

September Blyford and Sotherton 2026 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Council Celebrates National Environmental Protection Award Success

East Suffolk Council's Environmental Protection Team has been recognised in the RSPCA PawPrints Awards 2026, with three awards.

On Wednesday 3 September, the team were delighted to receive confirmation that they have been awarded both gold and silver recognition across three service areas:

- Gold PawPrints Award in stray dog services
- Gold PawPrints Award in kennelling
- Silver PawPrints Award in animal activities licensing

The Environmental Protection Team has previously been recognised in the stray dog services and kennelling categories. However, achieving the silver recognition for animal activities licensing represents a new achievement.

GLI Cllr Sally Noble, East Suffolk cabinet member for the Environment, said:

"I am delighted that the Environmental Protection Team has once again been recognised through the RSPCA PawPrints Awards. Achieving Gold Awards for stray dog services and kennelling, alongside a Silver Award for animal activities licensing, is a fantastic achievement and reflects the team's ongoing commitment to protecting animal welfare across East Suffolk. I would also like to thank the contractors and partner organisations we work with to deliver these important services.

"Furthermore, the new Silver Award for animal activities licensing highlights the team's dedication to working closely with licensed premises across the district, providing advice and guidance and supporting the highest standards of animal welfare."

Council Amplifies Call for National Climate Crisis Briefing

East Suffolk Council is urging the Government to deem climate change an issue of national security and answer calls for a televised emergency briefing.

In an open letter, GLI Councillors Tom Daly and Katie Graham – cabinet member and assistant cabinet member for Energy and Climate Change – underlined the need for a prime-time public service broadcast on the risks of climate and nature breakdown.

Other local leaders, cross-party politicians, public figures and campaigners have added their names to a parliamentary petition – launched by environmentalist and television presenter Chris Packham – calling for the UK-wide public briefing.

It follows community screenings of the People's Emergency Briefing – a 50-minute documentary, released earlier this year, examining the impacts of climate and nature crises on health, food security, the economy and national security.

Modelled after government updates broadcast during the Covid-19 pandemic, a briefing would bring together leading experts to explain the evidence and present strategies to adapt.

The open letter reads:

Councils are on the frontline of the climate and nature crisis. Together with our health service, our care and education sector, we are the boots on the ground when emergencies hit.

When Storm Babet raged through our parishes of East Suffolk in October 2023, we responded immediately with the creation of a new Resilience Fund, bringing immediate support to residents facing flood damage. And when accelerated coastal erosion due to climate change ravaged the sandy cliffs at Thorpeness, the council was on hand to support residents at risk of losing their homes, offering housing and financial assistance.

This summer, elsewhere in our district alone, catastrophic wildfires at Dunwich Heath made international headlines, as drought and extreme temperatures made an area of global ecological importance vulnerable to fire, wiping out the habitat of some of our country's rarest species. Farmers are reporting economically unsustainable yields and vulnerable and elderly residents have been suffering as hospitals warn of escalating impacts of the extreme heat across health and social care.

The scientific consensus is clear – climate change and nature breakdown are posing a major risk to the UK's food security, health, infrastructure, economy, and national security, with a recent government report warning that we are living in the least extreme climate we will know in our lifetimes.

Acting on this information, on 27 November 2025, leading experts from across the UK health sector, national security, food systems, economists and environmental scientists set out the evidence in a formal National Emergency Briefing at Westminster to 1,200 national decision makers from across government, the media, business, culture and faith sector.

However, despite record drought and extreme temperatures, and a new prime minister, there remains a lack of urgency in public messaging on the scale of the crisis, together with a lack of commitment to enable councils on the frontline of climate shocks to protect and support our residents.

Therefore, as elected representatives, we are taking this opportunity to join thousands of individuals across Suffolk and beyond in calling for a live, televised National Emergency Briefing to be hosted by the Prime Minister Andy Burnham and the UK's Chief Scientific Advisor Prof Dame Angela MacLean, to be delivered by independent experts.

A televised National Emergency Briefing would not set out specific policies or be party political. It is a means for clear, evidence-based communication on the state of climate change and nature loss, so that citizens are equipped to engage with decisions that will shape the country's future. It follows historic precedents of public safety messaging such as those given during the Covid 19 pandemic, and in times of war.

We welcome the support for such a briefing already pledged by our district members of parliament Jess Asato for Lowestoft MP, and Adrian Ramsay for Waveney Valley MP,

and call additionally on our Suffolk Coastal MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter for Suffolk Coastal MP and Minister at the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs to join the campaign.

We also acknowledge support from MPs elsewhere in East Anglia, Clive Lewis for Norwich South, Terry Jermy for South West Norfolk; Charlotte Cane for Ely and East Cambridgeshire; Pippa Heylings for South Cambridgeshire.

We call on other representatives in the region to share in this growing public campaign for such a briefing: Ian Sollom for St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire; Ben Obese-Jecty for Huntingdon; Steve Barclay for North East Cambridgeshire; Sam Carling for North West Cambridgeshire; Andrew Pakes for Peterborough; Nick Timothy for West Suffolk; Jack Abbott for Ipswich; James Cartlidge for South Suffolk; Patrick Spencer: for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich; Peter Prinsley for Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket; Jerome Mayhew for Broadland and Fakenham; Rupert Lowe for Great Yarmouth; George Freman for Mid Norfolk; Steff Aquarone for North Norfolk; Jeff Wilds for North West Norfolk; Alice MacDonald for Norwich North, and Ben Goldsborough for South Norfolk.

As elected politicians across all levels of government, have a responsibility to be straight with our communities, show leadership, and work together so that we can be on the front-foot when crisis hits.

Free Classes to Help Older People Improve Their Balance

Older people in Suffolk are being encouraged to take part in free exercise classes to help improve balance, fitness and flexibility.

Delivered by East Suffolk, Babergh and Mid Suffolk and Ipswich Borough Councils, the 12-week Strength and Balance programme aims to improve the balance, co-ordination, flexibility and confidence of residents aged 65 or over who have had a recent fall or feel unsteady on their feet.

The strength and balance classes are aligned to an evidence-based programme called OTAGO, which is a mixture of both strength and balance exercises led by a qualified instructor in a safe space.

Classes take place each week over a 12-week period, and each class lasts approximately 60 minutes. The exercises are designed to help people feel more confident on their feet, to get in and out of a chair and provide an opportunity to socialise with other members of the community with a shared goal to increase activity.

GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism said:

“Keeping active is essential for all ages but especially important as we get older. Most falls can be prevented, and some simple strength and balance exercises make all the difference to your mobility and confidence. The classes are also a great way to meet other people in your community, and ahead of this year's Falls Prevention Week, I

would encourage anyone over 65 who feels they may benefit from the programme to sign up.”

The programme is open to those over 65 years old who are at risk of falls, or who have recently had a fall, and who are registered with a GP within the East Suffolk, Mid Suffolk and Babergh or Ipswich Borough Council districts.

Healthcare professionals are also able to refer patients to the classes.

The form is available at: tinyurl.com/yc45h5xa

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/

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

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

View the Well Minds East Suffolk booklet: tinyurl.com/9xhka624