

Parish Report May 2018

Councillor

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Pothole repairs

It was recently reported that Suffolk County Council had repaired 6500 potholes since the start of the year. However, there are still a number of issues with the way Highways carry out their repairs, and this headline figure does not paint an accurate picture of the situation in Suffolk.

The Highways team are currently struggling to keep up with the need for repairs across the county, and so are resorting to temporary repairs which are quicker to complete than permanent repairs. They have recently introduced a more expensive temporary material that is supposed to last slightly longer. However, these pothole repairs will undoubtedly need to be repeated in the coming months as the temporary material deteriorates. Whether this represents value for money for Suffolk residents is an important question.

Suffolk Highways have also stated that they are "blitzing" whole areas of the road at once, rather than making multiple trips to the same area. However, it is important to note that they will only repair potholes that meet their intervention criteria. I have attached a copy of the "Defect Response Matrix" at the end of this report, which outlines the minimum size a pothole needs to be for it be repaired by Suffolk Highways.

Further information on the pothole repairs policy can be found within the Suffolk Highway Maintenance Operational Plan, available at: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/Roads-and-transport/how-we-manage-highway-maintenance/Suffolk-Highway-Maintenance-Operational-Plan.pdf>

Further National Lottery funding approved for "The Hold" in Ipswich

At the beginning of April, it was announced that the Heritage Lottery Fund had awarded an additional £10.3m towards "The Hold" project, a heritage centre to be built on the Ipswich Waterfront. Building work will begin this spring, with The Hold scheduled to open by the end of 2019.

The total cost of the project is expected to be £20m. Suffolk County Council has pledged £5m for the building, whilst the University of Suffolk has pledged £1m. The Heritage Lottery Fund had previously awarded £538,000, bringing the total lottery funding to £10.8m. Additional funding will come from the Wolfson Foundation and fundraising by the charity "Suffolk Archives Foundation".

As well as providing public facilities and teaching spaces for the University of Suffolk, The Hold is expected to house the majority of Suffolk's archival collections. This has been criticised by residents of Lowestoft and the surrounding area, who face losing their local Records Office and the records within it. Suffolk County Council has been criticised for the lack of consultation with residents prior to the decision to close the Lowestoft Records Office. A petition by local campaigners SORO (Save Our Records Office) will be presented to the Council on 24 May, calling on the Council to reconsider the decision to move all records to Ipswich. There is currently no suggestion that this project will affect the Bury St Edmunds Records Office.

Chilton Woods development moves forward

The Cabinet has agreed to proceed with the Chilton Woods development as an “upfront land sale”, meaning land will be sold to developers, either in lots or as a whole, who will then work on the development over a 10 year period.

The development is expected to deliver 1150 homes and supporting infrastructure, including highways improvements and a new primary school. 25% of these homes have been designated as affordable. Furthermore, the scheme includes 15ha of employment land which is expected to provide 1900 new jobs.

The Cabinet agreed to set aside £2.7m of funding for the development, to be released over the next 10 years. Furthermore, they will be seeking Government funding in partnership with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership to enable the delivery of employment as soon as possible.

Cabinet welcomes proposals to extend the Suffolk Coasts & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Cabinet agreed to welcome proposals by Natural England to extend the current boundaries of the Suffolk Coasts & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, they have suggested some amendments that need to be made to the proposal, to ensure the boundaries are manageable.

Ownership of land remains unchanged within an AONB and there is no restriction on how land is farmed. Whilst there is no presumption against development within an AONB, residents within the new AONB areas will have their Permitted Development Rights modified so that they are similar to those experienced by residents within a Conservation Area.

The Cabinet’s comments were included in a submission to Natural England’s public consultation, which ended on 20 April 2018. It is hoped that these amendments will be include in Natural England’s Draft Designation Order.

Matrix C - Potholes

		SEVERITY					
		Extreme	Major	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible
		Road Type 2	Road Type 3a	Road Type 3b	Road Type 3b	Road Type 4a	Road Type 4b
		Strategic 'A' rd Routes	Main Distributer - Major Urban Network and Inter Strategic routes	Main rural secondary distributor roads	Main urban secondary distributor roads	Local Roads	Minor rural roads and urban culs-de-sac
		400mm dia	400mm dia	400mm dia	400mm dia	400mm dia	400mm dia
LIKELIHOOD	Very likely >100mm	Cat 1 2 hours	Cat 1 2 hours	Cat 2 2 working days	Cat 3 5 working days	Cat 3 5 working days	Cat 4 10 working days
	Likely 75-100mm	Cat 2 2 working days	Cat 2 2 working days	Cat 3 5 working days	Cat 4 10 working days	Cat 4 10 working days	Cat 5 20 working days
	Possible 50-74mm	Cat 3 5 working days	Cat 3 5 working days	Cat 3 5 working days	Cat 4 10 working days	Cat 5 20 working days	Cat 6 14 calendar weeks
	Unlikely 25-49mm	Cat 5 20 working days	Cat 6 14 calendar weeks	Cat 6 14 calendar weeks	Cat 7 Potential future works	Cat 7 Potential future works	Cat 7 Potential future works
	Rare <25mm	Cat 7 Potential future works	Cat 7 Potential future works	Cat 7 Potential future works	Cat 7 Potential future works	Cat 7 Potential future works	Cat 7 Potential future works

Notes

If the diameter is between 300 and 399mm drop down one category (e.g. Cat 2 becomes Cat 3), if the diameter is between 200 and 299mm drop down 2 categories. If less than 199mm drop down 3 categories.
 Defects under 25mm in depth do not need to be recorded.
 Please note wheter joint sealing is required.