

July 2026 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

GLI Group Challenge Government Threats to Local Decision Making

At the Full Council meeting on 22 July, GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism proposed a motion to influence government intentions on two issues related to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), usually related to energy. The motion was seconded by GLI Cllr Tom Daly, Cabinet Member for Energy and Climate Change.

Following the Government's Nuclear Regulatory Review (2025), which was commissioned to identify ways to accelerate the delivery of nuclear projects, the Government has proposed changes to the way local communities and stakeholders are involved in decisions relating to these projects.

The proposals also include a change to the way nature mitigation funds, which aim to reduce the environmental impact of major developments, particularly on important landscapes, are determined.

GLI Cllr Whitelock said: "Suffolk hosts many NSIPs, many of them related to energy, and as there are proposals for many more, our protected landscapes are particularly vulnerable to these changes. Visitors are attracted to our National Landscape along the coastline and spend £700 million in East Suffolk every year, and so the impact of these changes on our local tourist economy, the biodiversity of our district, and for the voices and wellbeing of our residents could be significant."

Currently, after an NSIP is consented, many crucial sign-off powers sit with the Council as the planning authority, enabling them to utilise local knowledge and raise community concerns. However, the intended changes would see the Council become a consultee, transferring those important sign-off powers to a newly formed unit. This would mean decisions would be made nationally rather than locally, making it more difficult for communities to raise concerns.

The motion aims to address these proposals, by lobbying national Government to empower communities and local stakeholders, such as local councils and MPs, by ensuring they can meaningfully contribute to the development of NSIP policy.

Popular Roadshows Return this Summer

This summer, we're once again visiting towns around the district to chat to local people about our services and how they feel about what we do. We're HERE for you!

Having held roadshows in Halesworth, Bungay and Lowestoft, we will now be visiting the following locations throughout the summer:

- Wednesday 19 August - Aldeburgh
- Saturday 12 September - Wickham Market

All events are from 10am until 1pm.

Councillors and senior officers will be present to listen to local people and chat about our plans, our services and how we are looking to improve lives and outcomes not only in the towns we visit but throughout East Suffolk.

GLI Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council said: "Our roadshows are always very popular and give our communities the opportunity to speak directly to councillors and officers about any issues and questions they may have. Come and find out more about significant changes such as local government reorganisation, the new Local Plan and Better Recycling as well as the essential day-to-day services we provide. We look forward to meeting you!"

Over £500,000 to be invested in East Suffolk play areas this summer

East Suffolk Council and local partners are celebrating another major milestone in the delivery of the East Suffolk Play Strategy, with work starting on three new play areas and communities invited to help shape two more projects this summer.

Since the adoption of the Play Strategy in 2023, East Suffolk Council and its partners have invested more than £1 million in the redevelopment and enhancement of play areas across the district, helping to create inclusive, exciting and accessible spaces for children and families.

The latest phase of investment has been made possible through a partnership between East Suffolk Council, Carlton Colville Town Council, Gisleham Parish Council and Felixstowe Town Council, with more than £500,000 committed to deliver improvements at five play areas.

Local communities have played a key role in shaping the new play areas at Dale End in Gisleham, Newnham Avenue in Woodbridge and Staplehurst Close in Carlton Colville, with feedback in December helping to develop design briefs and inform proposals to specialist play companies. The public were then invited to pick their favourite design from the shortlist, with Kompan's proposals voted the favourite for all three play areas and construction now set to begin.

Construction timetable:

- Staplehurst Close, Carlton Colville – works started on Monday 20 July and planned to finish in early September.
- Dale End in Gisleham – works starting Monday 3 August and planned to finish mid-September.
- Newnham Avenue in Woodbridge – works starting Monday 17 August and planned to finish at the end of September.

Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk Council cabinet member for communities, leisure and tourism, said:

"We're delighted to see work getting underway to enhance three play areas across East Suffolk, while also giving local communities the chance to help shape two further projects this summer.

"Although these projects are happening over the summer holidays, a period we would normally avoid, we have carefully planned the work to minimise the impact on our communities. Most of the play equipment at Dale End and Staplehurst has already been removed due to safety concerns so carrying out the works in the summer holidays doesn't create further disruption. Works at Newnham Avenue will begin later in the summer holidays to allow families to use the existing play areas for most of the school break while minimising disruption to the neighbouring school.

“We’d like to thank residents, local schools and everyone else who shared their ideas and feedback throughout the consultation process for the three sites. We now want to encourage communities in Beccles and Felixstowe to get involved in the consultation process and help create play spaces that reflect the needs and aspirations of local families in their communities.”

The play areas will remain closed while the improvements are carried out, although every effort will be made to keep disruption to a minimum throughout the construction period.

Have your say on play areas in Beccles and Felixstowe

The community are being invited to share their ideas for two play areas – Darby Park in Beccles and Cavendish Park in Felixstowe both online and in person.

As part of the consultation local residents are encouraged to attend community engagement events at each site to discuss ideas, ask questions and share their views on what they would like the new play areas to look like.

The events will take place at:

- Darby Park in Beccles on Wednesday 5 August from 2pm – 5pm
- Cavendish Park in Felixstowe on Tuesday 18 August from 1pm – 4pm

Following the consultation period, draft designs will be developed and shared with communities in September, giving the public another chance to share feedback before final plans are agreed.

Residents can share their feedback online at:

[eastsuffolk.gov.uk/engagements/have-your-say-east-suffolk-play-areas](https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/engagements/have-your-say-east-suffolk-play-areas)

The closing date for the public to have their say is Monday 31 August.

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