

Parish Report for the end of October 2025 to the Bungay and Wainford villages division , from County Councillor Judy Cloke.

Bungay:

I attended the ‘drop in’ on 1st October, again no residents attended. I also attended the Traffic Working Group meeting, which I didn’t think was as productive as the initial meeting and I am unable to attend the next one. At the end of October I was also at the public traffic meeting organised by Cllr Pearmain, though not as a participant. I have agreed to sponsor from my Highways budget signs at Waveney Trucks which hopefully will encourage trucks to turn back onto the A143 rather than along Nethergate Street. This follows a meeting held in the summer involving residents, Cllrs and Adrain Ramsay MP.

Barsham:

Parish Councillors and I had a very comprehensive guided tour of both the old and new water treatment works at Barsham on 20th October, it was really interesting, so much work and investment in our rural area. The works abstract water from both the river and local boreholes and treat it to make it potable; I think we all learned a lot about the process.



Here we are on the roof of the new underground reservoir – in the rain.

Generally:

I was delighted to attend the Emergency services awards at Trinity Park; I don’t think we give enough credit to either fire fighters or police personnel for the horrors they face whilst going about their daily work.

I also stood in for the Cabinet member for Highways, Paul West at a meeting in Oulton called by Jess Asato MP regarding Highways, speeding traffic and HGV traffic in the village - Bungay is not unique.

Local Government Review & a statement from the Suffolk Business Board:

“The ambitions and opportunities business can deliver needs the active support of a streamlined governance structure that can help create the conditions for growth. Which is why, as local business leaders, we endorse the proposal to create a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Norfolk and Suffolk – a transformative opportunity to unlock growth, give more power and decision-making authority to local people and shape a more prosperous future for our region.”

The letter highlights the benefits of devolution, including local decision-making, guaranteed long-term funding and greater influence at the national level.

“Devolution means decisions made closer to home, by people who understand our local strengths, challenges and ambitions and want to help make things happen. It offers the opportunity to create high-quality jobs, attract long-term investment – including for vital improvements to infrastructure – and transform the delivery of public services in a way that reflects Suffolk’s unique character and needs.”

The Suffolk Business Board stresses that a directly elected mayor would provide strategic leadership and accountability to deliver on key priorities such as regenerating Ipswich, expanding clean energy innovation in East Suffolk, and growing the region’s digital and technology sectors.

The letter also underscores the successful track record of collaboration between Suffolk and Norfolk, which has already attracted over £1.3 billion in investment and created and safeguarded more than 15,300 new jobs in recent years.

Devolution :

Suffolk County Council’s cabinet has voted in favour of creating a new mayoral authority for Norfolk and Suffolk - which will bring £1 billion to the counties in the next 30 years - following overwhelming support from councillors earlier today (Thursday 2 October).

The new mayoral combined county authority (MCCA) would have access to a starting annual investment fund of £37.4 million - funded by the government. This is in addition to devolved funding from Whitehall to deliver public services.

The investment fund would enable the new mayor to support a wide range of long-term, locally-driven projects that will boost economic growth, improve infrastructure and enhance the quality of life for residents. This could include transport infrastructure, housing and education and skills.

Recycling

The Benjamin Foundation, which operates re-use shops at Suffolk's recycling centres in Bury St Edmunds and Foxhall, is benefitting from the money to provide local families with childcare, mental health, youth, family and housing support services.

The half-million-pound milestone came during the national Second Hand September campaign this year, with people pledging not to buy anything new during the month.

Margaret Catchpole:

On loan from the National Library of Australia, and the State Library of New South Wales, the letters form the centrepiece of Suffolk Archives' latest exhibition *Behind Bars - Suffolk's Criminal Past*.

Servant girl turned notorious horse thief, Margaret's daring escape from Ipswich jail, her capture, and eventual transportation to Australia made her a Suffolk legend.

As well as telling Margaret's story, *Behind Bars* lifts the lid on Suffolk's lawless past. Discover gripping true crimes from the infamous Red Barn Murder that shocked the nation to the curious case of the Acton Dumpling Murderess. Step inside the world of historic investigations and harsh punishments, including Suffolk's last public execution.

Explore how justice has evolved, from dealing with riots and social unrest to the development of prisons and rehabilitation, supported by HMP Hollesley Bay. In partnership with Suffolk Constabulary, the exhibition also traces the history of policing in the county and how officers continue to keep Suffolk safe today.

Budget:

Each year, the council faces difficult choices about how to spend public money – funding used for everything from keeping our roads safe to providing support for vulnerable children and adults who rely on social care.

These services touch thousands of lives across the county, every single day. We know times are tough for many, and the same is true for councils across the country. Demand for our services keeps growing, while costs continue to rise. Yet again, we face hard choices about how to make limited resources stretch further. That's why your input matters.

Our 2026/27 budget consultation is now open, and it takes just a few minutes to complete. Please visit www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Budget2026-27 to share your thoughts.

The consultation explains how the council manages its finances, the cost-saving measures already in place and the different ways we can generate additional income to support essential services.

We want to know:

1. What council services have you used in the past year?
2. To what extent would you support a rise in Council Tax?
3. What should we prioritise when setting the budget?

These are simple questions, but they go to the heart of how we plan for the future. Looking ahead, Suffolk is preparing for an important change: local government reorganisation. Our preferred model is to have just one council in Suffolk delivering all services countywide. We argue that simpler, more joined-up services would bring long-term savings – which could be reinvested in those services.

Ukraine:

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed today (15 October 2025) at the XR Lab at West Suffolk College in Bury St Edmunds by Councillor Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, and Volodymyr Kohut, Head of the Poltava Administration.

The agreement strengthens ties between the two regions and establishes a framework for meaningful collaboration across a wide range of sectors, including:

- Economic development
- Education, including partnerships with agricultural and nursing colleges
- Science, technology, manufacturing and advanced engineering
- Agriculture and food production
- Arts and culture
- Renewable energy and environmental sustainability
- Healthcare
- Tourism
- Humanitarian assistance

The agreement encourages knowledge sharing, business and educational exchanges, and joint projects that foster innovation, resilience and sustainable growth. It also commits both regions to regular dialogue, visits and ongoing collaboration to ensure the partnership continues to evolve and respond to emerging needs.

The History of Ipswich, our County Town:

Gipeswic: The Anglo-Saxon Town of Ipswich captures a lifetime of work and excavations by author, Keith Wade, a local archaeologist since 1974.

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service has published the book, who Keith worked for until his retirement in 2012.

The book supports his long-held assertion that Ipswich is the country's oldest town with continuous occupation on the same site. Ipswich dates back to the 7th century, and is one of the three earliest English towns (the others being Southampton and London).

Keith's favourite site to excavate was prior to the building of the Buttermarket Shopping Centre where a 7th century cemetery was discovered, overlaid by streets and buildings of the 8th to 11th centuries. The site then became the medieval Carmelite Friary.

Another highlight was the excavation east of Foundation Street, discovering the first town bank and ditch built by the Vikings. Also uncovered here was the medieval Dominican Friary, the remains of which were then consolidated for public view rather than being built over.

Archaeology at Sizewell:

Oxford Cotswold Archaeology carried out excavation works near the site of the future nuclear power station and discovered the lead and cloth package containing the mint condition coins.

The donation to SCCAS from Sizewell C, means that the find will be curated for posterity in its home county and will be made available to researchers of all levels.

Local and national museums can also apply for a short-term loan, so that as many people as possible can see it in the future.

The hoard features coins minted between 1036 and 1044 during the reigns of Harold I, Edward the Confessor, and the lesser known Harthacnut. Though a large proportion of the coins were minted in London, many coins were struck at other locations, including Thetford, Norwich, Ipswich, Lincoln and Stamford.

Affectionately known as 'the pasty' - for its visual likeness to a Cornish pasty - it is speculated that it was the savings pot of a local figure, who buried it as a precaution in the face of the social and political upheaval of the 11th century.

Judy Cloke 2 November 2025