

Thorndon Parish Council 3.5.2012
County Councillor Report

Development of Suffolk Circle

We have been Scrutinising the development of the Suffolk Circle, The circle was launched in February 2011 and is now in its second year of operation, and is a membership organisation open to anyone over the age of 50 years, which aims to connect its members to get every day practical tasks done, through matching up helpers and other members to supply support services, develop groups and friendships. Based on a target of 3500 members over 3 financial years, a county Council investment of £680,000 was agreed by cabinet.

To date 362 members have joined, against a target of 404, we were unable to get any figures on people rejoining after the first year, a membership fee of £30 per year is required and tokens costing £6.00 can be bought in exchange for services etc, these credits can also be earned by services given etc.

The other factor in our rural communities is the proliferation of “good neighbour schemes” these schemes do much of the work of the Suffolk Circle but without the annual sign up fee and tokens etc. Many members suggested this item should have been scrutinised before we signed off the budget.

Demand Responsive Transport

We have been looking into the effectiveness of our demand responsive transport offer, and check that it is delivering much needed public transport, to get to appointments shopping etc. Some constraints on the existing service are that the office hours to book a slot are only open 9am till 1.00pm, this is a huge inconvenience if you have for instance a Doctors appointment in the afternoon and are in need of a further appointment, you cannot confirm this date until the office opens the next morning. At the moment this service is in use here, and we hope that changes such as extending the office hours to book the Bus can be made to further its use.

John Peel Archive

This week the first selection from John’s 26000 album archive went online, A partnership of the Arts Council, Eye Film & Media and the John Peel Centre For Creative Arts have worked together to launch a website that shows John’s studio and each week we will release 100 albums from his archive, starting today with A then next week B etc, also each week a newly filmed video of one of the featured artists. The site is at www.thespace.org

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