

A Report for Groton Parish Council Meeting on 7th September From James Finch – County Councillor for the Stour Valley

Tel: 01206 263649 Mobile 07545 423796 Email: james.finch@suffolk.gov.uk

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➤ **Could you help a Ukrainian family in need?**

Suffolk has a proud history of supporting people in need and in the last six months, we have seen people and communities across our county come together to do all we can to help those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine.

More than 1,050 Ukrainian guests have now arrived in Suffolk via the Homes for Ukraine scheme and I want to say a huge thank you to each and every person and family who has taken Ukrainian guests into their homes and into their hearts. You are making a real difference every day, supporting and welcoming Ukrainian families into our communities.

Sponsors originally signed up to host guests for at least 6 months, with the option for those who are willing and able to continue beyond this. We are extremely grateful to those who are able to continue to provide this invaluable support to families beyond this initial period, however we fully understand that some will be unable to, due to changes in their circumstances in this time. Again, thank you to all in my division for everything you have done - supporting a person or family fleeing conflict is no mean feat and it cannot be underestimated how much of a difference you have made in these people's lives.

Guests on the **Homes for Ukraine scheme** who are not yet ready to leave sponsorship and move into their own alternative accommodation, but who cannot stay with their current host after 6 months, can move to a new host.

We also sadly continue to see more people fleeing the conflict each day. We are therefore asking anyone who thinks they may be able to help a family in need to sign up to the Homes for Ukraine scheme."

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The council remains disappointed that a number of key issues have not been fully resolved but is now looking ahead to the boosts for the local economy and protecting the local environment.

Whilst the council has been successful in securing many improvements to the scheme, it had raised several concerns where the impact on the natural environment could have been improved:

- The blight of the additional pylons at the main site
- Unnecessary and damaging outage car park at Goose Hill
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During the process, the council's voice has been strong, and our influence has resulted in a number of significant improvements to the proposals, to make them more acceptable for Suffolk.

The council has been instrumental in recent changes made to the proposals, which will see Suffolk benefit from nearly £200m of investment to mitigate the impact on communities, the environment and infrastructure. Assurances have also been secured to see a far greater quantity of construction materials will be delivered by rail and sea, reducing the number of lorries on the county's rural roads.

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The data, released on July 25th by the Cassius service, highlights the benefits of a digital care technology service, which is the most advanced in the country. Launched in July 2021, Suffolk County Council's Cassius service has:

- Changed the lives of 1,600 people with over 2,600 pieces of digital technology installed
- Avoided 118 ambulance call-outs at a time when pressure on the NHS is at an all-time high*
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- Estimated saving to social care of £4.2 million and cashable savings of £430,000 and £160,000 to the local NHS

Cassius has exceeded all our expectations and our social work practitioners are quickly becoming the most digitally advanced in the country. We have developed this service from scratch and this data is a testament to how you can transform services and continue to provide positive experiences and benefits to all. We are very pleased to see the added value to the wider health system too.

Most importantly, however, is the impact on people's lives which has been wonderful to see, and we are getting some excellent feedback from people using the technology. One resident said: "The technology literally saved my mother's life".

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