

**March 2025 Blyford and Sotherton Parish Report
East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update**

Funding top up for families most in need

Uniform banks in East Suffolk are invited to apply for additional support through a new funding scheme.

Following previous successful rounds of funding, East Suffolk Council has now allocated further funding to its East Suffolk Uniform Bank grant scheme and applications for 'top up' funding are now open.

Grants of up to £1,000 per application are available and can be put towards vouchers for shoes worth up to £15 per child and/or the purchase of new, branded uniform where supply is limited.

The funding is available for all existing uniform banks in East Suffolk, regardless of whether or not they have previously received funding from the grant scheme.

GLI Cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism, Cllr Sarah Whitelock, said:

“The cost of uniforms adds more pressure to already stressed household budgets so I am really pleased that we are able to offer further support to uniform banks that offer such practical and sustainable solutions.”

This is a rolling grant scheme, and a panel will meet each month to discuss applications. The scheme will continue until all funds are spent or the scheme is reviewed.

To apply for this funding, please visit: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/uniform-bank-grant-scheme

Successful applicants will be notified via email within five working days of the panel assessing their application.

Last Air Quality Management Area in East Suffolk removed

The last remaining Air Quality Management Area in East Suffolk – located on the A12 within Stratford St Andrew – has been removed following significant improvements in air quality.

To meet national air quality objectives, local authorities must regularly review and assess air quality in their areas. If a location is found where the objectives are not being achieved, the local authority must declare the area an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and develop an Air Quality Action Plan to reduce air pollution.

The AQMA, located at four properties close to the A12 within Stratford St Andrew, was established in 2014 after high levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) were detected. Studies undertaken suggested that southbound traffic accelerating just prior to the end of the 30mph speed limit in Stratford St Andrew – originally located at the end of the Long Row houses – was a cause of increased emissions and a large part of the problem.

In 2017, after the 30/50mph speed limit change was moved further south out of the village and away from the houses by Suffolk County Council, NO₂ concentrations within the AQMA fell below the national objective level and have continued to decrease year-on-year.

As a result, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) requested that the AQMA be revoked, and an assessment was carried out in 2024 to establish whether removal of the AQMA was appropriate. The revocation assessment considered the historical monitoring data, projected NO₂ concentrations over the next five years, local and national trends in NO₂ emissions, and local and regional factors that may impact on the AQMA. This included the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) expected to commence within East Suffolk – including Sizewell C, and the East Anglia One (North) and East Anglia Two offshore windfarms.

The findings were discussed by East Suffolk Council's Cabinet on 1 October 2024, and following a six-week public consultation, the AQMA was revoked on 18 December.

East Suffolk's Amazing

We invest every single penny we can in services to help maintain the beauty and cleanliness of East Suffolk but sometimes admit that it can never necessarily be enough.

A cross-party working group of councillors is already working on different ways we can work to maintain the beauty of East Suffolk, which includes encouraging more residents to take active pride in their local area.

This includes reducing fly-tipping, recycling properly and even, where possible, looking after the spaces outside your own property. We are also working closely and collaboratively with Suffolk County Council who have responsibility for weeds on roads and pavements, potholes and road signs.

There is already an incredible network of volunteers who work to help keep our district beautiful, with regular litter-picks, planting, and an all-round effort to keep their local area clean. If East Suffolk matters to you, if you want to play your part, we would love you to get involved. East Suffolk's Amazing... let's keep it that way!



The Council will support local communities and groups by lending equipment for litter pick events, including hi-vis vests, litter pickers, bags and bag hoops. A range of information about how communities can get involved in schemes, as well as a range of tips and advice, can be found at: eastsuffolk.gov.uk/waste/litter/amazing/

[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