

TOP-TEN REPORT FOR BUNGAY AND THE VILLAGES (JUNE 2026)
East Suffolk Councillors Toby Hammond and Anthony Specia

1. At the recent Suffolk County Council elections, Peter Aiano of the Green Party was elected to represent the Bungay division. He succeeds Conservative Cllr Judy Cloke, who worked hard for many years on behalf of the residents of Bungay and surrounding villages. Peter has hit the ground running, and he can be contacted via peter.aiano@suffolk.gov.uk.
2. At the ESC Annual Council this May, Anthony was re-elected Chair of Council for a fourth consecutive year. Toby has been appointed Vice-Chair of Planning Committee North, and member of the Local Plan Working Group. (For more on the Local Plan, see items 5-7 below.)
3. Local government reorganisation proceeds apace. We are pleased that the Minister of State has agreed with our proposal, made collectively with the other Suffolk Districts and the Borough of Ipswich, to establish three new unitary authorities for the county: Central and East Suffolk, Ipswich and South Suffolk, and West Suffolk. The alternative, a single Suffolk unitary authority promoted by the previous SCC administration, would have been too large to preserve local democracy and safeguard local community character. The precise boundaries for the three unitaries have not yet been finalised, but a provisional map is available at <https://suffolklgrhub.gov.uk>.
4. The May elections delivered outright control of Suffolk County Council to the Reform UK party, electing 41 councillors. The Greens are the official opposition with 13 councillors. There has been little indication of Reform's intentions as yet, although they have begun a legal challenge to the process of local government reorganisation.
5. The current Waveney Local Plan, which governs development in our part of East Suffolk, will soon reach its legal expiry. The process of creating a new East Suffolk Local Plan has now begun. Government now requires new Local Plans to be completed within 30 months, including community consultations. This timetable is significantly shorter than for previous iterations of the Local Plan, which took years. We strongly encourage Town and Parish Councils and Meetings to be prepared to make their views known during consultation opportunities.
6. The first consultation opportunity for the new Local Plan will open on 10 June. It is a scoping consultation focused on an overview of what the plan should contain. A full timetable for the development of the new Local Plan, as well as all consultation opportunities, is available at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/newlocalplan.
7. Part of the purpose of the new Local Plan will be to manage the Government-mandated housing quotas with which ESC will be obliged to comply. A consultation inviting proposals for land for housing development has taken place, and a map was made available online. We caution against relying on this map in any way: it shows only proposals made by landowners and others, not approved areas for development.
8. East Suffolk is well underway with delivering the new sets of bins to comply with national recycling legislation. Bottle banks will become a thing of the past, as glass will now be collected in our blue bins, along with metals and all types of plastic film and packaging. A separate green-lidded bin will collect paper and cardboard, and a caddy for food waste is provided to reduce waste stream contamination problems and save costs to ratepayers. The roll out is ambitious and carefully planned but will not be 100% perfect, so we ask for patience if some mistakes are made.
9. A spate of graffiti has unfortunately blighted many road signs in Bungay. Toby has been liaising with local police who are trying to identify the perpetrator(s), and also exploring a proposal to empower communities to get any further graffiti removed through a specialist service. These efforts are being taken forward by Peter Aiano through liaison with Suffolk Highways.
10. Anthony is delighted to continue championing the East Suffolk Youth Council, which has just finished its second civic year. The Youth Councillors continue to produce excellent motions on important issues for East Suffolk, many of which have been adopted by ESC.