



Cllr Chris Chambers

**Gipping Valley
Division**

www.chrischambers.uk

**September
2024 Report**



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New Europa Way link road in Ipswich gets start date

Works to build a new link road at Europa Way, connecting Sproughton Road with Bramford Road in Ipswich will begin on 9 September.

This scheme will include extending the existing Europa Way road to create the link road. This new section of road will include an off-road footpath and cycle path, with a new mini roundabout being built to connect the new extension of Europa Way to Bramford Road.

The scheme brings many benefits for local residents and aims to:

- Improve the transport network's reliability and safety
- Improve connectivity for sustainable transport modes such as pedestrians, cyclists and bus services
- Support Suffolk's economy by unlocking employment creation opportunities and planned growth
- Achieve a balanced development by installing green features to help avoid putting additional pressure on the surrounding environment, such as; installing Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff

The construction work is programmed to commence on 9 September 2024 with the aim to complete the works and open the new link road by the end of April 2025.

The work will be carried out in phases and will use various traffic management methods for each phase. This is essential for the safety of road users, residents and our team.

To facilitate construction, temporary parking restrictions will be placed along part of Bramford Road. Suffolk Highways requests that vehicles are relocated from the marked area whilst the works are carried out.

Temporary traffic lights and pedestrian crossing points will be the main method of traffic management used during works on Bramford Road. Towards the end of the work it may be necessary for part of Bramford Road to be closed. Full details will be confirmed at a later date.

The full details can be read on the Suffolk County Council website here www.suffolk.gov.uk/europa-way-new-link-road.

A dedicate email address has also been created for any questions regarding these works, please email: EuropaWayLinkRoad@milestoneinfra.co.uk.

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Councillor Chris Chambers, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy, Planning and Waste, said:

“I am delighted to see these long-awaited plans come to fruition and works start on building such an important connection between these parts of Ipswich. The connection will provide so many benefits to those living, working and travelling around this part of Ipswich and will create plenty of opportunity for growth in business and sustainable travel.

“We look forward to keeping the local community updated with our plans and progress associated with the new link road, and welcome feedback as we navigate construction over the coming months.”

Launch of my Gipping Valley Survey

As the County Councillor in Gipping Valley, I'm eager to hear about what concerns are top of your mind. So, I've created a quick online survey that asks about your views on some of the big issues of the day. You can take part by visiting chrischambers.uk/survey

Major scrapyards fire most likely sparked by discarded battery, fire investigators conclude

The fire at Sackers in Gipping Road, Great Blakenham, on Thursday, August 8, resulted in a major response by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service. The fire at Sackers saw 14 appliances and more than 80 firefighters deployed to deal with it.

It was brought under control late on Thursday and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service subsequently launched an investigation into the cause.

This has established that the most likely cause was a battery which had made its way into a pile of scrap metal.

If batteries, or electricals containing batteries, are not properly separated they can end up being crushed in the waste and recycling process.

When punctured they can self-combust, setting fire to any surrounding dry and flammable waste and recycling.

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At the height of the Sackers fire there were a total of 14 fire engines - around 80 firefighters at the scene, which included appliances from Essex and Norfolk.

Local residents and businesses were advised to keep doors and windows closed for nearly 24 hours as a massive smoke plume, which could be seen for miles, rose above the site.

Trains were also severely affected as rail services from Ipswich to Norwich, Cambridge and Ely were cancelled owing to the potential danger from the fire to the adjacent railway track.

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) said in May that lithium-ion batteries thrown in household rubbish bins had led to more than 1,200 fires in the UK waste system in the last 12 months, compared to 700 in 2022.

In June last year operations were disrupted at Haverhill waste transfer station in Homefield Road after fire broke out amongst 50 tonnes of rubbish and which is thought to have been caused by a battery.

Waste batteries and electrical items should never be thrown into household waste.

Instead, they can be recycled at any of Suffolk's 11 Recycling Centres, as well as other local recycling banks. Many supermarkets also accept them.

Electricals containing batteries that tend to be discarded the most are smaller, frequently used and often cheaper electricals like toothbrushes, shavers, chargers, and toys.

More information can be found at the Suffolk Waste Partnership website <https://suffolkrecycling.org.uk/>

Solar Together launches in Suffolk

Residents of Suffolk can come together to invest in renewable energy sources through a group-buying scheme for solar panels and battery storage. Solar Together Suffolk helps homeowners feel confident that they are paying the right price for a high-quality installation from qualified installers.

Suffolk residents can join the group-buying scheme, which offers solar panels with optional battery storage and EV charge points, as well as retrofit battery storage for residents who have already invested in solar panels and are looking to get more from the renewable energy they generate. The scheme allows homeowners to increase their independence from the national grid.

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It's free to register here, and there is no obligation to go ahead with an installation. Suffolk's councils are working in partnership with iChoosr, experts in sustainable energy transition, to make the transition to clean energy as cost-effective and hassle-free as possible.

How does it work?

- Householders can register online to become part of the group for free and without obligation at solartogether.co.uk/suffolk
- Approved UK solar PV suppliers participate in a reverse auction. They are able to offer competitive pricing as the volume and geographic concentration makes it possible for them to realise greater efficiencies, which they pass on with lower prices for installations.
- After the auction, registered households will be emailed a personal recommendation which is specific to the details they submitted in their registration.
- If they choose to accept their recommendation, the specifics of their installation will be confirmed with a technical survey after which a date can be set for the installation of their solar PV system.
- Telephone and email helpdesks are on-hand throughout the whole process which, together with information sessions, will allow households to make an informed decision in a safe and hassle-free environment.

iChoosr has been collaborating with UK councils since 2015 on its Solar Together scheme, aiming to accelerate the energy transition nationwide. The initiative aims to encourage residents to partake in the collective purchase of solar PV and battery storage systems. To date, Solar Together has installed 13,750 solar panels in Suffolk, reducing carbon emissions by 27,100 tonnes over 25 years – equivalent to 15,000 cars off the road in that time!

iChoosr's schemes have been delivered in partnership with local authorities in five countries. More than 180 schemes have led to 178,000 residents installing solar PV systems.

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Small improvements needed as children's services' Ofsted report published

Ofsted has published its report into Suffolk County Council's children's services. The report rated the service as 'requires improvement to be good'.

The ILACS (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) report conveys a mixed picture across Suffolk. Importantly, inspectors concluded that children's safeguarding is strong and that the experiences and progress of children in care were good. They also reported that 'children in care thrive'.

However, they highlighted weakness in some of the processes and systems in place. These included inconsistencies with the way first contact with children and young people is processed, and the quality and support to children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless. It also found inconsistencies in the level of understanding that care leavers have about the range of support available to them.

The report outlined seven points for improvement, which have either been implemented already through small amends to systems or processes, or are in progress.

The inspection looked at four areas; the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families; the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection; the experiences and progress of children in care; and the experiences and progress of care leavers. Although the majority of the report is positive, three of these were graded as 'requires improvement to be good'. The experience and progress of children in care was 'good'.

Following publication of the report, an action plan will be sent to Ofsted by the end of September and a partnership board will be set up to oversee improvements. The council will also carry out a quality assurance review of systems and processes.

You can read the report <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80565>.

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