

THEBERTON AND EASTBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE THEBERTON AND EASTBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT JUBILEE HALL,
THEBERTON ON WEDNESDAY 8th APRIL 2026 AT 7:00PM.

1. Attendance and apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. Stephen Brett – Chair
Cllr. Hazel Collins
Cllr. Vanessa Davis
Cllr. Robert Flindall
Cllr. Daryl Ash
Cllr. Graham Ward
Cllr. Stephen Morphey
Cllr. Nat Bacon

Apologies for absence:

District Cllr. Sarah Whitelock
District Cllr. Katie Graham
Cllr. Paul Collins - apologised

Members of the public:

No members of the public were present

In attendance:

District Cllr. Tom Daly
Honor Houlding- Clerk/RFO

Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council approved the apologies and absences from this month's meeting.
All in favour.

2. To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations

None.

3. Public Forum

a) Members of the public may address the Council on any agenda item

None.

b) To receive a report from the County Councillor

No County Councillors were present.

c) To receive reports from the District Councillors

Cllr. Tom Daly summarised the East Suffolk Council monthly report which is attached as **Appendix I**.

Cllr. Tom Daly highlighted the Thriving Places Fund for smaller communities, with capital grants available. He also referred to the Bringing Homes Back to Life campaign, which aims to return older properties to use and reduce the number of empty homes. There are currently 652 empty properties in the district.

An update was provided on the Sea Link examination, with less than a month remaining before closure and open floor hearings taking place. A link to Cllr. Tom Daly's contribution will be shared. Concern was expressed with regards to a reluctance to engage constructively and it was noted that a significant number of issues require to be considered by the examiner before the DCO is established.

A meeting at the Eel's Foot took place with SZC and ESC officers. It was reported that the tourism fund protocol has been amended to make it more accessible to the landlord of the Eel's Foot in Eastbridge. Discussions were described as constructive, with high level meetings taking place regarding impacts on local pubs and possible support through

the tourism fund. It was noted that it was unfortunate these changes had not been made sooner, as pubs are already struggling. Theberton has continued to press strongly for compensation and, at the last community forum, many parishes raised concerns that businesses require support. It was further noted that many businesses may not survive the development of SZC. Grants are available and concerns should continue to be raised.

Reference was made to Screwbolt in Leiston, which has requested support. Local tradespeople are no longer calling in as frequently due to parking difficulties and traffic disruption. Although some businesses had been expected to benefit from the development, contractors have instead relied on established supply chains.

It was further reported that the Leiston butcher had been seeking to sell the business, having been unable to compete for larger SZC contracts. However, it was noted that a new bakery has recently opened in Leiston.

Concern was expressed that the loss of local trades, shops and pubs would leave a damaging long term legacy for the area.

The possibility of establishing a forum for local businesses was raised, together with the need for business representatives to be included within governance groups, potentially through the Chamber of Commerce.

4. Minutes and Matters Arising

- a) To approve as accurate the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2026

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Brett and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2026 to be signed as a true record. All in favour.

- b) Matters arising

None.

5. Energy Projects

- a) To receive an update from Cllr. Paul Collins

Cllr. Paul Collins' NSIPS Report is attached as **Appendix II**.

The invitation to the Sizewell Tree Planting Event is attached as **Appendix III**.

- b) To discuss SZC compensation for village pubs

Cllr. Stephen Brett informed the council that compensation from SZC to aid the local pubs and businesses had been refused, as confirmed at the last Community Forum. He advised that he is willing to meet with both pub landlords and stated that, should either landlord wish to pursue support, grants and funding opportunities are available via different channels.

The process of providing new signage for the Eel's Foot at Eastbridge is ongoing. It was noted that obtaining Department for Transport brown tourist signage can be difficult and lengthy, with the landlords having sought a white on brown sign for the past two years. Support in progressing the matter was requested.

It was reported that trading conditions are likely to worsen over the next 12 months. Workers staying in accommodation are not permitted to keep cars and must use the park and ride system, making travel to local businesses more difficult. It was hoped that once SLR works are completed in approximately 18 months, motorists may be less discouraged from using the B1122.

Reference was made to proposals for a bar at the SZC campus. Although a bar will be provided, it will be for workers only. It was noted that the average age of workers tends to be older and the expectation is that behaviour will be more settled, with workers likely to have a few drinks before returning to their accommodation.

6. Planning

- a) To discuss planning application: DC/25/4545/FUL, The Lion Inn Public House, Theberton

Cllr. Robert Flindall summarised planning application DC/25/4545/FUL in respect of The Lion Inn. He noted that matters relating to the impact on the listed building should be left to ESC Planning, as the determining authority with relevant expertise. It was suggested that the front doors could be more traditional in appearance.

It was further noted that the existing outdoor bathroom facilities are outdated and that bringing these facilities indoors would be beneficial for the long term viability of the public house. Concern was raised regarding parking provision, which it was understood would be considered by Highways. Reference was made to the provision of 15 parking spaces.

In principle, the council raised no objection, subject to planners ensuring minimum impact on neighbouring properties and satisfactory parking provision.

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Brett and seconded by Cllr. Graham Ward to submit a No Objection response in principle, subject to the local planning authority giving due consideration. All in Favour.

ACTION: Clerk to submit no objection response to planning application DC/25/4545/FUL, The Lion Inn Public House, Theberton before 9th April deadline.

- b) To discuss planning application: DC/26/0631/LBC, The Lion Inn Public House, Theberton

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Brett and seconded by Cllr. Graham Ward to submit a No Objection response in principle, subject to the local planning authority giving due consideration. All in Favour.

ACTION: Clerk to submit no objection response to planning application DC/26/0631/LBC, The Lion Inn Public House, Theberton before 10th April deadline.

- c) Suffolk Preservation Society - Neighbourhood Planning Study Day 16th May 2026

The Clerk informed the council that Minsmere Levels Stakeholders are members of the Suffolk Preservation Society.

The Suffolk Preservation Society is awaiting expressions of interest regarding the proposed Study Day before confirming the venue and timings, which have not yet been published. If Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council wished to purchase a ticket for the event, the cost would be £10 per ticket or £30 for an annual donation to the Suffolk Preservation Society.

ACTION: Cllr. Paul Collins and or Cllr. Stephen Brett and or Cllr. Robert Flindall to attend Suffolk Preservation Society - Neighbourhood Planning Study Day 16th May 2026

- d) East Suffolk Call for Sites - Proposed Areas for Development

Cllr Robert Flindall summarised the East Suffolk Call for Sites - Proposed Areas for Development which is attached as **Appendix IV**.

The East Suffolk Council Local Plan was noted to be at an early stage with an increased requirement to identify potential housing sites. A public "Call for Sites" has been published with initial locations along the B1122 at Onner's Lane and the junction of Moat Road. It was confirmed this forms part of early evidence gathering exercise and further sites will be considered by the District Council.

The importance of progressing a Neighbourhood Plan was highlighted to ensure the Parish Council and community retain influence over future development and local planning policy.

Local concern was noted regarding the potential scale of development, although it was emphasised that no sites are confirmed at this stage and proposals may not be taken forward.

Reference was made to land at Moat Road, including an area of archaeological interest, where any development would require appropriate assessment. Concerns were raised that some proposals could significantly increase the size of the village without corresponding infrastructure, including services, transport, school provision and utilities. It was stated that development could see around 100 homes built and that without adequate supporting infrastructure, with reference made to examples elsewhere including Darsham and Wenhaston.

Broader concerns were expressed that the district is a desirable place to live and that developers are therefore likely to favour land within Suffolk due to the potential for higher profit margins.

7. Clerk/Councillors' Reports

a) Community Council

Cllr. Daryl Ash reported attendance at the Community Council meeting held on 25th of March, where the Sizewell C Community Fund application was discussed. The proposal relates to the provision of a shelter on the field for use by parents and carers while children are playing. Quotations are in the process of being obtained, with one quote amounting to £30,000.

A new author is required for the newsletter and the Parish Clerk will cover this on an interim basis.

The Community Council AGM is scheduled for 6.30pm on 9th of April. The Fun Day is planned for 20th of June was highlighted, with volunteers urgently needed.

Ongoing issues relating to banking were noted and it was confirmed that new trustees have been appointed.

ACTION: Clerk to put items for the newsletter on every Parish Council Agenda for councillors to put forward ideas for the newsletter each month.

ACTION: Cllrs. To assist by submitting ideas for monthly newsletter by the 20th of each month.

b) Sizewell C Community Fund Large Grant Application to purchase replacement tractor

Cllr. Robert Flindall detailed the progress of the tractor application with the Sizewell C Community Fund confirming that the application has now been submitted ahead of 29th March 2026 deadline. The clerk informed the council that the Equality and Diversity Policy and Safeguarding policies of the council require to be updated, which will form part of the May Agenda.

ACTION: Clerk to update, circulate and add the Equality and Diversity Policy and Safeguarding policies to May's Agenda

c) Sizewell C Community Fund Large Grant Application:

- i) Eastbridge Burial Ground Hedging
- ii) Theberton Playing Field Seating Area
- iii) Electricity and water supply to Eastbridge Burial Ground and Theberton Playing Field
- iv) Benches for Heritage Trail route

Cllr. Robert Flindall informed the council that the community survey had been circulated as part of the April village newsletter to all residents to gather evidence of local needs in response to the impacts of Sizewell C. Councillors were encouraged to promote the survey to neighbours and friends and to invite suggestions on improvements and priorities for the area.

ACTION: Clerk to send Cllr. Daryl Ash copy of survey to post photo of survey on neighbourhood Facebook page.

[ACTION: Cllr. Daryl Ash to post copy of the community survey on the local Facebook page.](#)

Cllr. Stephen Brett provided an update on the pétanque pistes at the Eel's Foot, noting that the previous proposal for these had been declined as the site is privately owned. At a recent meeting with East Suffolk Council, Sizewell C and the landlord, an alternative scheme was discussed which encourages contractors to support small local projects.

In principle, a contractor would be identified to supply materials and construct four new pétanque pistes, with the work expected could be completed within a week. A plaque would be installed to acknowledge the contractor responsible.

It was also noted that the Eel's Foot team is involved in a European tournament and may compete abroad in the coming months.

d) Heritage Trail Launch Event – 12th June 2026

The Clerk advised that the planned Heritage Trail event on 12th of June is no longer available and a new date is required for agreement with MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter. It was suggested that the event could be aligned with the Fun Day to be held on the 20th of June to increase attendance and support footfall for both events and potential revenue opportunities.

It was further suggested that, if 20th of June is not suitable, an alternative date in July could be considered once the school term has ended to allow greater participation from families. It was noted that children would be off school during July.

Provision of food was discussed, with Eel's Foot pizzas proposed as catering for the event but also to include The Lion Inn, Theberton.

[ACTION: Clerk to request 20th June, or other Saturday dates in the Summer with MP Jenny Riddell Carpenter.](#)

e) Eastbridge Playing Field

The clerk explained that the Eastbridge Playing Field Goal Post paint had been received and arranged a hand over with Cllr. Stephen Morphey to complete the works.

f) Commemorative Oak Tree at Theberton Playing Field

[ACTION: Cllr. Stephen Brett to speak to resident with regards to replacement Commemorative Oak Tree at Theberton Playing Field.](#)

[ACTION: Cllr. Stephen Brett to speak to volunteer with regards to watering new sapling oak tree at Theberton Playing Field.](#)

g) Speed Indicator Device

Cllr. Paul Collins' Speed Indicator Report is attached as **Appendix V**.

h) February Police Crime Report

The February Police Crime Report is attached as **Appendix VI**.

There were no crimes to report within the Parish in February 2026.

i) Defibrillator Refresher Training

The Clerk advised that she is currently liaising with three providers of first aid training to arrange a community defibrillator training session. A report outlining options, costs and available dates will be presented to the May meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to produce report presenting options for Defibrillator Refresher Training for the community.

j) Increased levels of roadside litter

The Clerk summarised recent correspondence from residents regarding increased roadside litter and advised that Sizewell C had been contacted to raise the issue. It was noted that litter picking events operated by volunteers are taking place in other surrounding areas too.

The provision of additional equipment for volunteers, including litter pickers and high visibility clothing, was discussed along with possible support arrangements such as refreshments. It was queried whether a daily litter collection service operates in the area.

Consideration was given to installing a larger bin at the Pump Street Cottages lay-by due to regular use and increased traffic levels.

ACTION: Clerk to file report to ESC about having bins at Pump Cottages layby emptied more frequently.

ACTION: Cllr. Nat Bacon to speak with SZC representative to discuss supporting litter picking events in the area.

ACTION: Clerk to write to local resident requesting feedback on ideas for litter picking help from SZC.

k) Suffolk Highways Survey for completion

The clerk requested volunteers for completing the Suffolk Highways Survey ahead of the 30th of April deadline.

ACTION: Cllr. Hazel Collins to complete Suffolk Highways Survey ahead of the 30th April deadline.

ACTION: Hazel Collins

l) Theberton and Eastbridge Newsletter

The Clerk informed the council that the current newsletter author had resigned. However, due to a lack of communication, both the Clerk and the previous author both submitted material for the April edition to Leiston Press. As the community survey was included, two April publications were produced, one of which was a double-sided issue.

It was noted that the council pays for the newsletter annually and that this has resulted in one fewer monthly issue available for 2026. The Clerk presented options to manage costs, including paying £4.00 for the additional side of the April newsletter and £22.00 for an additional edition, or alternatively omitting one future month, such as August, which is typically quieter and has no scheduled parish council meeting. It was noted that this approach would avoid exceeding budget, with flexibility to revise should urgent matters arise.

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Brett and seconded by Cllr. Graham Ward that the payment of £4.00 to be made to Leiston Press to pay for the additional side to April's newsletter. All in favour.

ACTION: Cllrs. To assist by submitting ideas for monthly newsletter by the 21st of each month

ACTION: Clerk to add £4.00 payment to May's agenda

m) Outstanding Actions List

The Clerk summarised the list of outstanding actions to the Council and confirmed that any outstanding actions would be added to April's action list.

8. Devolution Consultation

a) None

It was noted that the Government had announced a three unitary authority model for Suffolk and Norfolk.

9. Parish Matters

a) None

None.

10. Administration

a) To conduct the annual review and approval of the Asset Register

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Brett and seconded by Cllr. Graham Ward that the Asset Register be a true record and to be approved by the council. All in favour.

[ACTION: Clerk to update and publish the Asset Register on the Parish Council website](#)

b) To note the redeclaration of compliance with the Pensions Regulator

It was proposed by Cllr. Graham Ward and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to note the redeclaration of compliance with the Pensions Regulator. All in favour.

c) To note and approve the SALC Internal Audit Service Letter of Engagement

It was proposed by Cllr. Hazel Collins and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to note and approve the SALC Internal Audit Service Letter of Engagement. All in favour.

d) To note the confirmed Internal Audit booking with SALC 4th – 10th May 2026

It was proposed by Cllr. Hazel Collins and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to note Internal Audit booking with SALC 4th – 10th May 2026. All in favour.

e) To conduct the annual review and approval of the S137 expenditure 2026-2027 at £11.60 per electorate

The council conducted the annual review of S137 expenditure.

It was proposed by Cllr. Hazel Collins and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett that S137 of £11.60 to be approved by the Council. All in favour.

f) To review and approve the annual expenditure over £100 2025-2026

The council reviewed and approved the annual expenditure over £100 2025-2026.

It was proposed by Cllr. Hazel Collins and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett that the annual expenditure over £100 2025-2026 to be a true record. All in favour.

[ACTION: Clerk to update and publish the annual expenditure over £100 2025-2026 on the Parish Council website](#)

- g) To note and approve the Annual CIL report 2025-2026

The council noted and approved the Annual CIL report 2025-2026.

It was proposed by Cllr. Hazel Collins and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett that the Annual CIL report 2025/2026 to be a true record. All in favour.

[ACTION: Clerk to update and publish the Annual CIL report 2025-2026 on the Parish Council website](#)

11. Finance

- a) To note the budgeted versus actual income and expenditure for Qtr. 4 2025-2026

It was proposed by Cllr. Nat Bacon and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to note and approve the budgeted versus actual income and expenditure for Qtr. 4 2025-2026. All in favour.

- b) To approve the banking reconciliation for Qtr. 4 2025-2026

It was proposed by Cllr. Graham Ward and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to approve the banking reconciliation for Qtr. 4 2025-2026. All in favour.

- c) To approve the EOY banking reconciliation for 2025-2026

It was proposed by Cllr. Graham Ward and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to approve the EOY banking reconciliation for 2025-2026. All in favour.

- d) To review and approve the finalised EOY Accounts 2025-2026

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to approve the EOY Accounts 2025-2026. All in favour.

[ACTION: Clerk to publish the finalised EOY Accounts 2025-2026 and complete 2025-2026 AGAR.](#)

- e) To note the formatting correction to the March financial position

It was proposed by Cllr. Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed that the corrected March financial position to be a true record. All in favour.

- f) To agree to transfer £1,000 to the earmarked reserve for the Play Equipment Sinking Fund

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to transfer £1,000 to the earmarked reserve for the Play Equipment Sinking Fund. All in favour.

- g) To agree to reallocate the earmarked reserve of the Yoxmere Fisherman Fund to General Reserves

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to reallocate the earmarked reserve of the Yoxmere Fisherman Fund to General Reserve. All in favour.

- h) To agree to transfer £100 to the earmarked reserve for the Neighbourhood Planning Fund

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to transfer £100 to the earmarked reserve for the Neighbourhood Planning Fund. All in favour.

i) To agree to transfer £50 to the earmarked reserve for the Website Update Fund

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to transfer £50 to the earmarked reserve for the Website Update Fund. All in favour.

j) To agree to transfer £350 to the earmarked reserve for the Theberton Playing Field Equipment Fund

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed to transfer £350 to the earmarked reserve for the Theberton Playing Field Equipment Fund. All in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to research how much money the council have put into the earmarked reserves both sinking funds in the last 5 years and add to May's agenda.

k) To note that Theberton and Eastbridge Parish will receive £0.00 from East Suffolk Council in biannual CIL payments in April 2026

It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Morphey and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it noted that no East Suffolk Council CIL payments will be received in April 2026. All in favour.

l) To note the latest financial position

It was proposed by Cllr. Nat Bacon and seconded by Cllr. Stephen Brett and it was agreed that the latest financial position to be a true record. All in favour.

m) To authorise the following payments:

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Honor Houlding	£391.37	LGA 1972 s.112
Broadband	BT	TBC	LGA 1972 s.19
Clerk PAYE	HMRC	£325.77	LGA 1972 s.112
Payroll Services	SALC	£54.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Data Protection Registration	Information Commissioner's Office	£52.00	LGA 1972 s.111

The Clerk advised that the monthly BT payment will increase from April 2026 and is expected to be £27.54 plus VAT, totalling £33.05. As the invoice is due to be issued on or after 20 April, the payment will be presented to the May meeting for ratification.

The Clerk apologised for the earlier error regarding the ICO payment. This should be recorded as a direct debit payment of £47.00 due on or after 4 May and will also be presented to the May meeting for ratification.

ACTION: Clerk to add Data Protection Registration £47.00 to May Agenda for ratification

It was proposed by Cllr. Hazel Collins and seconded by Cllr. Graham Ward and it was agreed to authorise the payments listed above. All in favour.

12. Correspondence

To review the correspondence received between 9th March 2026 and 7th April 2026 take action as appropriate

The clerk summarised the correspondence received between the 9th of March 2026 and 7th April 2026 and the council agreed that no further actions were required. All in favour.

13. Questions to the Chair/Items for the Next Agenda

The importance of continuing to develop the village archive was discussed. It was suggested that the resident, whose family are from Theberton and who has spent his life in the village, should be invited to record his life story for inclusion within the archive.

Reference was also made to a newsletter produced by supporters of Orford Castle, which included an article about a former resident of Dovehouse Farm, Theberton. It was suggested that contact could also be made with Aldeburgh History Society regarding local historical material.

ACTION: Clerk to add local resident stories for updating village archives to next month's agenda

ACTION: Clerk to add increased updates of information to website to next month's agenda

Cllr. Robert Flindall asked whether the installation of swift boxes within the parish could be considered under the ESC Put Nature First initiative.

ACTION: Clerk to speak to Cllr. Sarah Whitelock with regards to swift box idea for the Nature First Initiative.

14. Next Meeting.

To agree the date and time of the next meeting of the next Parish Council Meeting and the Annual Meeting which is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 7:00 pm at the Jubilee Hall.

Honor Houlding

Parish Clerk

Meeting Ended at 21.26

March 2026 Parish Report
East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

£1.5m Thriving Places Fund Announced to Support East Suffolk's Smallest Communities

East Suffolk Council recently announced a new £1.5m programme that's set to revitalise the district's towns, village and rural communities.

Announced at the Town Councils' Conference held at High Lodge at Hinton, Saxmundham, the Thriving Places fund is planned to deliver projects that will strengthen the long-term resilience and sustainability of the district's smallest communities.

Launching in April 2026, the fund that will run for two years will be open to town and parish councils, CICs and social enterprises, charities and not for profit organisations and community groups to upgrade facilities, aims to help improve public spaces and make a difference to the lives of local people.

Leader of East Suffolk Council, GLI Cllr Caroline Topping said: "Our smaller communities are important to the fabric of East Suffolk, and we want to support them to be local centres of trade and ecommerce. A place for people to gather and places which build community understanding and cohesion, with that in mind, we are pleased to announce our Thriving Places Fund.

"Specifically targeted at smaller towns and communities in East Suffolk, this funding aims to revitalise and enhance local centres to encourage local enterprise, improve community participation, strengthen the local visitor and cultural economy, enable local carbon sustainable investment.

"We recognise the challenges our rural communities face – such as declining infrastructure, reduced access to services and the impact of social isolation, and to address the historical lack of place-based investment in these smaller communities, we are prioritising this funding support to meet each communities' specific needs. The Thriving Places Fund aims to address these challenges and empower each locality to develop projects that will have a lasting and positive impact on the lives of local people."

Communities can apply for grants of up to £50,000 to support local projects which aim to reduce inequalities in the area, help people to adapt to changes, help to protect important local assets like buildings or spaces, improve access to services, skills, wellbeing activities and local facilities and support long-term local growth.

Capital grants of between £10,00 and £50,000 will be available for purchasing or improving physical assets, while revenue grants between £5,000 and £25,000 can be utilised to cover project-specific activities and operational costs. Up to 60% of project costs will be covered by the new grants and up to 80% for successful applications from community and not-for-profit organisations. Each year communities can apply within four funding rounds, with the final decision made by a grant panel consisting of senior East Suffolk councillors and officers.

The fund is open to all areas of the district apart from the town council areas of Felixstowe and Lowestoft due to the significant Council and external funding both towns continue to benefit from such as the £20m in Pride of Place funding that's being awarded from central Government.

Further details on the funding will be available in April.

Youth Councillors visit heart of British democracy

The day started with a tour of Westminster Hall and the House of Commons, with Youth Councillors given many opportunities to learn about how the British democratic system works.

Youth Councillors were then able to ask Jess Asato MP questions, before holding a debate in the Boothroyd Committee Room, which fostered lots of discussion on a wide range of topics. Some of the issues raised throughout the day included social media and AI, violence against women and girls, community cohesion as well as the setbacks they face as young people living in a rural community.

The day was received positively by all Youth Councillors, with many feeling inspired to continue championing young people's voices both locally and nationally.

GLI Cllr Katie Graham, who attended the tour alongside the Youth Council, said:

"We should all feel proud of the Youth Councillors, who really showed their passion for representing young people in East Suffolk during their visit.

“I found the whole experience very uplifting, sitting in the halls of one of the world’s most historic, and architecturally impressive democratic spaces, listening to our youth councillors engage so confidently and insightfully with the issues of their time.”

Jess Asato, Member of Parliament for Lowestoft, said:

“It was fantastic to welcome East Suffolk Youth Council to Parliament and to see their curiosity first-hand. They certainly didn’t hold back when we sat down in the committee room, I was properly grilled with some thoughtful and challenging questions.

“I particularly enjoyed hearing their mixed views on the role of social media in young people’s lives. Seeing such engaged and passionate young people discussing the issues that matter to them is incredibly encouraging, and I wouldn’t be surprised if a few of them ended up sitting on the green benches themselves one day.”

The Youth Council was set up in 2024 to ensure the voices and concerns of younger residents are heard. It is an apolitical council, with its own rules of procedure designed to promote open discussion.

Youth from every secondary educational community in East Suffolk, including the homeschooled, are represented on the Youth Council.

Bringing Homes Back to Life in East Suffolk

So far in the financial year 2025/6 the Council has helped to bring 20 long term empty properties back into use, with 25 returned to use for the previous year. In the district there are currently 652 long term empty properties, with the number of properties standing empty for ten or more years currently standing at 106.

Each year the Council reviews the number of empty properties and works closely with their owners to bring them back into use – either by providing financial support to get them ready for the housing market or giving them guidance on how they can sell or rent out their home.

Housing Renovation Grants of up to £15,000 can help owners to carry out improvement works to get the property ready for letting out to tenants. This funding can help cover costs such as electrical rewiring, installing first time central heating, or remedying significant damp or structural issues. To keep the grant, property owners must live in the home for 20 years or if they are renting it out, it must be charged at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates for 15 years, with council-referred tenants taken for the first two years. Owners of properties in areas surrounding Sizewell could benefit from two grants to help them to provide accommodation to those working at Sizewell C. Grants of up to £7,000 per bedspace are available and can cover costs including structural works, electrical wiring, heating installation, windows and doors, plumbing, installing kitchen and bathroom facilities and additional parking. The grant will also support the creation of Homes of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) to licensable standards. Minor Works Grants can provide up to £3,000 per bedspace for people wishing to repurpose an unused bedroom within an existing home into accommodation for a Sizewell C worker. Additional Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) funding of up to £2,500 is also available where a property holds a valid EPC certificate of a rating D-G.

The Council provides support to empty homeowners if they are looking to sell by seeking valuations from local estate agents and working with local auctioneers who can offer reduced rates. Landlords can also be referred to East Suffolk Lettings which can help with renting properties and managing tenancies on the condition that rent is charged at LHA levels or within 10%, with a financial incentive offered as part of the sign-up process.

GLI Cllr David Beavan, East Suffolk’s cabinet member for Housing said: “Empty homes are wasted resources that burden both taxpayers and local communities. In the midst of a housing crisis, it is unsustainable to allow vacancy rates to rise when these buildings could be repurposed to provide the much-needed homes our communities desperately need.

“While we are penalising owners of empty properties through long-term empty Council Tax premiums of up to 300% due to the impact they cause, we want to encourage owners to get in touch with our Private Sector Housing team so that we can support them. It’s positive to see 20 homes brought back to life with the help of our team and we hope that by raising awareness of the problem, we can encourage more property owners to come forward.”

Children Encouraged to Get into Gardening on World Book Day

Free Field to Fork activity booklets were distributed to primary school children in East Suffolk to help encourage a love of both reading and gardening.

1,750 children across the district received the booklets, which are designed to engage and inspire children to learn about gardening.

The booklets have been produced in collaboration with the Royal Horticultural Society, and include free nature activities, games and recipes.

Children will also be provided with a growing kit, which will include a variety of seeds, planters and accompanying gardening resources. These kits will complement the booklets, transforming each child's knowledge about gardening into practical skills.

GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism, said:

"I am pleased to see our Field to Fork scheme once again supporting families with the cost of living, encouraging them to grow their own vegetables and giving them the tools to do so.

"These booklets also support the National Year of Reading, which is encouraging people across the UK to read about things that inspire them. In East Suffolk, these booklets will hopefully influence the next generation of gardeners and inspire more children to learn more about horticulture."

Sarah Galvin, RHS Head of National Community Programmes, said:

"We are delighted to have teamed up with East Suffolk Council to create these booklets as part of the Field to Fork scheme. Gardening with young people is a powerful way to spark curiosity about the natural world.

"From learning where our food comes from to improving health and wellbeing and caring for the environment, these hands-on experiences can ignite a passion, helping to kickstart the next generation's lifelong journey with gardening."

The Field to Fork booklet highlights the Council's support for the National Literacy Trust's National Year of Reading, for which East Suffolk Council is a pledge partner. Throughout 2026, the Council will be supporting other initiatives that encourage residents to get into reading.

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

Appendix II – Paul Collins NSIPS Report

1. TEAGS – Stop Sizewell C

We are working with one of our collaborators to look at the funding details following the FID closure and will update our findings once complete.

2. TASC Tree Planting Event

TASC are holding an oak tree planting day on 18th April starting at Theberton Jubilee Hall at 11:00am. The trees will be planted on either side of the B1122 on land owned by Tony Redhead and John Poll to commemorate the massive loss of trees due to the SZC project and as part of the National Day of Action (see [CPA Events Calendar - Community Planning Alliance](#)) supporting the efforts to raise awareness of the importance of green spaces to everyone. Further details of the TASC event are attached to this month's email.

3. East Suffolk Communities Energy Partnership

The ESCEP team met to discuss their submission for the SeaLink April 13th Deadline.

4. B1122 planning discussions and SZC Deed of Obligation Forums

A meeting with SZC regarding the requested additional traffic calming and speed limits on the B1125 was held on 4th March and SZC have agreed to review the speed limit proposals along the B1125.

The next Main Site Forum is on Wednesday 15th April 2026 and Northern Transport Forum is on 6th May 2026.

5. Sea Link Interconnector, National Grid Electricity Transmission – DCO Examination

I attended the Issue Specific Hearings (ISH3) which covered a number of items, but the item of main interest was the access route into the converter station site.

The assessment of the structure of Benhall Bridge, as a potential AIL route, is unlikely to happen during the Examination period and hence any approval regarding structural repair of the Benhall will be speculative. The assessment and any repair of the bridge have the potential to interrupt services along the East Suffolk line for passengers and any SZC rail freight movements, both of which would be unwelcome, the latter also resulting in additional SZC HGV movements.

The alternative for this route is to utilise an overbridge that protects the bridge during AIL movements but that also presents significant disruptions to normal traffic along the B1121 with difficult diversions for Saxmundham traffic.

SCC want SeaLink to further consider the B1122 (SLR) and a cross-country haul road via the B1119 as the primary route for both development and maintenance. This exits the B1122/SLR, close to Theberton House, crosses George Road the old Leiston airfield and the railway at the existing Saxmundham Road level crossing.

The level crossing would require widening and other work compared to the existing SZC plans and the upgrade and widening of the B1119 from the level crossing, close to the B1119, to a point close to Trust and Wardspring Farms when it would proceed directly west to the converter station. The haul road access from the B1122 across the airfield would also have to be available for future maintenance should AILs be required during those periods.

SeaLink are opposed to this and want to use the shorter Benhall Bridge, B1121 and (new) Fromus Bridge crossing close to Hurts Hall. SCC object to this as Benhall Bridge repair is speculative and the Fromus bridge and access road would be rarely used once the converter station is complete but would remain a permanent feature in the landscape.

The fact that additional works for SeaLink would have to be done at the Saxmundham Road level crossing also means there are potential impacts on SZC rail freight movements resulting in additional HGV movements.

Both positions have merits and issues, but there is little impact on the majority of the Parish apart from the SCC proposal requiring access across the Leiston airfield which will have impact on the local farms whilst the haul road is established and whenever it needs to be re-established for those rare occasions when required for maintenance.

So, there is a clear difference of opinion between SeaLink and SCC on the subject of an HGV/AIL route to the SeaLink converter station and it is not clear at this time which will prevail in the ExA's considerations and recommendation.

I have no suggestions for a submission at the next SeaLink Deadline as the merit's one way or another on the access route for the SeaLink converter station is really a matter that SCC will have to come to agreement with NGET SeaLink or wait on the ExA's decision in the event that no agreement is forthcoming.

A spreadsheet is being maintained of all of the documents submitted to the Sea Link DCO hearing and is available at https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1d_v0-UE301clpsUyGnppu5iCwOBACwhVl4xTITgnBLU/htmlview

6. Scottish Power Wind Farms and Friston Substation

Various preparatory works and archaeology are now being undertaken.

7. LionLink – National Grid Ventures

The statutory consultation for LionLink ends at 11:59pm on Tuesday 10th March 2026. The full set of consultation documents can be found at [LionLink Library | National Grid](#). Our approved response was submitted following our last Council meeting.

8. Solar Farms/Battery Storage

- **Town Farm Solar Park**
[Town Farm solar park](#), close to the A12 and south of Yoxford next to the Sizewell Link Road roundabout (under construction, this small solar park is 21MW and consented under ESC planning. It is not large enough to be an NSIP.
- **Helios Energy Park**
A submission was made to the SeaLink DCO Examination regarding their proposed connection to the Kiln Lane (Friston) substation and to ensure that SeaLink continued to work with Helios regarding there being a viable route for the solar park to connect to the substation. The precise location of the solar park is not yet fixed as engagement with landowners is ongoing. However, it is likely that the solar park will be situated north of the church at Snape crossroads with a cable corridor running roughly northeast to the substation site. This will yet another NSIP because of its size (250MW). Further details can be found at [SCC](#) and on the [SeaLink DCO website](#).

9. Hydrogen East/Capital Hydrogen

No further information at this time.

10. Suffolk Water Recycling and Transfer Scheme

No further information at this time.

Together Against Sizewell C (TASC)

**TASC wish to invite you to an informal community gathering
at
The Jubilee Hall Theberton
On Saturday 18th April at 11am**

Mr Poll and his family and Mr Tony Readhead and his family have kindly given permission for an oak tree to be planted on their land, one on either side of the B1122 in Theberton and Eastbridge Parish

The two trees are oaks which have been grown in Suffolk from Suffolk acorns and are to be planted to commemorate the twenty thousand plus trees which have been sacrificed for the building of Sizewell C, in particular the many wonderful mature hedgerow trees which have formed an integral part of the East Suffolk landscape for decades - much loved and sadly missed

The event is to acknowledge the receipt of the trees into the Parish, and they will be planted after the gathering

This occasion will form TASC's part in the National Day of Action to send a message to government that people everywhere care deeply about the natural world and want to see it protected and restored.

It is hoped that more community hedgerow trees will be planted in the future in other parishes impacted by Sizewell C

Hopefully the oak trees will give communities some positive thoughts for the future of the natural world in our area.

Please come along and celebrate with us.

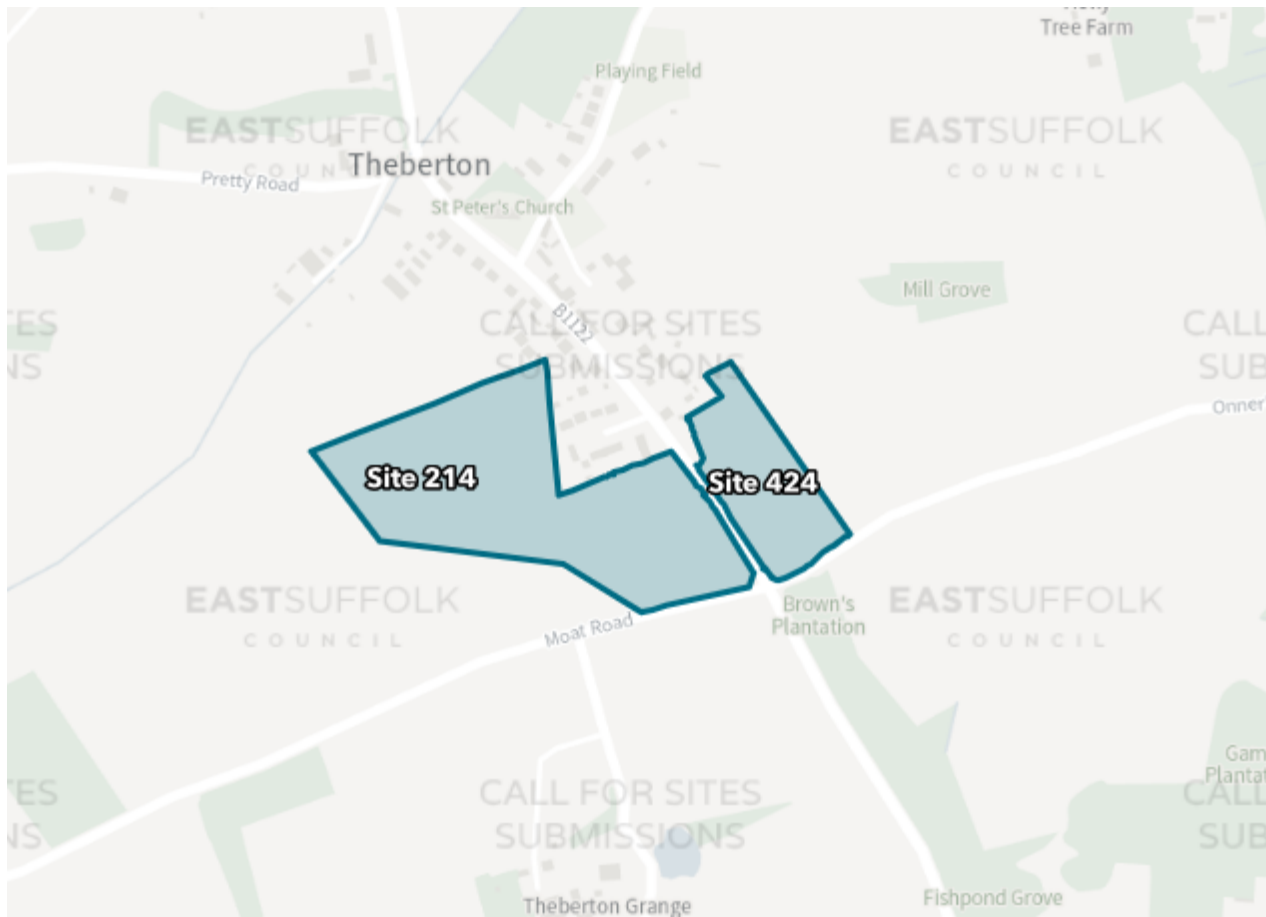
Light refreshment will be available

Best Wishes

Joan Girling, Jenny Kirtley and Chris Wilson

For further information about the National Day of Action, please see the Community Planning Alliance's website: <https://communityplanningalliance.org/events-calendar/>

Appendix IV - East Suffolk Call for Sites - Proposed Areas for Development



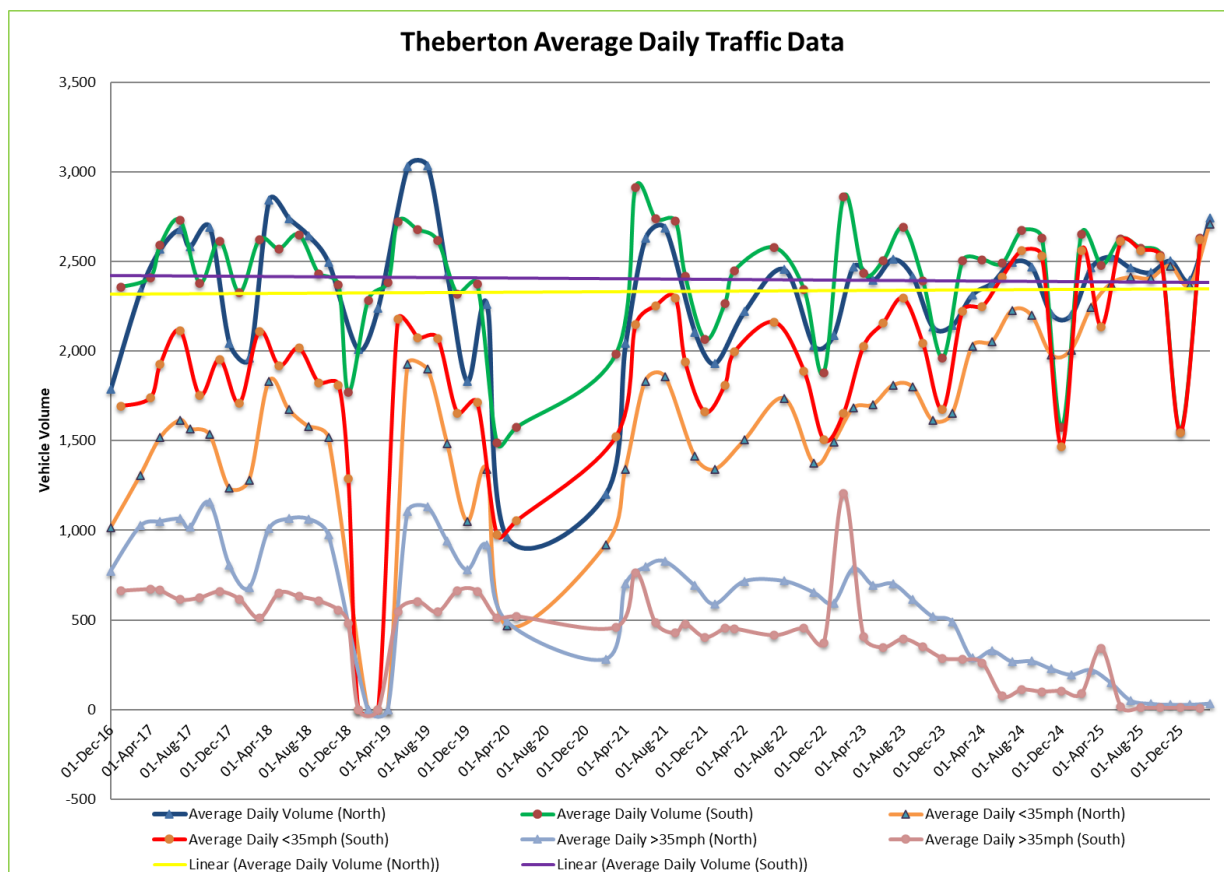
Theberton Speed Indicator Device Report 8th April 2026

The speed indicator device has been operational for ninety-eight ~20-day periods since 20th December 2016. It is placed at one end of the village or other at ~30-day intervals.

The **85th percentile speed*** is **37.7 mph** from North and **35.6mph** from South when they enter the village. These averages are over the whole period from December 2016.

The average speed cameras are now resulting in significantly lower speeds. **The slow reduction in the long term 85th percentile value for traffic comes with the fact that this month only 0.3% of traffic from the South and 1.3% for the North was above 35mph compared to the long-term averages of 27.3% from the north and 18.1% from the south.** The fastest vehicle this month was 75mph on 28th March at 11:50am.

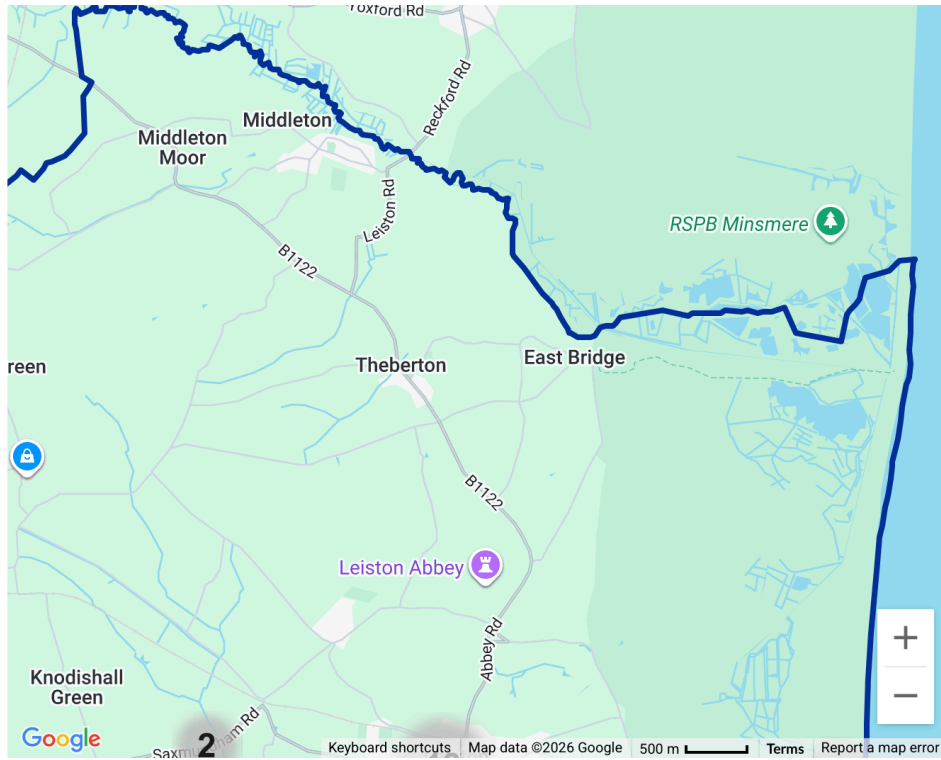
The two almost parallel straight lines at about 2400 vehicle volumes represent the long-term trend of traffic volumes since the start of monitoring in December 2016. As you can see overall volumes are in a slight decline (2-3%) to current day, even with SZC traffic.



SID Start Date	22-Mar-25	22-Apr-25	20-May-25	18-Jun-25	18-Jul-25	16-Aug-25	13-Sep-25	16-Oct-25	15-Nov-25	17-Dec-25	14-Jan-26	13-Feb-26	15-Mar-26
Average Daily Volume (North)	2,464		2,526		2,464		2,439		2,503		2,395		2,744
Average Daily Volume (South)		2,478		2,627		2,573		2,535		1,555		2,628	
Total Vehides (North)	49,273		48,000		46,816		46,336		47,561		45,495		52,131
Total Vehides (South)		47,072		49,911		48,883		48,158		29,550		49,930	
Total Vehides <35mph (North)	44,829		45,121		45,820		45,700		47,026		44,962		51,469
Total Vehides <35mph (South)		40,589		49,596		48,676		47,964		29,349		49,757	
Total Vehides >35mph (North)	4,444		2,879		996		636		535		533		662
Total Vehides >35mph (South)		6,483		315		207		194		201		173	
Average Daily <35mph (North)	2,241		2,375		2,412		2,405		2,475		2,366		2,709
Average Daily <35mph (South)		2,136		2,610		2,562		2,524		1,545		2,619	
Average Daily >35mph (North)	222		152		52		33		28		28		35
Average Daily >35mph (South)		341		17		11		10		11		9	
85th percentile speed North (mph)	33.8		32.7		29.9		29.7		29.5		29.5		29.7
85th percentile speed South (mph)		29.9		28.8		28.8		28.8		28.8		28.8	
% <35mph (North)	91.0%		94.0%		97.9%		98.6%		98.9%		98.8%		98.7%
% <35mph (South)		86.2%		99.4%		99.6%		99.6%		99.3%		99.7%	
% >35mph (North)	9.0%		6.0%		2.1%		1.4%		1.1%		1.2%		1.3%
% >35mph (South)		13.8%		0.6%		0.4%		0.4%		0.7%		0.3%	

*The 85th Percentile is indicative of the speed that the majority of road users are travelling at.

Appendix VI – February Police Crime Report



All Crimes (67) ▼

February 2026 ▼

Live Chat
Suffolk Police Live Chat