

June 2020 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Stick With It Suffolk – continue slowing the spread of coronavirus

Suffolk residents are being asked to continue their great efforts, which are successfully reducing the spread of COVID-19. The *Stick With It Suffolk* campaign, launched on 18 May, highlights the things we must all continue doing to keep each other safe and to defeat the virus.

These are:

Keep staying at home

Keep working from home if you can

Keep two metres apart if you go out

Keep exercising safely

Keep washing your hands with soap and water

Keep self-isolating if you, or anyone in your household, has symptoms

Keep travelling by car, bike or walking

Keep staying safe at work

Keep shielding yourself if you're vulnerable

Keep supporting local businesses

Keep looking out for each other.

Stick With It Suffolk is being rolled out across the county by the Suffolk Resilience Forum, which includes Suffolk's NHS, Emergency and Public Services. These local authorities and organisations are working together around the clock to keep Suffolk as safe as possible. This is how Suffolk will successfully respond to the government's *Stay Alert, Control The Virus, Save Lives* message.

People are asked to share their stories and how they are managing to stick with it, using the hashtag #StickWithItSuffolk on social media. On behalf of all the members of the Suffolk Resilience Forum, I'd like to say thank you to the people of Suffolk for the sacrifices they are making by following these instructions. Now, more than ever, it is important that we stick with it - the number of cases can very easily increase if we take our eye off the ball. This would be a backward step, with strict lockdown measures coming back into force. We are making progress, and we will continue to do so if we Stick With It Suffolk.

Domestic abuse helpline extended to offer round the clock support in Suffolk

On 22 May, Suffolk County Council, working with Anglia Care Trust, extended its Domestic Abuse Helpline to offer 24-hour support. The council is urging anyone experiencing, or at risk of, domestic abuse to make contact, when safe to do so. With lockdown measures still in place, it is important that those who may find themselves at risk of abuse at home, can access the right support at whatever time they need it. The existing Domestic Abuse Outreach Service has therefore extended its 0800 977 5690 freephone number to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone with concerns, including professionals who are supporting clients and friends and families who are concerned for loved ones, can access this local support. The government advice encouraging people to stay at home as much as possible can create additional challenges to those at risk of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse remains a priority for partners across Suffolk during this period. This 24-hour free phonenumber is a vital lifeline in helping those in need. The service also includes a live web chat from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, which can be accessed at angliacaretrust.org.uk. If people are in immediate danger, they should call the police on 999. If someone is unable to speak or make a sound, but needs immediate help, they should call 999 and stay on the line, and then press 55 when prompted. The call will be transferred to the police, who will know it is an emergency call.

Highways completes 1,000 extra road improvements during lockdown

On 13 May, it was reported that Suffolk Highways has increased its number of repairs and road improvements since the Coronavirus lockdown began. 6,334 potholes and other highway faults were repaired in the county during March and April, compared with 5,345 in the same period last year,

meaning a 18.5% increase in repairs. Through Suffolk Highways' careful planning of resource prior to and during the lockdown, teams working out on the network have been supported to continue working effectively, whilst keeping themselves and members of the travelling public safe. On top of these reactive repairs which are picked up through reports from residents and Suffolk Highways' routine inspections, the service has continued with its larger improvement schemes, completing works on Angel Hill in Bury St Edmunds and continuing with the construction of a new footpath on Heath Lane in Ipswich. Suffolk Highways has also continued with its cyclical drainage, grass cutting and weed control programmes, ensuring those travelling for essential purposes can do so safely. Furthermore, the resurfacing and surface dressing programmes have begun – laying new surfaces on roads to help stop potholes from forming in future. Despite the obvious challenges all public services are experiencing at the moment, I am really pleased to see that not only are our highways colleagues continuing business as usual, but they are using the quieter roads to get more done. Our teams have had to work in different ways, to ensure they can continue keeping the roads safe and open for use, whilst keeping themselves and those they come into contact with safe and healthy. Despite these extra precautions, Suffolk Highways colleagues have increased productivity, repaired more issues and continued with their planned programmes of work. These successes are evidence of the hard work and dedication shown by our key worker operatives - thank you all for what you continue to do to keep our county moving.

More booking slots released following successful re-opening of Suffolk's recycling centres

On Thursday 14 May, all of Suffolk's 11 recycling centre sites re-opened on an appointment only basis. Since then, 95% of all slots have been booked. This amounts to 28,500 appointments. The booking system has proved an efficient and effective way of allowing people to easily dispose of their rubbish and helping manage demand on the service. The system has received widespread public support. It has helped reduce traffic disruption on roads around the sites and supported social distancing on site for staff and members of the public. The initial road closures that were put in place at Fornham Road, Bury St Edmunds, and Foxhall Road, Foxhall, were lifted after five days. Sir Alf Ramsey Way, Ipswich, remains closed for the time being, with the closure reviewed regularly. From 28 May, in line with the phased approach, and because of the success of the booking system, car derived vans can access the sites via online booking. Charges for DIY waste from households, like soil, rubble or hardcore, will also be accepted, but trade waste still cannot be taken to the sites. Contactless card payments will be taken at a kiosk on site, in line with social distancing measures. Bags of compost will also be available to buy on site. The success of the re-opening of the recycling centres has been largely down to the cooperation and willingness of people to comply with the temporary guidelines and support social distancing on site. Thank you for playing your part in helping us with the smooth transition of getting Suffolk's recyclable waste moving again. The positive comments and feedback from our residents have been overwhelming and very much appreciated by site staff. Temporary rules still apply, which include:

- No access to sites without pre-booking
- Cars, car derived vans, and pedestrians only – no larger vans, trailers or commercial-type vehicles
- One adult to unload, unless two adults are needed for heavy items
- No staff assistance to unload vehicles, no trade waste, no textiles or re-use items accepted.

To make a booking, please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/recyclingcentres. If you do not have access to the internet, call 0345 606 6067. To prevent dangerous queueing, residents without a booking will not be able to enter the site. Residents must not arrive on site more than five minutes before their allocated time. People who are, or have anyone in their household, suffering from Covid-19 symptoms, or who have been diagnosed as having the virus, must not visit recycling centres.

Matthew Hicks - County Councillor for the Thredling Division