

County Councillor Report

January 2025

ROAD CLOSURE ON TRIMLEY HIGH ROAD

An application has been made for a closure of Trimley High Road, near to the Howlett Way roundabout, for a period from 20 to 31 January 2025 inclusive. This is in connection with the construction of homes by Bellway, at Kingsfleet Park. The closure is to facilitate section 50 construction of a gas main connection and a water main connection, plus section 278 road works – resurfacing and white lining.

It has transpired that there was not adequate liaison with County Council Passenger Transport, and consequently necessary re routing and provision of bus services. I was promised a decision by 20 December as to whether the proposed works would go ahead or be deferred. I am still seeking an answer on this. However, the technical detail that I have been given indicates that the required works, whenever they take place, will necessitate full road closure for 12 days. This is because of the extent of the work (construction of gas and water mains) and guidance on safe road working. The relevant Code of Practice stipulates the minimum road width remaining where the road can continue to be open. This is after allowing the area for work, a safety zone, and adequate footpath width. Partial road closure will not be possible for this work.

I will continue to seek an answer as soon as possible on when the closure is to happen. I have been assured that this will only occur when a shuttle bus has been arranged to take passengers from either side of the closure via the A14 diversion.

HOWLETT WAY BUS SHELTERS

A referral was made to Highways relating to overgrown tree branches on the roof of the glass bus shelter in Howlett Way. The request for cutting back work was refused. I appealed this decision to the Cabinet Member for Highways, and I also asked for work to cut back a tree in close proximity to the brick bus shelter opposite. After negotiations, I can announce that both of these shelters will have necessary cutting back work done in January.

WARM HOMES LOANS

There are loans available through Suffolk County Council for insulation and other work to improve thermal efficiency of homes. These are interest free loans, for £2000 to

£15000, payable over a maximum period of 7 years. There is a £3 million fund, and the money is available from 01 November 2024, financed by the Government.

Details are available and applications can be made at

lendology.org.uk/warm-homes-suffolk-loan/

WINTER GRITTING

Suffolk County Council Highways have a fleet of 36 gritters, with 2 spare vehicles to cover breakdowns. These run on hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), and there is route planning software to plan efficient gritting. In the 2023/24 winter 7822 tonnes was used on 123400 miles of carriageway. For 2024/25 there is a stock of 21000 tonnes of grit. Priority 1 roads (1259 miles) are A and B roads, roads to fire stations, hospitals, rail stations and main bus routes. Priority 2 roads (843 miles) are other bus routes, rural villages, school accesses. In addition, all grit bins at registered locations have been filled.

MY 2024 COUNCIL ACTIVITY

During 2024 I have attended a total of 162 County and Town Council meetings, Parish Council meetings, briefings and training sessions, and social or civic events. My attendance at Council and Committee meetings was 100%, with no meetings missed.

COUNCILLOR STUART BIRD B.A.(HONS)

COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR FELIXSTOWE NORTH AND TRIMLEY DIVISION

TOWN COUNCILLOR FOR FELIXSTOWE PORT WARD