



Over 400 Suffolk roads set for upgrade as largest ever surfacing project gets underway

Residents across Suffolk are set to benefit from 421 newly surfaced roads this year - almost doubling the number of roads completed last year, as Suffolk Highways' largest ever resurfacing programmes get underway.

With the start of the surface dressing programme beginning this week, 102 roads will be surface dressed, whilst a further 319 sites will benefit from a full machine resurfacing during the year.

Surface dressing is an efficient, sustainable and cost-effective maintenance treatment that prolongs the life of a road surface – it restores skid resistance and seals the road surface from water, whilst removing potholes and improving level differences of the road.

The surface dressing project sits alongside the programmes for reactively repairing potholes and machine resurfacing roads, all complementing one another. During the past six months, Suffolk Highways has repaired over 9,000 potholes and resurfaced 41 roads, with a further 278 roads planned for resurfacing in this financial year.

New for this year, Suffolk Highways' supply chain partner, Hazell & Jefferies, has invested in new vehicles which allow the new surface to be laid in a safer and more efficient way. For example, the new vehicles eliminate the risk of hitting overhead cables or structures.

- For more information on surface dressing and to view this year's programme, please visit: [Surface dressing](#)
- For more information on machine resurfacing and to view this year's programme, please visit: [Road Resurfacing](#)

99% of pupils receive a preferred primary school on National Offer Day

99.36% of children were offered a place on National Offer Day at one of their three preferred primary schools and 96.52% were offered a place at their first preference school.

Suffolk County Council received 6,844 applications from parents and carers indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to join in September 2024.

Families who applied online can log in to the online service from today to see the school their child has been offered. They will also receive an email to confirm this offer unless they have indicated that they do not wish to. Letters will be sent to parents who made a paper application by second class post today (16 April 2024).



Once school places have been confirmed, parents need to consider how their child will get to and from school. If their child is eligible for Suffolk County Council funded school travel they will receive an email by 10 May 2024 with details of how to opt-in.

Any parents or carers with a child born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 who have not yet applied for a school place should make an application immediately. Information on how to make an application can be found on the [School Admission pages](#) or by contacting Suffolk County Council on **0345 600 0981**.

For further information on how to view your offer online and guidance on what to do if you have not received your preferred offer, please read the [School admissions FAQ page](#).

New Independent Chair appointed to drive forward SEND reform

Suffolk County Council can announce that Kathryn Boulton has been appointed as the new independent chair of the Local Area Partnership's SEND Improvement Board.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision is delivered by the Local Area Partnership in Suffolk, which includes Suffolk County Council, NHS Suffolk and North-East Essex Integrated Care Board and NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board.

The SEND Improvement Board was set up in response to the inspection of SEND services in Suffolk in November last year by Ofsted and CQC and is a requirement of the Improvement Notice that will be issued to Suffolk by the Department for Education. Made up of senior leaders from the council and NHS, board members will oversee the implementation and review of plans and services aimed at improving the way SEND services are delivered in Suffolk. It will also ensure the successful delivery of the Priority Action Plan, which was co-produced following the inspection and has been agreed by the Department for Education. [You can read this plan online](#).

The new chair of the board, Kathryn, has 37 years of experience across children's services. With an education background and success in several senior leadership roles, Kathryn has significant experience of transforming SEND services in local authorities and ensuring the voices and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families are central to the design and delivery of SEND services.

In addition to Kathryn's appointment, the Local Area Partnership will receive an Improvement Notice from the Department for Education. This was an expected outcome after the Ofsted and CQC inspection. It means that advisors from the Department for Education and NHS England will work with the Local Area Partnership to support and monitor improvement plans until further notice.

Chris Chambers - County Councillor for the Gipping Valley Division
Mob : 07595310290 E-mail : chris.chambers@suffolk.gov.uk



Share your thoughts on the importance of nature in Suffolk

A new survey has been launched to find out which aspects of nature in Suffolk are most important to you.

Your responses will feed into Suffolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, a plan to help reverse the decline in nature across the county, and to connect and expand existing areas that are important for wildlife and the landscape.

- Nationwide, wildlife species have declined by 19% since 1970 ([State of Nature report](#))
- One in six species in Great Britain are at risk of extinction ([State of Nature report](#))
- Up to 70% of Suffolk's 22,000 ponds are neglected or abandoned ([Suffolk Wildlife Trust](#))
- Norfolk and Suffolk have over three times less ancient woodland than the national average ([Natural Capital Evidence Compendium for Norfolk and Suffolk](#))

To address this decline and to help nature recover, government has introduced legally-binding commitments. There are 48 of these Local Nature Recovery Strategies across the country, led in Suffolk by Suffolk County Council.

Together, they will form a national 'nature network', proposing actions such as the creation of wetlands, restoration of peatlands, planting of trees and hedgerows, and more sustainable management of existing woodlands and other habitats like grasslands.

Members of the public are invited to share their favourite nature spots to visit, what access is like, which habitats and species should be protected, and so on. You don't have to be a wildlife expert, but your thoughts will help the work to reverse the decline of nature in Suffolk.

Farmers, landowners and land managers are also encouraged to submit practical, achievable proposals to support nature conservation, as well as sharing how land is currently managed and any challenges faced applying for government funding schemes.

All responses will help build a picture across Suffolk to help protect and enhance our environment.

You can share your thoughts in the Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy Survey by visiting <https://www.nsnrp.org/get-involved>, which closes on 30 June 2024.