

April 2022 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Over 98.5% of pupils receive a place at one of their preferred Secondary Schools

It was announced on March 1st that 98.51% of pupils received a place at one of their Preferred Secondary Schools in Suffolk on National Offer Day. This year, Suffolk County Council (SCC) received 7768 applications from parents indicating at which secondary school they would prefer their child to be educated from September 2022. 7339 pupils received offers for their first preference school and 7652 pupils received an offer for one of their three preferred schools. Families who applied online are able to log on to the Admissions Portal from today to see their child's offer. They will also receive an email to confirm this offer. Letters will be sent to parents who made a paper application by second class post today (1 March). If a family does not receive a place at their preferred school, their child's name will automatically be added to the waiting list for that school. Parents will also be advised on how to log an appeal should they wish to do so. It is excellent news, that the vast majority of families have once again been offered a place at one of their preferred schools. Published criteria was used to decide who has priority for places so that the process is fair and clear. Starting secondary school is a big step in a child's education and the more we can do to make the transition to a new school smoother for them, the better. Once school places have been confirmed, parents need to consider how their child will get to and from school. If their child is eligible for SCC funded school travel they will receive an email by the end of March 2022 with details of how to opt-in. For further information please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions.

Suffolk County Council's leaving care service receives high praise from Ofsted

On March 3rd, Suffolk County Council's leaving care service received high praise from Ofsted after a recent visit. Ofsted inspectors assessed the local authority's arrangement for care leavers as part of a focused visit to the service. The visit follows on from the Outstanding rating received by SCC's Children's Services department in 2019. The services for children in care and care leavers was the only area at the time to be rated 'Good' and therefore was an area of priority for the council. At the recent visit inspectors concluded that care leavers are successfully helped to transition to independence and reach their full potential. The service was seen to have a culture that is "determined, ambitious and creative" with practitioners who build trusting relationships with care leavers. Practitioners were seen accessing a wide range of specialist expertise to provide services to care leavers that are individualised and responsive. Inspectors also said that "Many care leavers achieve well, exceeding their own expectations. All are valued and their achievements are celebrated. Persistent efforts are made to reach out to those who are difficult to engage." This report really demonstrates the hard work that staff in the leaving care service deliver day in, day out. I would like to thank them for the great work that they do for our care leavers. We are committed to delivering the highest quality service for our care leavers in Suffolk. All young people have the right to the appropriate level of support they need to aspire and achieve. I am committed to ensuring that this is the reality for all of Suffolk's young people, including our most vulnerable." The full report can be found here: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50178373>

Help to reduce the environmental impact of your home

"Low Impact Living in Suffolk" is a new campaign making it easier for Suffolk residents to improve the energy efficiency and lower energy use of their homes. Our homes are responsible for generating 20% of all UK carbon emissions, primarily through the heating and energy they use. There are many ways to reduce these emissions, with Low Impact Living in Suffolk sharing steps through the www.greensuffolk.org website. Information is available to demystify the products, technology and grants that help reduce the impact of our homes on the environment and save money on increasing energy bills. Residents can find out their carbon footprint, look for green energy tariffs and compare new, more sustainable heating systems including ground and air source heat pumps, biomass boilers, heat recovery, hydro and wind electricity.

Detailed information on solar panels, including buying schemes, water heating and electricity sits alongside up to date advice on recycling. Options for improving or replacing windows across properties that vary in age, materials, location, and style are also available. We all have a responsibility to slow the rate of climate change, and our homes make a significant contribution to this. I know that many Suffolk homeowners are keen to do what they can to reduce their carbon emissions and their energy bills. But knowing where to start can be difficult, with so much information out there. By launching Low Impact Living in Suffolk, we want to simplify this process and help homeowners by guiding them through the changes they can make to their homes more sustainable. If you visit Suffolk's Creating The Greenest County website www.greensuffolk.org you will find up-to-date information on reducing your carbon footprint at home. All the information is in one place, and applies to a range of homes and budgets, to help plan your own Net Zero journey more easily. Low Impact Living in Suffolk is part of Suffolk's commitment to be a Net Zero county by 2030, which is being delivered through the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan. All Suffolk's local authorities have declared a climate emergency and are working together to meet this ambition.

Campaign urges households to recycle glass properly

Residents across Suffolk are being encouraged to get behind a campaign calling for people to recycle glass properly. Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP) is launching 'Glass – It's Better in The Bank', a 12-week campaign aimed at getting people to stop putting glass in their household recycling bins and to use a bottle bank instead. Suffolk Waste Partnership comprises the county, district and borough councils working together to improve waste management services. The SWP campaign runs until 31 May and will feature in adverts on buses, at supermarket billboards and on a van touring part of the county, plus on social media and on radio. District and borough councils, which collect our rubbish, will be applying bin tags and stickers to recycling bins containing glass. Crews will have a prompt in the cab to remind them to be on the look-out and recycling bins may not be emptied if they are found to contain glass. There will be a dedicated web page about the campaign on the Suffolk Recycling webpage with a set of FAQs and an information leaflet to distribute at events. Glass is not accepted in household recycling bins as the Materials Recycling Facility at Great Blakenham near Ipswich, where the bins are taken for sorting, is unable to separate glass from other materials. Glass mistakenly placed in household recycling bins costs the SWP around £500,000 a year. It will **not** be recycled and can spoil other good recycling, especially card and paper. Glass represents about half of all the wrong material in household recycling bins – other bad eggs include black rubbish sacks, food, nappies, textiles, and cartons – and rejection levels are currently running at around 20%.

Lifesaving fire equipment to help efforts in Ukraine

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has pledged its support for Ukraine by providing much-needed fire engines and kit for those on the frontline. This forms part of the ongoing National Fire Chiefs Council and Fire Aid initiative, which will see a convoy of donations travel to the war-torn country. Two surplus engines no longer in service have been donated to Ukraine by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, along with vital equipment including hoses. Like most of the world, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service is deeply saddened by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and will do everything in its power to help the country. SFRS are incredibly proud to support the National Fire Chiefs Council by providing two of our fire engines to Ukraine, both of which are fully operational and ready for use on arrival. Our thoughts are with all Ukrainian firefighters at this time, as they continue to protect their communities during the conflict despite the danger posed to their own lives. It is anticipated that 5,000 pieces of kit will be donated by fire services from across the UK over coming weeks.

Matthew Hicks - County Councillor for the Thredling Division

Tel : 01728 628176 Mob : 07824 474741 E-mail : matthew.hicks@suffolk.gov.uk