

A Revised Report for Groton Parish Council Meeting on 13th January 2021

From James Finch – County Councillor for the Stour Valley

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➤ COVID 19 infection rates over Christmas

I regret to say that this subject is still very much the focus for the Suffolk County Council team.

More than one third of Suffolk's total confirmed coronavirus cases were recorded in the last two weeks.

A cumulative total of 15,643 people have tested positive for the virus in the county as of January 2 – with 5,321 people testing positive from December 20 to January 2, making up 34% of all cases recorded in Suffolk by that point. The highest ever number of people testing positive came on December 29, when 749 people were confirmed to have contracted the virus, however this could be due to a lag in test results on Christmas day. There have been 60 cases in my Area in the last 7 days. Updated data for our local area can be found in the Suffolk Coronawatch website [here](#). For clarity this Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) area named **Nayland, Leavenheath and Boxford** includes the following 18 parishes and hamlets: *Assington, Boxford, Dorking Tye, Edwardstone - Rose Green & Mill Green, Groton, Higham, Layham, Leavenheath, Lindsey, Milden, Nayland, Polstead, Polstead Heath & Bower House Tye, Raydon & Raydon Great Wood, Shelly, Stoke by Nayland, Thorington Street, White Street Green.*

Message from Stuart Keeble, Director of public health for Suffolk County Council, said: “Suffolk is seeing a similar, sharp increase in positive cases in line with the regional picture, which is making more people ill and putting our hospitals under even more pressure. The new variant of the virus spreads more easily, we must all limit contact with others wherever possible. Even though you may not have any symptoms, you may be giving Covid-19 to someone else without realising it.” Do not forget though another reason for the greater number of positive cases is the significant increase in the quantity of testing throughout the county and the country.

Let's stick to this guidance rigidly NOT LEAST NOW to protect our accident and emergency teams in our hospitals.

➤ Vaccination centres and Hubs in Suffolk

NHS Management aim to reach a point where everybody lives less than a half an hour away from a vaccination centre in Suffolk and north Essex. Vaccination centres are expected to go live at Gainsborough Sports Centre and Trinity Park – the site of the Suffolk Show by mid-January. Eventually, it is hoped there will be 16 vaccination centres and 20 GP surgery hubs, sites alongside the three hospital site in Ipswich Colchester and Bury St Edmunds within our area of Suffolk. **At the time of writing, the following GP practices in South Suffolk will be offering COVID Vaccinations - East Bergholt (Constable Country Medical Practice), Hadleigh (Hadleigh Health Centre), Sudbury & Great Cornard (Hardwicke House Surgery, Cornard Branch) & Lavenham (Lavenham Branch of Long Melford Practice).** The advice is- ***Do not call them – they will call you.***

As plans have not been fully developed, I have had discussions with the Directors of the Stoke by Nayland Hotel Golf and Spa, and have put forward their site for use as a local vaccination centre. This is being considered by Dr Ed Garrett, CEO of the Clinical Commissioning Group. The advantages for this area of South Suffolk is that there is easy access and plenty of parking on site and because of the present lock down plenty of space within the conference rooms and the large banqueting suite – none of which are being utilised at the moment.

➤ Suffolk Police proposals for April 2021 -2022

Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore has just published his proposals for the policing element of the council tax precept for the next financial year which includes a proposal for more officers for the county through the policing precept.

He is asking Suffolk residents for their thoughts on his proposals through an electronic survey which can be accessed through the website link [here](#) or Google “Suffolk Precept Survey”. The survey is open until 9am on Thursday 28th January.

➤ **Primary School application deadline approaches**

Parents and carers **have until Friday 15 January 2021 to submit** an application to secure their child's place at a Primary, Infant, Junior or Middle school for September 2021. Applications should be made for children born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017 who are due to start primary school from September 2021.

An application for a full-time school place must be made even if a child is already attending a nursery class in an infant or primary school, a pre-school or a children's centre next to a school site.

Before making a school application, parents and carers need to consider how they will get their child to and from school. School Travel eligibility is based on a child attending the nearest suitable school that would have had a place available. This might not be the catchment area school. To find out more about SCC's school travel policy please visit www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel.

➤ **Supporting the Vulnerable in the Stour Valley during the COVID 19 pandemic.**

Over and above what the County Council is supporting directly, I have this month allocated funds to each of my three Benefices in my division to support in particular the local food banks that the local churches are running. If you do know any person or family in particular need, please let me know or your local priest.

➤ **Virtual Fostering and Adoption Sessions for the Stour Valley**



Since the incidence of COVID 19 sadly the demand for this service has increased significantly. Therefore, those who would like to find out more refer to the website - <https://www.fosterandadopt.suffolk.gov.uk/> or join one of the following events

For those wanting more information on Fostering only:-

Wednesdays - 6th January, 3rd February, 3rd March and 7th April - all 7:00pm in your home.

For those wanting more information on Adoption only:-

Thursdays - 7th January, 4th February, 4th March and 8th April - all at 7:00pm in your home.

To book a place please email Claire.Gwatkin@suffolk.gov.uk. She will then send instructions on how to join the virtual meeting. As always, our team will be happy to answer any questions you have about fostering or adoption! They normally will have a foster carer or adoptive parent available to help you too at these events.

Please continue to spread the word.

➤ **My Priorities**

Education - Supporting Vulnerable People - Jobs and Growth - Localism and the Stour Valley - Building on Suffolk's Strength all underpinned by strong financial management and low council tax.