

## **Bawdsey Parish Council SCC News Update – January 2015**

### **New gritters join Suffolk highways' winter response**

Nine new Econ gritters have been purchased in the last few months to replace ageing ones in SCC's highways fleet. On top of this, a further 29 gritters have been upgraded since the contract between Kier MG and the county council began, significantly improving the winter service provided across the county. SCC's highways team has 39 gritters, each with an attachable snow plough and three mini-gritters which are designed for areas with weight restrictions, such as bridges. Also, as part of the highways contract Kier MG can call on additional vehicles, should they be required. There are 112 operators ready to help keep the county moving when temperatures drop and when there is snowfall. There are 1,225 miles of priority-one gritting routes which are treated in advance of predicted ice or snow. In all, the 34 priority-one gritting routes taking two and a half hours to complete. When ice or snow is forecast to persist beyond 9am, a further 845 miles of priority-two routes will be treated, so long as gritters are not needed on the priority-one roads. Further information on priority one and priority two routes can be found on the county council website: [www.suffolk.gov.uk/salting-gritting-and-snow-clearing](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/salting-gritting-and-snow-clearing).

### **Suffolk's energy-from-waste facility now open – on time and on budget**

Construction of Suffolk's energy-from-waste facility has been completed on time and on budget, fulfilling its purpose of putting the county's waste to good use. Since testing of equipment and procedures began in June, the site at Great Blakenham, near Ipswich, has been taking in the waste that can't be recycled from homes and businesses across Suffolk, and beyond. On Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December the testing phase was successfully completed, and the facility handed over from the building contractors to SITA UK who will run it for the next 25 years, on behalf of SCC. The site has brought a number of benefits to the local community. During construction over 100 Suffolk firms won contracts, worth around £13.5 million, to supply goods and services to the site and it is estimated further £1 million a year will continue to be spent in the local economy. It has created 47 new jobs on site and a further 200 could be created if the proposed greenhouse project, using surplus heat from the site to grow tomatoes, goes ahead.

### **UK's first-ever youth employment centre celebrates 500 sign-ups in first month**

MyGo, the UK's first-ever dedicated youth employment centre celebrated its official, grand opening last month, with 500 sign-ups to the service. The MyGo centre at Fraser House in Ipswich which opened for business on Monday 10 November, offers all 16-24 year olds in Ipswich and the surrounding area free training, career and employment support. The project is pioneering a new approach to helping young people get into work. Led by businesses, local councils, New Anglia LEP and Jobcentre Plus; this programme supports aims to halve youth unemployment in the greater Ipswich area over the next two years. The project is funded by money unlocked through the Greater Ipswich City Deal - the government's flagship programme to devolve power to local authorities and businesses to put them in control of economic opportunities and challenges.

### **49 young people caught in Ipswich truancy sweep**

49 young people were found truanting from school on one day in December, during a community operation carried out by SCC's education welfare officers and Suffolk Police in Ipswich town centre and the surrounding areas. As a result, two young people were immediately returned to school and a further nine students will be issued with fixed penalty notices for being out of school without authorisation. Last month's sweep was part of a series of on-going operations aimed at tackling truancy and ensuring children are in the safety of a school or learning environment during term time. Three young people from outside the county were also spoken to today. This highlights the point that this is not just an issue for Suffolk. In such cases, details of the young person are referred to the appropriate neighbouring authority. Lisa Chambers, SCC's cabinet member for education and skills, said: "Ensuring children attend school during term time is imperative in raising attainment. A child with a 90% school attendance record misses the equivalent to half a year of secondary school. Young people really need to attend school and be in a learning environment every day. Although more truants were found this year, the bulk

of these were found with their parents, so fewer students were returned directly to school. The majority of truants were located in Ipswich town centre and very few of those found this year were previously known as truants. There is a direct correlation between poor attendance and academic achievement. Figures from the Department for Education show that around 88% of children that regularly miss days in school fail to gain five good GCSEs - and 45% fail to get any at all.

### **Final phase of Travel Ipswich works underway**

The final phase of Travel Ipswich is set to begin with the final upgrading of signals and improvement of junctions in the town centre. Over the last few months there has been significant improvement work carried out, delivering on the overall aims and objectives of Travel Ipswich. This work includes: upgrading traffic signals across the town to enable them to be linked into the new state-of-the-art Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) system; improvement work at Commercial Road, including narrowing of the slip lane to the railway station to reduce speeding, removal of signalised pedestrian crossing and installation of a wide zebra crossing, upgraded street lighting; new traffic signals, new crossings across Princes Street and Chancery Road as well as new road and footway resurfacing; new toucan crossing at Barrack Lane to provide cycle link from Geneva Road and north of town down Portman Road and on to the station; and simplifying the crossings on London Road and enhancing the bus priority, new signing, road resurfacing and footway resurfacing. In the next and final phase of Travel Ipswich, the remaining schemes and junction improvements will be taking place. Work is planned to ensure closures and disruption are kept to a minimum. However, where disruption is expected, we will make every effort to give advance notice and whenever possible suggest alternative routes.

### **Parents urged to have their say on school admissions consultation**

SCC is seeking views on its proposed admissions policy for the 2016/17 school year; ensuring school places are offered to children in a fair way. The consultation, which was launched at the end of December, will run until Friday 27 February 2015. There are a number of proposals for changes in admissions for the 2016/17 school year; including: changes to the Bury St Edmunds catchment areas to meet the demands of school re-organisation and the development of a new high school at Moreton Hall; the introduction of a second round of admissions for the normal year of entry to a school. This will be for late applications made after the closing date and before the offer date, when no previous application has been made or where exceptional circumstances apply; and allowing a maximum of three live preferences for the normal year of entry at any one time. If you want to view the arrangements for these schools you should contact the school directly. To view the consultation documents and to have your say on the proposals, please visit [www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations), alternatively you can write to Georgina Beard, Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX or email: [admissionsconsultation@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:admissionsconsultation@suffolk.gov.uk)

### **County Council to discourage use of sky lanterns and balloon releases**

SCC is discouraging the use of sky lanterns and balloon releases on local authority-owned land and at events licensed by the council. Sky lanterns and balloons pose a significant hazard to wildlife and property as they return to the ground. There have been many examples involving livestock, birds and sea-life getting injured as a result of these falling onto ground or into water. The council's Trading Standards team has adopted the Trading Standards Institute's code of practice in relation to this. The code gives local authorities the opportunity to discourage the use of sky lanterns when licensing events and to ban their use on local authority land. Meanwhile, the county council's fire and rescue service has adopted the Chief Fire Officers' Association' policy and actively discourages the use of sky lanterns. There is evidence that fires have been caused by lanterns falling on to thatched roofs and other susceptible surfaces. There is also the issue of waste, as there is no way to know where the lanterns will fall once they burn out.

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