

Framlingham Ward Newsletter - March 2026

Vince Langdon-Morris (District Councillor)

East Suffolk District Council [ESC] 2026-27 Budget

On Wed, 25th February, I presented the third Green Liberal Independent (GLI) administrations budget at 'Full' Council in Lowestoft. It received a unanimous vote of approval by Councillors.

The 26-27 budget is aligned to [Our Direction 2028](#) strategy. We have maintained support for the 'Community Help Hub', 'Ease the Squeeze', 'Mobile Community Pantry' and 'advice hubs' and developed a new 'Thriving Places' programme (with £1.5m of grant funding to promote and leverage sustainable local growth across our rural towns). *Active travel* will continue to be supported through the *Cycling and Walking Strategy* and the *First Light Festival* in Lowestoft through the *cultural strategy*.

[ESC Press release] Cllr Vince Langdon-Morris, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Resources and Value for Money, said: "We're pleased to be delivering a balanced budget to protect essential Council services that people who live, work and visit the district rely on every day. The increase in the portion of council tax we receive (based on a Band D property) equates to just £5.67 extra per household for the entire year – meaning residents pay an additional 11 pence per week. The majority of households' council tax payment goes to Suffolk County Council, the Fire Brigade and Police (ESC receives around 9% of the total monthly council tax bill).

ESC Key Performance Indicators dashboards:

Take a look at this if you have some time. [Strategic KPI dashboards](#)

Katch Bus: March 2026 sees the third year of Katch bus services. The phone app can be used for booking tickets, but personally I prefer to give the Katch office a call 01728 635939 to plan my travel. Since April 2023 the service has expanded from 22 to 31 bus stops, adding Easton, Rendlesham and Blaxhall to the existing Framlingham, Parham, Wickham Market, Hacheston, Campsea Ashe, Tunstall and Snape stops. The number of people using the bus, including me :-), is on the rise.

| | Total Passenger Numbers | |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------|
| 2023-24 | 2,655 | - |
| 2024-25 | 4,248 | +60% |
| 2025-26 | 4,480 | +5.46% |
| Forecast 2025-26 | 4,888 | +15.1% |

New Katch return fares were introduced in 2025-26 making return journeys cheaper. Since May 2025 bus passes have been accepted and in the past 5 months their use has been consistently over 100 customers a month.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Suffolk

New unitary council(s) must be in place by April 2028. The Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government will rule on LGR for Suffolk this month. Two proposals are on the table:

- **Three Councils for Suffolk:** the **District** and **Borough** councils have made the case to replace the 6 existing councils with 3 unitary councils, responsible for the provision all local services.

Or:

- **One Suffolk:** proposed by Suffolk County Council, creating a single mega unitary council.

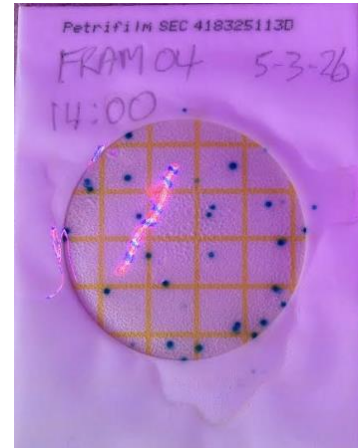
We shall all know soon enough.

The Deben Climate Centre (DCC) 4 Rivers Project on the Ore

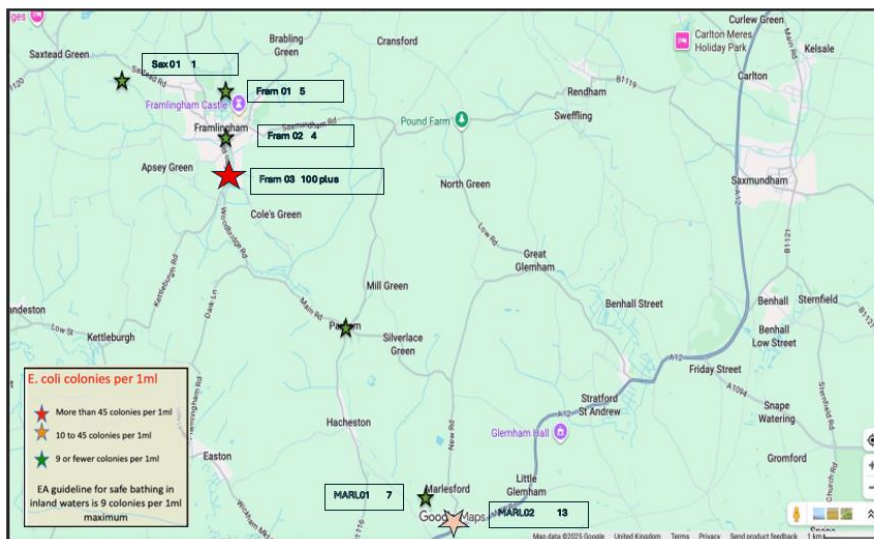


The DCC, 4 Rivers project is a citizen science initiative that does water quality testing on the Deben, Ore/Alde, Blyth and Waveney Rivers. All test results are shared with the Environment Agency & Anglian Water.

In Framlingham, we have established a team to do water quality testing along the length of the River Ore, stretching from Saxtead, through Fram, right down to the junction with the River Alde. We are



Framlingham, Hacheston, Parham, Marlsford **E.Coli** Testing on River Ore Date: 15-20 January 2026



currently measuring E. coli, Phosphates, Nitrite and Nitrate levels and will expand this soon to ammonia. A proposal will be submitted to all Parish Councils that lie along the Ore River, to seek support for costs of test materials. If you are interested in joining the River Ore team to do water testing, please send an email to: framoreriver26@gmail.com.

Framlingham Flood Resilience, Recovery Working Group

The FFRRWG completed a 'GAP' analysis using the [Amazi report](#). The team also walked the River Ore, along the Mere up into the catchment / watershed.

A 'grab' box is now ready to be used at a moment's notice, held at Framlingham Town Council office. It is stocked, with items, such as a: small solar charging unit, solar lighting, walkie talkies, hi viz clothing, FFRRWG documentation, etc.

The Upper Ore Farmer Cluster Group have received a grant from the District Councillors *Enabling Communities Budget* (£1,200). This funding will create a digital catchment map, highlighting specific areas where water holding / resilience structures can be incorporated into the landscape.

A follow up online *Emergency Preparedness and Building Community Resilience training*, for Town and Parish Councils is planned (to date 26 have completed the training, a further 21 councils are signed up). These trainings are presented by the ESC Resilience Coordinator, working in coordination with the Suffolk County Councils, Joint Emergency Planning Unit or JEPU. If you are interested to join the training, please contact the ESC Resilience Coordinator: Charlie.Smith@eastsoffolk.gov.uk.

Greener Fram | action for a positive future

Splash of Colour: Sam T and myself will again expand the wildflower growing areas along our grass verges. In the coming spring we want to again see an expanded 'colour burst' of wildflowers. My thanks go to the hard work of the Greener Fram team, who put so much of their personal time in to make this initiative and many other a success.

Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan Review

Framlingham Town Council and many residents / volunteers are reviewing the existing Neighbourhood Plan (2016 to 2031) to:

- keep it relevant and effective,
- address any changes in local need,
- align with new housing targets,
- update to national planning rules, and
- stay aligned with changing planning policy and implementation.

Neighbourhood Plan reviews try to ensure that the community's vision stays aligned with current planning realities, legal requirements and prevent conflicts with higher-level planning, e.g. East Suffolk has been mandated new housing targets by Central Government, from 905 to 1,696 annually.

The benefits of reviewing and maintaining the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Ensures the Neighbourhood Plan guides development effectively.
- Tries to prevent our Neighbourhood Plan policies from being overridden by new Local or National plans.
- Empowers our community to try to maintain 'local control' over housing development.

Framlingham - Housing

In my view, since Storm Babet in Oct. 2023 any new housing built in Framlingham simply cannot exacerbate flooding and funnel water onto the highway (as happened on Fairfield Road). There are some excellent sites around Framlingham that could provide resilient, social and affordable housing at scale for young and old alike. There is not a need for yet more 3-4-5 bedroomed unaffordable properties, of which we have a surplus across the town.

Belway, Woodbridge Road, Framlingham DC/25/3412/FUL

This planning application has gone quiet for now but expect it to re-appear soon. I am sure that 'pre-application meetings' (closed door and legal) have taken place between the Planning Department and Belway. I have listed some statutory requirements below that relate to the potential for future flooding, that simply must be paid the highest attention.

Legal Frameworks

- Highways Act 1980 (Sec 163): This act dictates that occupiers or owners of premises must ensure that surface water from their land does not flow onto the footpath or road. If this is not complied with, local authorities can serve notice, and failure to act can lead to fines.
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010: This requires new developments to manage surface water using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to prevent flooding elsewhere.
- Artificial vs. Natural Runoff: While natural "run-off" (water flowing naturally downhill) is generally allowed, water redirected by man-made changes—such as roofs, gutters, or paved drives on a new estate—must be managed so it does not flow onto the highway.

Developer & Authority Responsibilities

- Developers are responsible for ensuring that their drainage systems (such as SuDS or soakaways) effectively manage water within the boundary of the new estate. They are specifically advised against connecting private surface water to highway drainage systems without permission.
- Highway Authority Powers: The local Highways Authority has the power to act if they believe the water is causing a nuisance, such as flooding or icing in winter.
- Adoption Agreements: New estates often operate under a Section 38 Agreement (highways) or Section 104 Agreement (sewers), which should ensure that infrastructure is adopted and properly maintained.

Victoria Mill Road DC/25/4170/ARM

I have been provided with yet another picture of an HGVs squeezing through the 'S' bends. Suffolk County Council has asked the applicant to relook at the outline design and incorporate cycle ways. My interest is in the required 'Section 278' certificate, that must be issued by Suffolk County Council Highways allowing the straightening of the 'S' bends, which is a public highway and making this housing site more accessible.

East Suffolk Council Helpful Information

Support with budgeting, debt, bills:

- **Citizens Advice East Suffolk:** providing support on different things including benefit entitlement, debt and budgeting. Advice line 0808 278 7866 open Mon to Frid 10am to 2pm; can also email on advice@caes.org.uk
- **East Suffolk Council's Community Help Hub:** providing support on health & wellbeing and helping you budget and see what you're entitled to. You can self-refer at https://my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/service/Community_Help_Hub_referral or call East Suffolk Council's Customer Services Team, ask for Community Help Hub - 0333 016 2000
- **Suffolk Coastal Poverty Action** focus on poverty & debt, call 07942 359865 or help@scpa.uk

Food:

- **Waveney Foodbank:** serves Framlingham; call Citizens Advice, East Suffolk 0808 208 2138
- **Lowestoft&District Foodbank:** covers Wickham Market; email: info@lowestoft.foodbank.org.uk
- **Heating your home:** If you are finding it difficult to heat your home, please reach out to the organisations listed above, who can see how you may be able to be helped. There are also Warm Welcomes running at all libraries; free support spaces to do activities or just 'be' if you prefer.
- **Hour Community** (Framlingham area) call 01728 440511 or email: admin@hourcommunity.co.uk
- **Connection and socialising:** If you're not able to see friends, family or neighbours as often as you'd like, Silver Line is run by Age UK free and is a confidential telephone service for older people. They provide friendship, conversation and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call for free on 0800 4 70 80 90. Your local library or coffee morning is also a good place to go to chat with others.
- **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: [Ease the Squeeze on cost of living » East Suffolk Council](#)

February 2026 Parish Report

East Suffolk Council GLI Group: Councillor Update

Helping households to save money, eat well and reduce food waste

Households across Suffolk can now get free access to an award-winning meal planner to help them eat healthily, save money and reduce food waste. Feel Good Suffolk provides free support to residents who want help managing their weight, getting more active and to stop smoking. Now it has now teamed up with FiveDinners.com

The online platform founded by TV chef and author Theo Michaels is already working with NHS Trusts and a number of other councils supporting over 30,000 members.

Now through the partnership with Feel Good Suffolk, it is offering households across the county free premium access for this year to the platform which would otherwise cost £86 a year.

Residents simply have to visit the website, select the district council area that they live in and then put in their postcode - they won't be asked for any bank details which means they won't be charged for using the service.

Once registered, they will receive a meal plan every week, tailored to their needs and preferences. This can be personalised for low calories, child friendly, low cost, vegetarian, gluten-free, quick and easy, menopause friendly and more. Alongside the meal plan, members receive a shopping list for the week ahead, which automatically adjusts to the number of people they are cooking for.

The idea is that through meal planning, the service can help people manage a healthy weight with nutritious meals and portion control. That in turn can also help reduce household food waste and save households money.

GLI Cllr Jan Candy, East Suffolk's cabinet member with responsibility for Community Health, said: *"It's fantastic to be offering the FiveDinners meal planning service free to residents across Suffolk. The benefits of helping people to manage their weight, improve their wellbeing whilst saving time and money as well as reducing their food waste, make it easier for us all to live healthier lives. I hope people will take advantage of this opportunity to cook smarter, save money and to eat well."*

To take part, please visit: fivedinners.com/my-community-food-hub/mycommunity/. For further information about receiving support for weight management, getting more active, or stopping smoking, please visit: feelgoodsuffolk.co.uk

East Suffolk Youth Councillors Visit Parliament

On March 6, a delegation from East Suffolk Youth Council (ESYC) visited parliament for a tour and to engage in a debate about social media and critical thinking – conducting politics at the heart of politics! This follows on from their recent meeting with MPs regarding flooding, during which they stated their desire for the Lowestoft Tidal Barrier to receive government funding.

The youth council was established with cross-party, unanimous support from East Suffolk Council in March 2024 and has welcomed members from special, state, private & home schooling backgrounds. The council is the first of its kind, with the GLI administration having written the powers of ESYC into the constitution. Any motion passed by the young people must be discussed at Full Council. ESYC have so far passed motions across a range of topics, including community infrastructure levy, community cohesion & flooding.

GLI Cllr and Chair of East Suffolk Council Dr Anthony Specca said: *"Our Youth Councillors were invited to Parliament not just as ordinary school pupils, but elected representatives of their communities, just like the MPs who meet in the same building. The future of democracy visiting the cradle of democracy – how fitting! Our Youth Councillors play a big role in East Suffolk, and they've already moved the needle on issues such as youth safety and local planning. I'm tremendously proud of what they've achieved, and they should be proud, too."*

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.

GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism, said: *“When travelling locally, having a safe and secure place to store a bike at the destination can be a key factor in deciding what mode of travel to use. We want our communities to journey by bicycle, confident in the knowledge that they can park, lock and leave a bike in a safe space. “This grant fund supports the wider work of our Cycling and Walking Strategy, which aims to reduce the environmental impact of traffic pollution and congestion from cars through meaningful and community-focused initiatives.”*

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.

Guidance on applying to the grant can be viewed at: tinyurl.com/yhmbpa5

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.

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