

# December 2016 Monthly Round-Up Newsletter

## Five nominations for Suffolk County Council at 2017 LGC Awards

Suffolk County Council is up for four national awards at a glittering ceremony in London next year.

The County Council has received five nominations in four categories at the LGC Awards, which take place in Grosvenor House on March 8 2017. The awards are an annual event, which showcase the work of council staff who help their communities in new and innovative ways in times of uncertainty.

The council has received two nominations in the Children's Services category, which aims to recognise councils that adopt a strategic approach to the vital service area, and is also in the running for Partnership of the Year, which demonstrates councils working with other organisations to bring about service improvements and/or improved efficiency and Digital Council of the Year - which will go to the council that can show how it has transformed systematically its approach to technology to improve outcomes for residents and facilitate better collaboration between partner organisations.

The organisation has also received a nomination in the new Rising Star category - which aims to highlight local government's exceptional young officers and professionals who are currently not in corporate management team roles.

Suffolk County Council's nominations are:

### **Suffolk's 'Twos Count Here' Project (quality early learning for two year olds) - Children's Services**

'Twos Count Here' is a bespoke project created by Suffolk County Council. The aim is to ensure eligible two year olds have high quality early learning experiences, supporting early years settings to meet the unique needs of increasing numbers of two-year-olds. It is a strengths based, time focused, reflective project which embodies Suffolk County Council's corporate values and beliefs as it's empowering, reflective and based on partnership working. The outcomes of the project have been significant and the needs of two-year-olds are now better understood and met, supporting them to make good progress. Practitioners report the project as being inspirational.

### **Signs of Safety and Wellbeing in Suffolk - a whole system implementation - Children's Services**

Improving the impact of services with significantly diminishing resources is a common aspiration and challenge. Suffolk Children's Services can claim to have done just that

through an innovative and bold programme to implement a single practice framework across all of its services: Suffolk Signs of Safety and Wellbeing. Through implementing an ambitious and clearly articulated plan, the council has worked with partners to create a more positive and sustainable experience for children and families, fundamentally changing the role of services from the 'fixer'<sup>1</sup> of problems to the stimulator of family-owned change.

### **Suffolk's Most Active County Partnership - Partnership of the Year**

Suffolk's Most Active County Partnership is a unique collaboration of organisations that have come together to make a positive impact on physical activity levels in Suffolk. Guided by the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board, it is an innovative place-based intervention that is making a positive impact on activity levels by bringing added value to the good work that many organisations across the county are doing to engage people in physical activity. The partnership, which includes local and national partners, including local authorities, public sector bodies, the voluntary sector and private companies, is changing the face of physical activity within Suffolk.

### **Leading Change by Digital Customer Experience - Digital Council of the Year**

Working in small agile teams Suffolk County Council re-imagined its website (going from a Society of Information Technology Management rated one-star website in 2014 to four-star in 2016). The County Council has taken this learning further and has been using agile project management techniques and user research to co-produce new services with the people who use them. The County Council is also developing its Customer Experience Platform, which is used to deliver a joined up Customer Experience across the Council. This will deliver a single view of a customer, single sign-on, visibility of customers across all services, customer portal and more targeted proactive demand management activities across a range of channels.

It is the second year running that Suffolk County Council has been shortlisted for Digital Council of the Year at the LGC Awards.

### **Matt Woor - Rising Star**

The Rising Star category is a new addition to the LGC Awards. Matt Woor is Suffolk County Council's Social Media Channel Manager. The impact this he has had on the entire organisation in such a short space of time is staggering. Culturally the organisation has shifted from one end of the spectrum to the other. Thanks to Matt's impact across the organisation, social media is no longer viewed as too risky or irrelevant - instead it plays a prominent role in how the organisations engages, interacts and delivers services to the people of Suffolk. Matt is a valued asset and a true rising star of the future.

## **Ofsted Success for Schools in Lowestoft and Waveney**

A number of schools in the Lowestoft and Waveney area have excelled in their recent Ofsted reports, reflecting the strong improvement work taking place at schools in the area.

Bungay High School, East Point Academy and Bungay Primary School are amongst the schools which have improved their Ofsted ratings from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' over the last few months.

Of their success, Iain Owens, Head Teacher at Bungay Primary School said: "Sheer hard work, dedication and close collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. It's all about working with colleagues at schools both near and far to beg, steal and borrow great ideas and start developing them within your own school to create brilliant strategies that help your children become the best learners they can be.

"Schools can't work in isolation anymore, reinventing the wheel is too exhausting; the innovative ideas, the excellent practice is all out there, continually evolving - you've just got to reach out and see what fits to meet the needs of the children."

The Attic PRU and Harbour PRU have also improved their Ofsted ratings from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good'.

Many schools have retained their previous 'good' or 'outstanding' statuses, such as Sir John Leman High School and Old Warren House School. In the Lowestoft and Waveney area, 84% of schools are now rated 'good' or better. This figure has improved by over 24% since January and the gap has significantly reduced compared with the rest of the county.

Lowestoft Rising is a partnership between Suffolk Police, Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner's office, Waveney District Council, Suffolk County Council and Health East. Its aim is to create a significantly improved quality of life for people growing up, living, working, visiting and investing in Lowestoft.

Change Manager for Lowestoft Rising, Phil Aves said: "One of main focusses [of Lowestoft Rising] was aspiration in young people, to support schools in their work to Raise the Bar. After 3 years of engagement with schools and colleges we are beginning to see the hard work everyone has put in produce a tangible difference.

Roughly half of the schools in Lowestoft have also improved their attendance figures compared with this time last year. Previously attendance in the Lowestoft and Waveney area had been consistently lower than that of the rest of the county, however the latest figures reveal that this gap has narrowed considerably and is now less than 1% below Suffolk's overall figure.

Suffolk County Council's Raising the Bar Programme aims to improve levels of educational attainment and ensure that every child in Suffolk is able to achieve their full potential. More information can be found on our website: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/raising-the-bar/>

## Mildenhall Recycling Centre improvement work complete

Work to improve Mildenhall Recycling Centre has been completed, with the site able to operate at its full capacity during opening hours.

Suffolk County Council commissioned site operator FCC Environment to manage the project to ensure the Recycling Centre continues to be fit for purpose now and in the future.

Those using the site will notice the layout of the containers at the Recycling Centre has changed over the past few weeks as the site has been expanded to improve traffic flow and parking. Now the work is complete, full containers will be serviced from a dedicated area without a need to close the site each time.

The works, which started in September, have been completed on time and with as little disruption as possible to the normal service available at the Recycling Centre. The site only closed for two days when an essential part of the work to move the office and several utility points was carried out.

## Young people make more than 1,000 Brilliant Baubles as part of festive recycling campaign

Schools and groups from across Suffolk have made their own festive decorations as part of a campaign aimed at teaching children how they can have fun reducing their waste in the run up to Christmas.

Following on from the successful 1,000 Suffolk Stars project last year, the Suffolk Waste Partnership invited schools and groups across the county to make 1,000 Brilliant Baubles. As part of the campaign to promote reuse and recycling, children and young people were asked to use recycled materials to decorate old CDs, to be displayed at two major Suffolk venues - The Apex in Bury St Edmunds until mid-January and Ipswich Town Hall until 9 January.

Twenty-four schools, two guide and brownie groups and one library have taken part in the project, with around 1,200 baubles being created and hung up just in time for Christmas.

The fantastically festive decorations, which have captured the imagination of children, have acted as a reminder that making decorations and presents from reused and recycled materials is especially important at Christmas when more waste than normal is produced.

Old CDs you no longer need can be sold on or sent for re-use at Charity shops. They can also be placed in media banks at Suffolk Recycling Centres. If they are still in their cases they'll be sorted for reuse, if not they'll be recycled.

All schools that took part were also entered into a prize draw to win a £50 gardening

voucher, which was won by Tudor Primary School in Sudbury.

## Suffolk Trading Standards' Christmas campaign, Rogue Elf,

Leading to Christmas Suffolk's Trading Standards teams raised awareness of the dangers of purchasing unsafe electrical gifts, with advice on how to avoid such products and where to report the sale of these products.

Every year around 70 deaths and 350,000 injuries in UK homes are caused by faulty electrics and electrical equipment and nearly nine out of ten electrical fires are caused by products, either through misuse or faults.

There is a risk that products purchased with the best intentions could also turn out to be dangerous. A product could be a cheap copy, of poor quality or made to look like a well-known brand. The increase in the popularity of online shopping makes it even easier for dodgy goods to slip through the net.

Suffolk Trading Standards officers put together some useful shopping tips that could stop consumers becoming victims of faulty goods. A 'Wanted' style poster with the crimes the Elf has committed, along with information on how to avoid and where to report sightings to were sent out and people were encouraged to become Consumer Champions.

Consumer Champions work Suffolk Trading Standards to protect and empower their local community, build resilience against rogue traders and make Suffolk a safer place to live. For more information on the scheme and how to join, visit [www.suffolk.gov.uk/iointhefight](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/iointhefight)