

November 2024 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

'Tis the season to reduce, reuse and recycle

The festive season is a time of joy, celebration and gathering with loved ones to share delicious food and exchange gifts. However, it is also a time when we produce a lot of waste.

This year, we encourage you to celebrate a circular Christmas! So, what does that mean? The circular economy is all about reducing waste, keeping products in use for longer and promoting sustainability. By reducing, reusing and recycling, we can enjoy the festive spirit while being kinder to the planet – and it's more budget-friendly too!



Let make this Christmas a time of giving – not just to each other, but to the planet as well.

Here's some practical tips to help you go circular this Christmas – and beyond:

Regift unwanted items

Do you have unwanted items or gifts gathering dust? Give them a new lease of life by regifting them to someone who will truly appreciate them! Whether it's a book, home décor or even a vintage piece, regifting is a budget-friendly and thoughtful way to reduce waste while making someone else's Christmas. Regifting can also include homemade crafts or upcycled items. Need some craft inspiration? [Check out these ideas](#).

Gift experiences, not things

Instead of physical gifts, consider giving experiences! They create long lasting memories without the environmental impact. From spa days to theatre tickets, experience gifts are a fantastic way to support local businesses while reducing waste.

Local tip: East Suffolk is full of local experiences you can gift! How about a vineyard tour, a fun baking class or a cosy meal in a local restaurant? Find more inspiration with [The Suffolk Coast](#).

Buy pre-loved

One of the best ways to support the circular economy is by buying pre-loved gifts. Charity shops, antique stores, and local markets often have budget-friendly, unique and sustainable options that give pre-loved items a new lease of life.

Local tip: East Suffolk has many fantastic charity shops for you to explore. [Find your nearest ones](#). And don't forget to check out local [car boot sales](#), where you can find unique treasures and pre-loved gifts at great prices.

Shop local

Whether searching for the perfect gift or stocking up on festive treats, shopping locally helps reduce the carbon footprint of your purchases. By choosing to shop local, you're not only making a more sustainable choice but also supporting your local community.

Local tip: Small businesses across East Suffolk offer a range of delicious, locally made foods and beautiful handcrafted gifts – from artisanal treats to unique jewellery. Find more information about [shopping in East Suffolk](#). Also, don't miss the [markets](#) taking place across East Suffolk every week. Here you can find local food and drink, such as jams, honey, vegetables, bread, cheeses and ales.

Upcycle decorations

Instead of buying new Christmas decorations, why not get creative with what you already have? By upcycling, you can transform old or unwanted items into beautiful new pieces, such as garlands made from scrap fabric or festive candle holders made from empty glass jars. [Here's some great ideas](#).

Local tip: East Suffolk has several local repair cafes and groups, so if you need something fixed but aren't sure how to do it, this could be your answer! [Find your nearest one](#).

Eco-friendly Christmas cards

Choosing eco-friendly Christmas cards is a great way to spread festive cheer while being kind to the planet. Look for cards made from recycled materials or sustainable paper, or even plantable ones that grow into beautiful flowers or herbs.

Personalised e-cards are another great option. Not only do they save paper, but they can also be personalised with photos and messages, and no stamps are needed!

Feeling crafty? Make your own handmade cards using materials you already have or upcycle old cards for something truly special.

Local tip: When getting rid of old Christmas cards, remember to recycle where possible. Cards without glitter or foil can be recycled in your blue bin at home.

Wrap sustainably

Many wrapping papers aren't recyclable due to glitter or foil. This year, try using reusable or recycled materials, such as old newspapers, fabric (think scarves or tea towels), or brown paper tied with twine for beautiful, eco-friendly alternatives.

[Here's some ideas](#) to make your gifts stand out while supporting sustainability.

Local tip: If you choose to buy wrapping paper, opt for eco-friendly options that can be recycled in your blue bin at home (avoid glitter or foil). If in doubt, do the scrunch test - if it scrunches and doesn't spring back, you can recycle it!

Recycle festive waste

Recycling is essential, but it is important to do it right. Most wrapper paper is recyclable, except for glitter or foil-effect papers. You can also recycle cardboard packaging and cards without glitter or foil in your blue bin at home, as well as hard plastic, aluminium foil, newspaper, magazines, cans and plastic bottles.

Local Tip: Find out [what can and cannot be recycled in your blue bin](#) at home. There's also plenty of [recycling options](#) for items like glass and textiles.

Recycle real Christmas trees

If you've bought a real Christmas tree, remember to recycle it after the festivities for a greener start to the new year.

You can recycle your tree by placing it in your garden waste bin, composting it, or dropping it off at your nearest [recycling centre](#).

You can also support organisations, such as [EACH](#) and [Just Giving](#), that collect real Christmas trees to collect money for charity.

If you bought a potted tree, be sure to plant it in your garden so you can enjoy it for years to come.

Local Tip: Recycling your Christmas tree in your garden waste bin at home is easy—just cut it down to fit, ensuring the trunk and branches are no wider than 6 cm. Not signed up for the garden waste collection scheme yet? You can get 26 collections every year for just £52.50. [Sign up now](#).

Reduce food waste

The festive season often leads to excess food waste, but there are some simple steps we can all take to reduce this waste:

- Plan your meals carefully to avoid overbuying.
- Stick to a shopping list and check what you already have at home before heading out.
- Turn leftovers into tasty meals such as soups, stir-fries or sandwiches.
- Store extra food in airtight containers and freeze anything you can't eat.
- Got too much extra food? Share it with friends, family or local charities.
- And remember, scraps can be turned into garden gold through home composting.

Local tip: Turn your Christmas leftovers into magic with these delicious recipes from [Food Savvy Suffolk](#).

And finally, help others by donating things you don't need

If you have items around the home that you no longer want or need, such as toys, clothes or home décor, why not donate them? They could be the perfect gift for someone you've never met! By donating unwanted items in good condition, you're helping someone else enjoy their own circular Christmas and keeping the cycle going.

Local tip: Find your nearest [charity shop](#).

Introducing the first ever East Suffolk Youth Council!

A new council entirely comprising young people from across East Suffolk has now officially formed, ensuring the voices and concerns of younger residents are heard.

Thirty-two young people from up and down East Suffolk have been elected to the new East Suffolk Youth Council, an innovative initiative designed to engage young people in politics and enable them to influence decisions affecting their lives and communities.

Youth from every secondary educational community in East Suffolk, as well as the homeschooled were invited to stand for election earlier this year. These elections took place ahead of an induction day held at East Suffolk House in Melton on Monday 18 November, where the thirty-two members of the Youth Council were 'sworn in'.

Youth councillors will set their own priorities, have their own debates and reach their own decisions. They will have real and robust connections with East Suffolk Council, to ensure young peoples' voices are heard loud and clear in council decisions, and to drive real change across the district.

GLI Cllr Anthony Specca, Chair of East Suffolk Council said: "The East Suffolk Youth Council is a centrepiece of my Chairship. I'm incredibly proud of our new Youth Councillors, who had the courage to stand for election, and the passion to represent their peers and communities. I'm excited for the ideas and energy they'll bring to our local democracy, and I'm looking forward to working with and alongside them."

As part of their induction, the youth councillors received special training to help them to take up their new roles, understand the structure of council meetings and how motions are brought forward, and set their priorities ahead of the first Youth Council meeting on 9 December.

The Youth Council is apolitical, with its own special rules of procedure designed to promote open discussion. There will be three Youth Council meetings each year – one in-person and two online – with plenty of opportunities between meetings to get together and get things done.

The Youth Council is supported directly by the Chair, as well as other East Suffolk councillors and officers.

Victory in East Suffolk as National Grid Ventures' Nautilus interconnector project set to leave

East Suffolk Council has welcomed the news from Ofgem that National Grid Ventures' proposed Nautilus project will no longer be connecting within East Suffolk, favouring a connection at the Isle of Grain, Kent.

The news comes after the recent Ofgem Initial Project Assessment (IPA) consultation which sought community and stakeholder feedback on the proposal to relocate the UK's onshore connection for Nautilus within East Suffolk at Friston, as opposed to the recently assessed (and dismissed) Isle of Grain location. The Nautilus project proposes a 1.4 gigawatt electricity interconnector cable due to connect Belgium with the UK, running under the North Sea.

Having made it clear that Ofgem's wish to bring such a project back to East Suffolk, overlooked the significant social and environmental costs, GLI Cllr Tom Daly (Cabinet Member for Energy and Climate Change), is delighted with this development.

He said: "We have been calling on Ofgem to reverse such a decision and allow Nautilus to proceed to the Isle of Grain, rather than putting short term cost advantages before all else - including exploring possible future economies in coordinating multiple projects at a brownfield site rather than peppering our heritage coast with unplanned-for industrial development. The change of heart is welcome news for East Suffolk Council and the local communities it represents.

"The political leadership and technical expertise within East Suffolk Council has enabled Ofgem to see sense and listen to the concerns of local people within the communities set to be impacted by such a project. It has been a long road, however it is moments like today which make it all worthwhile.'

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