

**December 2023 Parish Report**  
**East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update**

***Helping families access affordable school uniform***

Community groups, organisations and town and parish councils are invited to apply for funding to help provide school uniform to East Suffolk families in need.

Following a successful round of funding earlier this year, the East Suffolk Uniform Bank grant scheme is now open for a second round of applications. The scheme provides funding for community groups to open a new uniform bank or expand an existing uniform bank.

Once operational, donations of new or pre-loved good-quality uniform, sportswear and school equipment can be made to the banks, which will then be made available to families who may be struggling to afford uniform.

Uniform banks which have been funded through the previous round of this grant scheme are now operational at Bloodmoor Community Centre in Carlton Colville, Project40Seven at Creative Leiston and St Luke's Church in Beccles.

GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: "On average, school uniform costs families over £300 per year, and this can be higher if a school requires the use of a particular supplier, or the uniform contains branded items. Providing uniform, sports kit and other school equipment can be a struggle for many families, particularly those in rural areas. Uniform banks can help ease this pressure by providing good quality uniform to those in need and also helps to reduce clothing waste."

Grants are available for up to £3,000 and applications are welcome from community and voluntary groups, organisations and town and parish councils.

Applications close on 28 January 2024.

Full details about how to apply: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/uniform-bank-grant-scheme](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/uniform-bank-grant-scheme)

For further details, please contact: [gemma.fraser@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.fraser@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

***A Warm Welcome for everyone***

A network of venues offering residents a warm, safe space to socialise over the winter has reopened for the second year.

East Suffolk Council's Warm Welcomes (formerly Warm Rooms) scheme has now relaunched, with more than 20 village halls, churches and community hubs providing a warm space and an opportunity to connect with other members of the local community.

Last year, Warm Rooms operated over the winter months to provide warm, friendly spaces across East Suffolk. This winter, the rooms have been rebranded as Warm Welcomes following feedback received by those using the service, and the host venues.

Part-funded by the UK Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Warm Welcomes provide a safe and welcoming space where members of the community, including people who may

be struggling with the cost of heating their homes, can come to meet with others and access information about additional support available in the community.

GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: "Warm Welcomes provide people of all ages with a safe space to visit to meet others from their community, take part in activities and find out more about other types of support available in their local area."

Earlier this year, community groups interested in joining the Warm Welcomes programme were encouraged to apply for grant funding. Venues must be open for at least 8 hours per week and the funding can be used as a contribution towards energy costs, refreshments, food, activities and the purchase or hire of resources such as craft materials.

Find your nearest 'Warm Welcome' here: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/warm-welcomes](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/warm-welcomes)

### ***East Suffolk Through the Lens photo competition launch***

A search is underway for fabulous photos celebrating East Suffolk – 'Through the Lens'. East Suffolk Council is excited to announce the return of a competition giving photographers of all ages and experience the chance to showcase their favourite sights and scenes from across the district.

The competition, relaunched under the new name East Suffolk Through the Lens, will see one winning photo grace the cover of East Suffolk Magazine when delivered to every household in the district next spring. High street retail vouchers will also be up for grabs for the overall winner, under-16 winner and three runners-up.

Entrants are encouraged to submit photographs that capture the essence of East Suffolk – from its people and wildlife to its historic buildings and beautiful landscapes.

GLI Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council, said:

"The district is full of inspiration for photographers; the people and places, natural beauty and stunning views. I'm looking forward to seeing how people capture it through the lens. It could be a moment that perfectly represents daily life, or an enduring image that encapsulates what we love about where we live."

More information about the competition can be found at the East Suffolk Through the Lens webpage. Entries should be submitted via an East Suffolk Through the Lens online entry form before midnight on Sunday 28 January.

Winners will be announced during the week commencing 26 February, with the overall winner receiving a £100 high street voucher and seeing their photo printed on the front cover of the spring edition of East Suffolk Magazine.

One under-16 winning entrant will also be chosen to receive a high street voucher worth £75, while three runners-up will each get a high street voucher worth £25.

[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/photo-comp/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/photo-comp/)

### *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/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/)**

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:

**[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk)**