

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

From West Suffolk District Councillors for the Hundon, Clare and Kedington Ward
Nick Clarke, Karen Richardson and Marion Rushbrook.

West Suffolk Council has once again performed well this year. We have fantastic officers who we work with keeping us updated, many of you have worked with them. Guess we were all hoping to see the end of Covid but it seems we have to learn to live with it. Now with the increase in inflation it is vital to support our communities.

Warm homes

West Suffolk Council has been successful in a £7.1m bid made on behalf of all of Suffolk district councils for money from the Government's Sustainable Warmth fund. This fund is designed to support improvements to low income, low energy efficiency rated homes.

The money will enable work to be carried out to 750 homes in Suffolk. In West Suffolk, we will use £1.6m of the funding for works that will benefit residents in more than 150 homes. This is more important than ever with the growing energy issues residents are feeling.

The latest funds will enable the installation of various energy saving measures including loft, cavity wall and external wall insulation, solar panel systems, air source heat pumps to heat multiple homes, and a shared ground source heat pump which will provide heating to a cluster of properties.

Carbon emissions

West Suffolk is committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 as well as supporting residents and businesses through schemes such as the Green Home Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme, Solar for Business and the Greener Business Grant.

Last year, as part of its delivery of its Climate Change Action Plan, the Council secured £1.43m grant from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and agreed to invest a further £370,000 in renewable energy technologies and energy saving measures at some of its key sites.

Work that will save or offset a total of 124.95 tonnes of carbon emissions is being carried out over the next month to deliver on these environmental improvements. This includes:

335 solar panels to be installed at Vicon House in Western Way, Bury St Edmunds, saving 45 tonnes of carbon emissions per year

128 solar panels to be installed at Provincial House in High Street, Haverhill, saving 17 tonnes of carbon emissions per year

256 additional solar panels to be installed at Mildenhall Hub, Sheldrick Way, Mildenhall, saving an additional 35 tonnes of carbon emissions per year

A battery energy storage system at West Suffolk House in Bury St Edmunds which take the excess electricity generated from existing solar panels at the Council building and use it to supply power during peak demand. It means even in the event of a power cut, the site will have an uninterrupted power supply, while it will generate an income by selling renewable energy to the National Grid. It also adds capacity for additional renewable energy generation to be installed in the nearby area, helping further reduce carbon emissions. This will save at least 9 tonnes of carbon emissions

Air source heat pumps to replace gas boilers at Bury St Edmunds Bus Station and Nowton Park Visitor Centre saving 10.3 tonnes of carbon emissions per year

New glazing at Provincial House, Haverhill to reduce heat loss, saving 8.65 tonnes of carbon emissions per year.

The measures will eventually deliver financial savings as well with around £80,000 a year expected to be saved.

We are investing in our properties – both those where Council services are based and those that we own and lease to tenants. This will not only improve their environmental performance, but also deliver year on year financial savings which will help support both the ambitions and the day-to-day work of the Council as we face the challenges ahead.

As stated, all of these are in relation to West Suffolk Council owned sites. If you have any queries about these or other sites, please contact the team by emailing environment@westsuffolk.gov.uk

For more information on West Suffolk Council's environment work: [Protecting our environment](#)

How we are helping Ukrainian refugees

West Suffolk Council are helping with the overall County and national effort to support Ukrainian refugees.

Suffolk County Council and the district councils are working together as a partnership to respond to this challenge and provide help to people.

As you would expect the situation is still fluid, but organisations are pulling together to either fill any gaps or clarify Government guidance. A case management system has been set up for organisations across the county to have access to and therefore better co-ordinate responses.

A number of teams across West Suffolk Council are playing a role supporting Ukrainian refugees who are coming to our district and this will evolve over the coming months from response, to longer term community support.

Our immediate priority is to carry out property checks and to support Suffolk County Council by checking documents for DBS and safeguarding purposes. This involves staff from the Private Sector Housing and Environmental Health Team visiting the

homes of potential hosts to ensure that they are suitable to welcome refugees. There are currently just over 50 potential hosts in West Suffolk.

The Families and Communities Team is working with partners to develop a package of support for hosts, refugees and community groups who want to provide assistance. This builds on the strong links we developed with partners during the Covid pandemic. Teams are also supporting people to access housing and benefits services advice for those arriving via both the Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

There is a frequently asked questions page on the Suffolk County Council website which is being updated as more questions come in. It can be found at [Frequently Asked Questions | Suffolk County Council](#)

Locality Budget

The three of us spent most of the annual budget we are given. We have ensured all our parishes and town have benefitted from it. It is easy to apply for and someone in the Families and Communities team is there to help if any is need. Examples of where the money has been spent:

Jubilee events. Working with the many volunteer groups in our area our budget has assisted towards free events in the communities in the next few weeks.

Speed sensors. speeding is an issue we are all aware of.

Notice boards. Our rural communities rely on these to find out what is happening in their area.

Defibrillators. Another important asset of us on the rural parishes. The money has gone towards the machines, installing them, providing training and the cost of running them.

Benches, Sea Scouts (equipment), table cloths, senior citizens tea party, sports group etc.

Please apply for this grant or ask us if you have questions.

We continue to work with Bobby Bennett (County Councillor) as some of our work crosses over.