



BABERGH GREEN PARTY - MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Autumn edition 2023



Activist testing River Stour water

CAMPAIGNERS IDENTIFY DANGEROUS LEVELS OF E.COLI IN RIVER STOUR

Laura Smith (Green Party District Councillor for Sudbury Southwest) has led a citizen science group that has been testing spots in the Designated Bathing Status application of the River Stour, in and around Friars Meadow, as well as other spots around Sudbury. Babergh Green Party, who have been campaigning about pollution in the river Stour and other rivers in the district, has invested in equipment to undertake tests of E.coli. They obtained some worrying results.

Very high levels of E.coli have been found in various areas, indicating that the water is not safe for bathing.

These results tally with Anglian

Water's own E.coli testing results. The plates opposite show the presence of E.coli in the test samples. A sample with more than nine blue dots is designated as unsafe. As you can see, the samples taken have significantly more than nine dots.

If the Bathing Status application by the River Stour Trust and Sudbury Town Council is successful, this will mean increased monitoring of the river by the Environment Agency. However, if they find that the water is a health risk for bathers then this will be significant and could cause the river to be 'closed' to bathers, which will be controversial and newsworthy, as well as inconvenient. On the plus side, it might force Anglian Water into taking stronger action.

Fingers crossed for a successful application.



Samples taken from various locations of the River Stour around Sudbury

GREEN PARTY COUNCILLORS FUND LIFESAVING EQUIPMENT

Last month Orwell Cllr Daniel Potter was able to provide Freston Parish with locality funds to help towards the village acquiring a defibrillator with additional funding to come from Peninsula Green County Councillor Simon Harley.

The defibrillator will enable residents to quickly access this potential lifesaving equipment in the event of a cardiac arrest or any other similar medical emergencies. The village was originally intending to fund and receive the defibrillator a few years earlier, however the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 meant plans were put on hold while councils locally were unable to meet as effectively in the time period. Now however there has been scope and opportunity within the Parish Council to make such plans possible again.

On providing the funding for the defibrillator Councillor Potter said: 'I am happy for Freston village to receive its first defibrillator for its own residents. This locality funding is my first application since becoming a Councillor in May, and I am happy that it has been put to vital use which could make the difference to saving someone's life and provide the difference in stabilising a person's condition before an emergency ambulance arrives. I know those in the Parish Council will be delighted to have this as it has been long sought after too.'



**Councillor Daniel Potter
in the control room**

PROCESSING YOUR RUBBISH

Last week Councillor Jane Carruthers joined other District Councillors on a visit to the energy waste plant at Great Blakenham. The Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) takes household recycling from all over Suffolk. Despite ongoing campaigns to inform the public, only 75% of the waste collected is suitable for recycling, which ultimately costs council taxpayers' money. Random things found in the blue bins include lots of disposable nappies and worryingly, dead pets.

The rubbish is sorted both mechanically and by hand before being bailed up for processing elsewhere. Once the recycling is sorted, it is no longer termed 'waste' but instead becomes a 'commodity'. These commodities are then sold on, with the price received, varying, depending on global commodity markets. The money made offsets the cost of collecting and sorting, so it is more costly to 'throw away' into the black bin for incineration than to recycle.

Biffa, who are contracted to run the MRF plant, assured us that they try to keep as much in the UK as they can with all plastics being recycled here. They then sell to the EU only exporting further afield if necessary. We were assured that they only sell to reputable companies so none of Suffolk's recycling should get dumped abroad as is sometimes reported.

BILDESTON SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION - ACHIEVED!

After 13 years of campaigning, Green Party County Councillor Robert Lindsay was happy to see 20mph signs being installed in Bildeston. The speed limit, which runs for the length of the High Street and includes several side roads followed a parish council survey that found two thirds of villagers wanted it.

To obtain a reduction in speed limits requires the parish council to fund and pay for a highways speed survey. Even if the speed survey identifies the traffic is around the requested speed limit that is being asked for there are still a number of criteria that need to be met before highways will consider reducing the speed limit. Funds then must be found to pay for the change in speed limit and these are substantial costs. These costs were met by the parish council with help from Councillor Lindsay.

Despite what the government says, speed limit reductions are a common ask for councillors, whether it be 30mph to 20mph or 60mph to 40mph, and it is frustrating for people when these requests are knocked back by Highways, even in the face of regular accidents.

In a recent survey, 65 per cent of people in Lavenham said they would support a lower speed limit, and this has now been approved in principle by the county council.

GREEN DRINKS

COME ALONG TO THE GEORGE IN
HADLEIGH

Friday 20th October 7.30pm

A chance to meet fellow green supporters for a relaxed chat.

Further Green Drinks in Sudbury and Shotley to be announced soon!



STONE STREET, HADLEIGH SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION - ACHIEVED!

Green Party Councillor Simon Dowling has been campaigning with residents and businesses on Stone Street, Hadleigh (A1141) to get the speed limit cut from 40mph to 30mph where people live and work.



Simon and fellow campaigners

Together, they submitted a detailed application and won the support of Hadleigh Town Council and the local county councillor. As a result, the county's Highways department agreed to write a formal study of the speed limit request. Their findings recently went to the SCC portfolio holder, who has agreed to make the change because "a 30mph limit would be appropriate to make the route safer."

Simon said, "This is great progress - the county council really does need to act on delivering safer streets for all users. It shows what a focused campaign by residents and Green Party activists can do!"