

# Parish Report – April 2020

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## COVID-19 Update

Latest Government advice is available here: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Latest SCC information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

### SCC meetings

Suffolk County Council have cancelled meetings for the foreseeable future. During this time, the Chief Executive will use her emergency powers to make any necessary decisions on behalf of the Cabinet/Council through the delegated decision-making process. Details of any decisions made will be published on the SCC website.

### App and phonenumber launched to support vulnerable residents

The free app, called Tribe Volunteer, can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. The telephone number for those in genuine need of help is freephone 0800 876 6926 and will be staffed from 09:00 to 17:00, seven days a week.

The service will mean willing volunteers, charities, town and parish councils, community and religious groups can all log their details and offers of support on an app, while people who need help can phone to request support. As the number of offers and requests grows, they will be matched so that the right help can be given where it's most needed. This support could include delivering groceries, medication or essential household goods, in line with Government social distancing guidelines.

### School closures and free school meals

More information about school closures in Suffolk is available here:  
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/schools-guidance/>

To support children eligible for free school meals, schools will be able to purchase meals or vouchers for supermarkets or local shops.

The government has also confirmed that the total value of vouchers offered to each eligible child per week will exceed the rate it pays to schools for free school meals, recognising that families will not be buying food in bulk and may therefore incur higher costs.

Effective immediately, schools will be able to order vouchers directly from supermarkets or shops in their communities to be emailed or printed and posted to families, and they will have their costs covered by the Department for Education.

#### Bus passes can be used before 9:30

Suffolk County Council is allowing concessionary travel for those with elderly and disabled bus passes early in the morning (before 9.30am). This is to allow these residents to access the exclusive early morning shopping times that supermarkets have arranged for these people.

#### Public transport services reduced

New timetables are now in place for most public transport services, including buses, trains and community transport until further notice. Suffolk County Council is advising those who must use public transport to check with their local provider to find out the latest timetable.

Further details can be found at [www.suffolkonboard.com](http://www.suffolkonboard.com) or by calling 0345 606 6171.

#### Funding available for food banks

Suffolk County Council has made £60,000 available to support food banks in Suffolk. The funding is being administered by Suffolk Community Foundation. Foodbanks and other organisations can apply for funds at <https://www.suffolkcf.org.uk/grants/suffolk-coronavirus-community-fund>.

**Stay Home. Protect the NHS. Save Lives.**

## **Suffolk County Council submits bid for Government funding for buses**

Suffolk County Council has submitted a statement of intent to the Department of Transport (DfT) for £580k to improve some of the county's bus services.

The council has not yet released details of how they plan to spend this funding. However, we understand that they are not intending to use it to reinstate the subsidised bus services which were cut last summer.

The DfT planned to announce which statements of intent have been successful by the end of April, but it is likely that this will be delayed given the current situation.

## **EDF Energy delay application for Sizewell C Development Consent Order**

EDF Energy have decided to delay their application for a Development Consent Order for Sizewell C by a few weeks, due to the current situation.

In March, my group were planning to submit a motion asking Suffolk County Council to withdraw support for nuclear power and publicly oppose Sizewell C. However, the Council meeting in March was cancelled. This means that our motion has also been delayed, but we plan to submit it again at the earliest opportunity once meetings at the council start up again.

## **Opt-in for 2020/21 free school transport**

Parents are now able to opt-in for free school transport for the 2020/21 school year. This will be the second year of the new school transport policy. The deadline for opting-in is 31 May 2020.

If parents have a child who is already receiving SCC funded school travel, they must opt-in again to continue to receive it.

Parents whose child is not eligible for SCC funded school travel but who wish to purchase a spare seat, may do so. The application for spare seats opens on 1 July 2020.

To opt-in or for more information on the SCC school travel policy please visit;

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel/>

## **SCC wins DfT funding for next stage of A12 works**

Suffolk County Council won £830,000 of funding from the Department for Transport, to develop an Outline Business Case to take forward its plans to improve the A12 East of Ipswich.

This project is specifically looking to increase capacity and improve overall traffic flow at junctions and will explore the potential for a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the A12.