapidly upscaled and ‘implemented’ by central government, using an updated Suffolk Coastal [local plan](#)? I consider myself a ‘yes in my backyard’ YIMBY person, but we really need the right housing, in the right location at the right price (especially for people who perhaps like to downsize and free up the preponderance of larger family homes). I estimate that current housebuilding across Fram has netted £40 million (plus) [profit](#) with little investment in upgrading the towns infrastructure. In return we have received roughly £1.32 million of Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) to upgrade the town? Last year [Rightmove](#) valued the average house price in Framlingham at £360,000, look now folks. Good news for some, not so good news for youngsters and incoming Sizewell workers?

## **Press Release by East Suffolk District Council:**

***Cllr Mark Packard, Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management. Posted 12 December 2024***

Cllr Mark Packard, Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management at East Suffolk Council has issued the following statement [in response to the Government’s announcement regarding the National Planning Policy Framework](#).

“We will need time to fully digest the implications of this announcement. However, it is clear that our response to the Government’s consultation - which laid out our concerns about proposals to enforce unachievable housebuilding targets - have been disregarded.

“We entirely refute the Government’s characterisation of local government as ‘blockers’ to planning, particularly here in East Suffolk where we are quite the opposite. Our Planning Team, the Committees, and the Council more widely are committed to enabling and delivering the right development in the right place in this part of the country.”

“Our current Local Plans already include ambitious plans for housing and economic growth – with just over 900 homes a year and over 20,000 homes to be built during the plans’ lifetime to 2036. This includes seven strategic sites of up to 2,000 homes, including Garden Communities, delivering new community-scale housing and infrastructure over the long term.”

“We recognise the need for more housing in England, given that many local communities, like our own, struggle with housing affordability along with the challenges of second homes in tourism hotspots. However, the significant increase in housing numbers which the Government are now demanding, is entirely unrealistic, and the Government’s top-down approach will drastically undermine public trust in the Planning Process.”

## Greener Fram: [Greener Fram | action for a positive future](#)

Greener Fram has held several meetings at the Unitarian Meeting House and now have three initiatives planned for 2025. Watch this space in the new year for updates.



*Splash of Colour. Planting bulbs at the Mowbrays, donated by East Suffolk Council.*



*Greener Fram Meetings at the UMH*

## Projects We have Launched



### Splash of Colour

We are planting and growing wild flowers on a number of grass verges in Framlingham – we get the seeds and bulbs, obtain permission for each site, and develop an annual maintenance plan. Great for bees and insects, and splashes of colour for Fram. Please join in to help expand this into new areas.



### Food Share Shed

Our sharing shed for excess food grown locally, or bought items surplus to needs, was situated outside the Library. Food was available free for anybody in Framlingham. It has been temporarily removed for repairs and needs to be relocated to a new spot. We now have a possible new home and hope to set this up again soon as a shed with set opening times.



### "Keep the Heat" in Fram

A Team will be assessing properties heat emissions with a thermal imaging camera. You will be able to see how and where heat is being lost from your home. A key step towards reducing energy consumption. Let us know if you would like to sign up for this assessment.



**Press Release from East Suffolk Council. *Inaugural meeting of East Suffolk’s new Youth Council***

An innovative new Youth Council, comprising young people from across East Suffolk has met for the first time, to ensure that their ideas and concerns are heard.

This autumn, thirty-two young people from up and down East Suffolk were elected to the new East Suffolk Youth Council. This initiative is designed to engage young people in politics and enable them to influence decisions affecting their lives and communities.



Following an induction day on 18 November, at which new Youth Councillors were ‘sworn in’ the first official Youth Council meeting took place at Riverside, Lowestoft on Monday, 9 Dec 2024.

As their first item of business, Youth Councillors elected a Chair and Vice-Chair. Both positions were hotly contested. After multiple nominations, speeches and votes, a Chair was elected from St Felix School in Reydon and Vice-Chair from **Thomas Mills High School** in Framlingham.



The Youth Council then turned to their first motion, in which they called upon East Suffolk Council to devote greater resources and attention to youth safety and well-being. With the newly elected Chair presiding ably over discussions, the Youth Councillors emphasised the impacts of social media and the Covid-19 pandemic, and the need for improved youth activities, services and support. The Youth Council carried their motion unanimously and East Suffolk Council must now consider their views.

At the District Councillors Full Council meeting in November 2024, we unanimously agreed to discuss any future / valid motion passed by the Youth Council.

**Cllr Anthony Speca, Chair of East Suffolk Council, said:** “The Youth Council’s unanimous vote on their first motion was an emotional and historic moment. For the first time, the youth of East Suffolk are really setting the agenda. They stepped up, got elected, decided their own priorities, and made their voice heard. They’ve conducted themselves

with such professionalism that they're an example not only to their peers, but to me and my fellow Councillors. I couldn't be more proud."

"The Youth Council is not just a token gesture. They're a real part of our local democracy, with the power to influence East Suffolk Council discussions and to drive positive change. Their first motion is a big step—but it's also just their first step. I'm excited to work with our new Youth Councillors, and I can't wait to see what else they bring to our attention."

## **Wider News East Suffolk News**

### **Fresh opportunity for funding to support East Suffolk residents this winter**

#### **Cost of Living Community Grant Fund**

Voluntary organisations and community groups have another chance to apply for an East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council 'Cost of Living Community Grant' to support individuals and families in communities throughout the district this winter.

The Cost-of-Living Community Grant fund has already supported 17 projects across East Suffolk in round one, ranging from a network of Warm Rooms in Beccles to the Woodbridge CommuniTEA Chinwag and the Emmaus Felixstowe Community Lunch.

Groups can apply for a grant of £500 to £1,500 to run projects between January and March 2025, but are encouraged to get their applications in soon – the second and final round will close on December 16.

Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk Council's Cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism, said: "We had a great spread of projects in round one to help support local residents with warm spaces, food and social opportunities this winter.

When the weather turns cold, as it has over the last week, some residents struggle to stay warm and access hot meals, and can struggle with loneliness.

"We want to enable local organisations to tackle this and support as many people as possible. If you have a great project in mind that could hit the ground running in the new year, please get your application in as soon as you can."

Applications from projects that received a grant in round one, or a Warm Welcome grant from East Suffolk Council this winter, will not be eligible for funding and cannot be considered.

### **November 2024 Parish Report, East Suffolk Council, Green Liberal and Independent (GLI) Group – Councillor Update**

#### ***'Tis the season to reduce, reuse and recycle***

The festive season is a time of joy, celebration and gathering with loved ones to share delicious food and exchange gifts. However, it is also a time when we produce a lot of waste.

This year, we encourage you to celebrate a circular Christmas! So, what does that mean? The circular economy is all about reducing waste, keeping products in use for



longer and promoting sustainability. By reducing, reusing and recycling, we can enjoy the festive spirit while being kinder to the planet – and it's more budget-friendly too!

Let make this Christmas a time of giving – not just to each other, but to the planet as well. Here's some practical tips to help you go circular this Christmas – and beyond:

**Regift unwanted items** Do you have unwanted items or gifts gathering dust? Give them a new lease of life by regifting them to someone who will truly appreciate them!

Whether it's a book, home décor or even a vintage piece, regifting is a budget-friendly and thoughtful way to reduce waste while making someone else's Christmas. Regifting can also include homemade crafts or upcycled items. Need some craft inspiration? [Check out these ideas](#).

**Gift experiences, not things** Instead of physical gifts, consider giving experiences! They create long lasting memories without the environmental impact. From spa days to theatre tickets, experience gifts are a fantastic way to support local businesses while reducing waste.

Local tip: East Suffolk is full of local experiences you can gift! How about a vineyard tour, a fun baking class or a cosy meal in a local restaurant? Find more inspiration with [The Suffolk Coast](#).

**Buy pre-loved** One of the best ways to support the circular economy is by buying pre-loved gifts. Charity shops, antique stores, and local markets often have budget-friendly, unique and sustainable options that give pre-loved items a new lease of life.

Local tip: East Suffolk has many fantastic charity shops for you to explore. [Find your nearest ones](#). And don't forget to check out local [car boot sales](#), where you can find unique treasures and pre-loved gifts at great prices.

**Shop local** Whether searching for the perfect gift or stocking up on festive treats, shopping locally helps reduce the carbon footprint of your purchases. By choosing to shop local, you're not only making a more sustainable choice but also supporting your local community.

Local tip: Small businesses across East Suffolk offer a range of delicious, locally made foods and beautiful handcrafted gifts – from artisanal treats to unique jewellery. Find more information about [shopping in East Suffolk](#). Also, don't miss the [markets](#) taking place across East Suffolk every week. Here you can find local food and drink, such as jams, honey, vegetables, bread, cheeses and ales.

**Upcycle decorations** Instead of buying new Christmas decorations, why not get creative with what you already have? By upcycling, you can transform old or unwanted items into beautiful new pieces, such as garlands made from scrap fabric or festive candle holders made from empty glass jars. [Here's some great ideas](#).

Local tip: East Suffolk has several local repair cafes and groups, so if you need something fixed but aren't sure how to do it, this could be your answer! [Find your nearest one](#).

**Eco-friendly Christmas cards** Choosing eco-friendly Christmas cards is a great way to spread festive cheer while being kind to the planet. Look for cards made from recycled

materials or sustainable paper, or even plantable ones that grow into beautiful flowers or herbs.

Personalised e-cards are another great option. Not only do they save paper, but they can also be personalised with photos and messages, and no stamps are needed!

Feeling crafty? Make your own handmade cards using materials you already have or upcycle old cards for something truly special.

Local tip: When getting rid of old Christmas cards, remember to recycle where possible. Cards without glitter or foil can be recycled in your blue bin at home.

**Wrap sustainably** Many wrapping papers aren't recyclable due to glitter or foil. This year, try using reusable or recycled materials, such as old newspapers, fabric (think scarves or tea towels), or brown paper tied with twine for beautiful, eco-friendly alternatives.

[Here's some ideas](#) to make your gifts stand out while supporting sustainability.

Local tip: If you choose to buy wrapping paper, opt for eco-friendly options that can be recycled in your blue bin at home (avoid glitter or foil). If in doubt, do the scrunch test - if it scrunches and doesn't spring back, you can recycle it!

**Recycle festive waste** Recycling is essential, but it is important to do it right. Most wrapper paper is recyclable, except for glitter or foil-effect papers. You can also recycle cardboard packaging and cards without glitter or foil in your blue bin at home, as well as hard plastic, aluminium foil, newspaper, magazines, cans and plastic bottles.

Local Tip: Find out [what can and cannot be recycled in your blue bin](#) at home. There's also plenty of [recycling options](#) for items like glass and textiles.

**Recycle real Christmas trees** If you've bought a real Christmas tree, remember to recycle it after the festivities for a greener start to the new year.

You can recycle your tree by placing it in your garden waste bin, composting it, or dropping it off at your nearest [recycling centre](#).

You can also support organisations, such as [EACH](#) and [Just Giving](#), that collect real Christmas trees to collect money for charity.

If you bought a potted tree, be sure to plant it in your garden so you can enjoy it for years to come.

Local Tip: Recycling your Christmas tree in your garden waste bin at home is easy—just cut it down to fit, ensuring the trunk and branches are no wider than 6 cm. Not signed up for the garden waste collection scheme yet? You can get 26 collections every year for just £52.50. [Sign up now](#).

**Reduce food waste** The festive season often leads to excess food waste, but there are some simple steps we can all take to reduce this waste:

- Plan your meals carefully to avoid overbuying.
- Stick to a shopping list and check what you already have at home before heading out.



- Turn leftovers into tasty meals such as soups, stir-fries or sandwiches.
- Store extra food in airtight containers and freeze anything you can't eat.
- Got too much extra food? Share it with friends, family or local charities.
- And remember, scraps can be turned into garden gold through home composting.

Local tip: Turn your Christmas leftovers into magic with these delicious recipes from [Food Savvy Suffolk](#).

**And finally, help others by donating things you don't need** If you have items around the home that you no longer want or need, such as toys, clothes or home décor, why not donate them? They could be the perfect gift for someone you've never met! By donating unwanted items in good condition, you're helping someone else enjoy their own circular Christmas and keeping the cycle going.

Local tip: Find your nearest [charity shop](#).

### ***Introducing the first ever East Suffolk Youth Council!***

A new council entirely comprising young people from across East Suffolk has now officially formed, ensuring the voices and concerns of younger residents are heard.

Thirty-two young people from up and down East Suffolk have been elected to the new East Suffolk Youth Council, an innovative initiative designed to engage young people in politics and enable them to influence decisions affecting their lives and communities.

Youth from every secondary educational community in East Suffolk, as well as the homeschooled were invited to stand for election earlier this year. These elections took place ahead of an induction day held at East Suffolk House in Melton on Monday 18 November, where the thirty-two members of the Youth Council were 'sworn in'.

Youth councillors will set their own priorities, have their own debates and reach their own decisions. They will have real and robust connections with East Suffolk Council, to ensure young peoples' voices are heard loud and clear in council decisions, and to drive real change across the district.

GLI Cllr Anthony Specca, Chair of East Suffolk Council said: "The East Suffolk Youth Council is a centrepiece of my Chairship. I'm incredibly proud of our new Youth Councillors, who had the courage to stand for election, and the passion to represent their peers and communities. I'm excited for the ideas and energy they'll bring to our local democracy, and I'm looking forward to working with and alongside them."

As part of their induction, the youth councillors received special training to help them to take up their new roles, understand the structure of council meetings and how motions are brought forward, and set their priorities ahead of the first Youth Council meeting on 9 December.

The Youth Council is apolitical, with its own special rules of procedure designed to promote open discussion. There will be three Youth Council meetings each year – one in-person and two online – with plenty of opportunities between meetings to get together and get things done.

The Youth Council is supported directly by the Chair, as well as other East Suffolk councillors and officers.

### ***Victory in East Suffolk as National Grid Ventures' Nautilus interconnector project set to leave***

East Suffolk Council has welcomed the news from Ofgem that National Grid Ventures' proposed Nautilus project will no longer be connecting within East Suffolk, favouring a connection at the Isle of Grain, Kent.

The news comes after the recent Ofgem Initial Project Assessment (IPA) consultation which sought community and stakeholder feedback on the proposal to relocate the UK's onshore connection for Nautilus within East Suffolk at Friston, as opposed to the recently assessed (and dismissed) Isle of Grain location. The Nautilus project proposes a 1.4 gigawatt electricity interconnector cable due to connect Belgium with the UK, running under the North Sea.

Having made it clear that Ofgem's wish to bring such a project back to East Suffolk, overlooked the significant social and environmental costs, GLI Cllr Tom Daly (Cabinet Member for Energy and Climate Change), is delighted with this development.

He said: "We have been calling on Ofgem to reverse such a decision and allow Nautilus to proceed to the Isle of Grain, rather than putting short term cost advantages before all else - including exploring possible future economies in coordinating multiple projects at a brownfield site rather than peppering our heritage coast with unplanned-for industrial development. The change of heart is welcome news for East Suffolk Council and the local communities it represents.

"The political leadership and technical expertise within East Suffolk Council has enabled Ofgem to see sense and listen to the concerns of local people within the communities set to be impacted by such a project. It has been a long road, however it is moments like today which make it all worthwhile."

### ***Ease the Squeeze on Cost of Living***

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk.

To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place:

**[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/)**

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:

**[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk)**

**View the Well Minds East Suffolk booklet:** [tinyurl.com/9xhka624](http://tinyurl.com/9xhka624)