

**Thorndon Parish Council 7.2.2013**  
County Councillor Report

**John Peel Centre Building Complete**

The building work to completely transform the Corn Exchange in Stowmarket to the John Peel Centre for Creative Arts is now complete. We have taken this Victorian shell and introduced state of the art new heating lighting systems included a mezzanine floor with a bar and community kitchen and a lift for disability access.

In all this project has gained inward investment of over £1000,000 into a Suffolk market town, as well as providing a springboard for local talent.

For the last 9 months I have been chairman of the project, overseeing the transition from a rudimentary shell to the well equipped building we now have. All the directors and team at the John Peel Centre are volunteers, which makes this achievement all the more rewarding.

I look forward to seeing you in the building at some stage, and if anyone would like a tour, I have a key, and would gladly show you around.

**Update on Suffolk Highways contract tender process**

In December 2012, Suffolk County Council announced Balfour Beatty Living Places as the Preferred Bidder for the contract to maintain and improve Suffolk's highways from 1st April 2013.

Following a period of discussion with Balfour Beatty Living Places, Suffolk County Council has not been able to confirm and clarify commitments made to the point where it can provisionally award the contract. It has therefore been decided that the procurement process will revert to the previous stage where Suffolk County Council can liaise with any, or all, of the bidders who submitted final tenders (including Balfour Beatty Living Places), before again identifying a preferred bidder.

This does not affect the county council's ambition to identify a private sector company that will be responsible for the design and implementation of highway maintenance and improvement works, winter gritting, street lighting, traffic signals and bridge works throughout the county. However the key objective to achieve £2 million of recurring revenue savings in year 2013/14 if delayed technically means £500,000 per quarter is not saved.

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