



District Councillors Report to Playford Parish Meeting and AGM

For May 2026

Carlford and Fynn Valley Ward.

Rushmere Village, Great Bealings, Little Bealings, Playford, Bredfield, Grundisburgh & Culpho, Witnesham and Swilland, Westerfield, Hasketon, Clopton, Charsfield, Dallinghoo, Tuddenham, Boulge, Burgh, Debach, Otley.

From District Councillor

Cllr Colin Hedgley

(Colin.Hedgley@eastsoffolk.gov.uk)

Westerfield Quarry (SCC/0093/25SC)

We are still awaiting a decision. A number of clarification requests have been sent to the applicants. The application will not now be considered before the County Council Elections on the 7th May. Then the new Councillors will have to undergo training in order to sit on certain committees. So, my guess is more like a June decision.

Devolution

As I expect all of you are now aware the plan to postpone the County Council elections has now been reversed and these will take place on 7th May 2026. That will have a knock-on effect for the District Elections. The new Local (District) Councils will be in place from May 2028. The Mayoral Election should take place in 2028. Of course anything could change.

I make no secret of my disappointment. I firmly believe that one council for the whole of Suffolk was the best way forward. Having three separate Councils looking after Social Services, Education, SEND children etc doesn't seem to me the best way of streamlining local services. Or saving money.

Planning.

Planning is undergoing some major changes from this government with the aim of speeding up the delivery of new homes. East Suffolk has had their built homes figure increased from 905 to 1660. You have probably seen the adverts for building land, the large roadside billboards asking for land plus ESC adverts. The first phase has been completed and the second phase will eventually see the development plan for each area.

Planning Enforcement

I am often asked why enforcement doesn't happen when an obvious deliberate flouting of the rules has occurred. Enforcement has to firstly investigate and secondly abide by very strict rules



even if the perpetrator/applicant does not. Also, the person to whom the enforcement team are taking action has the right of appeal at every stage. At East Suffolk there are some enforcement actions taking 6-10 years to complete.

Waste and Recycling

2026 will see the introduction of a new bin collection system. I know some people have now received the new bins. I am not one of them!

The details can be viewed on the East Suffolk Website. Just enter **Better Recycling**.

Council secures First Light Festival for future

The future of Lowestoft's First Light Festival has been secured, following East Suffolk Council agreeing to funding for the next three years.

Communities encouraged to choose sustainable transport with new grant scheme.

East Suffolk Council is inviting organisations to apply for funding towards cycle parking in their local community. The Community Cycle Parking Fund is offering grants of up to £1,000 for the purchase and installation of new or upgraded cycle parking facilities.

Both town and parish councils, as well as community groups that work alongside them, can apply for the funding. Applications are now open for the grant fund. There is no deadline and applications will be considered on a rolling, first come first served basis until all funding has been allocated. Application guidance: <https://eastsuffolk.co/cycle-parking-fund-guidance>

Application form: <https://eastsuffolk.co/cycle-parking-fund-application>

If you are considering making an application and have any questions or are unsure if this grant scheme is appropriate for your project, please.

contact: climate.sustainability@eastsuffolk.gov.uk.

Boot Street Bridge

I do not know when Boot Street Bridge will be repaired. So, lorries of 3 ton or more will still have to find alternative routes and I daresay that will include going through Playford.

Potholes etc

I am aware that potholes and damages road edges are an important and ongoing concern to everyone. Potholes and damage to verges can be reported to Suffolk County Council Highways Department. The easiest way is on the Highways Reporting tool. <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>, this allows you to report problems and to include photographs, if you have them. Highways will issue you with a problem report number and



advise you of the action they intend to take. Alternatively, you can telephone the Customer Service Centre on 0345 606 6067.

Anti social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour can affect anyone at any time and can range from annoying other people which causes harassment, alarm, or distress. If your complaint is regarding any of the following issues you can report it.. This list is not exhaustive.

- Nuisance vehicles (not parking)
- Neighbour nuisance/disputes
- Harassment of residents
- Intimidation
- Racial abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Noise and/or abusive behaviour

A special reporting form is available on the ESC website under “Community Safety and Emergencies” or contact the Customer services 0333 016 2000

District Councillor Funding.

As you are aware I have a certain amount of money each year in order to help good causes and projects around Carlford Ward. It does not amount to much though just £7500 to be spread over 17 Parishes. In the past I have assisted Playford financially, Playford Youth Club, and money towards the defibrillator, money towards the bottle bank refurbishment and SIDS brackets.

New fund announced to support East Suffolk’s smallest communities

East Suffolk Council has announced a new £1.5m programme that’s set to revitalise the district’s towns, village and rural communities.

Announced on Thursday 26 February at the Town Councils’ Conference held at High Lodge at Hinton, Saxmundham, the Thriving Places fund is planned to deliver projects that will strengthen the long-term resilience and sustainability of the district’s smallest communities.

Launching in April 2026, the fund that will run for two years will be open to town and parish councils, CICs and social enterprises, charities and not-for-profit organisations and community groups to upgrade facilities, help improve public spaces and make a difference to the lives of local people.

Communities can apply for grants of up to £50,000 to support local projects which aim to reduce inequalities in the area, help people to adapt to changes, help to protect important local assets like buildings or spaces, improve access to services, skills, wellbeing activities and local facilities and support long-term local growth.



Capital grants of between £10,00 and £50,000 will be available for purchasing or improving physical assets, while revenue grants between £5,000 and £25,000 can be utilised to cover project-specific activities and operational costs. Up to 60% of project costs will be covered by the new grants and up to 80% for successful applications from community and not-for-profit organisations. Each year communities can apply within four funding rounds, with the final decision made by a grant panel consisting of senior East Suffolk councillors and officers.

The fund is open to all areas of the district apart from the town council areas of Felixstowe and Lowestoft due to the significant Council and external funding both towns continue to benefit from.

Further details on the funding will be available in soon.

Support has been agreed for temporary coastal defences which will provide short-term protection for homes at Thorpeness.

Funding was agreed to support the urgent installation of rock bags on the beach in front of homes in the Old Homes Road area. Expected to last between two and five years, the rock bags aim to slow erosion and reduce the risk of flooding through wave overtopping to a number of homes and allow time for further future options to be considered.

Planning- How is East Suffolk Progressing?

Planning figures can be pretty boring on occasions.

However, there is plenty of information on the East Suffolk website [Planning application and enforcement statistics](#) | [East Suffolk Council](#) webpage.

Call for Sites

The call for sites has now been completed and a map of these has now been published. This does not mean that they will all be accepted or that the ones accepted will be built on in its entirety. However, your experience in the past will have shown you that we must be vigilant in order to have our say.

The map can be viewed on the ESC Planning website and “Call for sites submission map”