



# SUFFOLK HIGHWAYS

## COUNCILLOR NEWSLETTER



### Message from Cllr Paul West, Cabinet Member for Operational Highways

We have recently marked first year anniversary of the new Suffolk Highways and Suffolk Streetlighting contracts with our service delivery partners Milestone Infrastructure and J McCann.



This provides an ideal opportunity to launch our monthly quarterly newsletter and update you on some of the great work carried out to date. Although both contracts are still in their infancy, there have still many achievements, including Suffolk Highways increasing its defect repairs by 35% compared to the previous contract, and repairing more than 21,000 potholes across the county from 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024.

Suffolk Streetlighting has made great strides in its commitment to Social Value being at the heart of all it does, by creating apprenticeship and employment opportunities to help strengthen the local economy.

This first newsletter covers some of the achievements made over the last 12 months. We hope you find this material informative and interesting, and feel you can share this with your communities.

Kind regards,  
Paul

## INNOVATION BOLSTERS RESPONSE TO DEFECTS



The wet weather has inevitably led to an increase in potholes nationally, including in Suffolk. In response to this, we have trialled new methods to help in the fight against defects, and are reviewing their success before considering further use in future.

This includes the introduction of the Dragon Patcher, which **enables defect repairs to be carried out up to five times faster** when compared to using traditional methods. The equipment also **saves 0.015 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per m<sup>2</sup> of defect repairs, an estimated 78% carbon reduction** compared to when using traditional repair methods, supporting SCC's ambition to achieve Net Zero by 2030.

In March, we also deployed the Roadmender on our county's urban roads. The Roadmender uses an Elastomac solution – a repair method which results in **sealed, longer-lasting pothole repairs and is capable of overlaying areas with multiple defects in a single visit**. Elastomac is an eco-friendly material that contains nine end-of-life waste tyres recycled into every tonne. This helps to **lower the carbon footprint of patch repairs by 80%**.

Our use of innovations has led to Suffolk Highways being named as a finalist in the Steve Berry Highways Authority Initiative award category at this year's Highways Awards.

[We are now using this equipment to help us prevent potholes ahead of the winter months.](#)

## NEW SUFFOLK HIGHWAYS CONTRACT SEES DEFECT REPAIRS INCREASE BY 35%

Reactive works October 23 - September 24

21,193  
pothole  
repairs



3,569  
emergencies  
attended

3,610  
pavement  
repairs



111,373  
gullies  
cleansed

Just 12 months into the contract, Suffolk Highways has **repaired almost 31,000 defects, including more than 21,000 potholes** across the county and carried out **over 3,500 pavement repairs**. This has contributed to a 35% increase in reactive defect repairs compared to the same period for 2022/23, during which 22,871 defects were repaired. In addition, we have **cleansed almost 110,000 gullies and attended more than 3,500 emergencies**.



# KEEPING SUFFOLK SAFE AND MOVING DURING ADVERSE WEATHER

The first six months of the contract saw Suffolk experience one of the wettest winters on records, with the county hit by four major storms within a short space of time.

Our reactive teams were required to respond to multiple reports of flooding and fallen trees. **In total, we attended more than 2,200 emergencies between October to March alone.**

During these major weather events, we worked with partners such as the emergency services to keep Suffolk's communities safe and moving. **More than 5,000,000 litres of water and 164 fallen trees were removed from the highway during the storms.**

In addition, **we gritted over 114,000 kilometres of highway** in Suffolk during the winter months and preparations are already in place for the 2024/25 Winter Season, including the introduction of 36 new gritters which have been named by Suffolk residents at this year's Suffolk Show.



## VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUE

The effects of the storms experienced in Suffolk were long lasting, with the adverse weather leading to the collapse and serious deterioration of some of the county's roads.

This includes Otley Bottom, where we undertook a major project earlier this year to repair the road, with us installing bank support sheets, constructing a gabion basket wall and repairing the edge of the carriageway.

We have also recently completed repairs at Aspoll Road, Debenham, and are also in the process of carrying out works at The Street, Aldham, to enable the road to safely reopen shortly.

In addition, we have a number of major projects currently underway across the county. Our works at Hemyard to replace a Public Right of Way bridge will be completed in a few weeks. We are also making good progress with replacing Bridge Farm Bridge in Stowlangtoft with a stronger, safer structure for the benefit of the local community and highway users. In addition, we have commenced works on Europa Way in Ipswich to construct a new link road between the end of the existing Europa Way and Bramford Road (B1067).

# SUFFOLK'S LARGEST RESURFACING PROGRAMME CONTINUES

## EXTRA FUNDS INVESTED IN IMPROVING SUFFOLK'S ROADS

The county's largest ever resurfacing scheme is in the process of being delivered, following Suffolk County Council investing an extra £10m in its surfacing programme.

This year alone, **93 sites across Suffolk have been surface dressed**, spanning 669,785 square metres, which equates to more than 86 miles, or roughly the distance from Ipswich to Buckingham Palace.

Surface dressing is a process that seals the road surface from water ingress and extends the life of existing road surfaces. It is essential that we use this preventative treatment alongside carriageway resurfacing to provide an efficient and comprehensive service.

We are currently around 20% through the additional funding, which is being used to improve roads across Suffolk.

Suffolk Highways recently presented a 'State of Suffolk's Roads' report to Scrutiny Committee which sets out how we invest in maintaining Suffolk's roads. [The report can be viewed here.](#)



## OVER 20,000 SQUARE METRES OF MACHINE SURFACING DELIVERED

Machine surfacing has also been completed at hundreds of locations across the county. This is a longer process than surface dressing which involves replacing the existing road surface, and the programme has focussed on urban locations including residential areas, cul de sacs and access roads.

We have also carried out a project which has targeted smaller sections of Beccles Road, Lowestoft. **Over several nights during May we repaired 79 defects covering a total area of 667 square metres**, helping to improve the surface of the road for local road users whilst minimising the impact by reducing the total length of the road closure. This project was well-received by the local community.



# PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Suffolk Highways remains committed to delivering safer, greener highways. Since the start of the contract, we have implemented the use of Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel, which is a direct replacement for white diesel, **saving 87% of CO2 compared to using white diesel alone and around 300 tonnes of carbon since October 2023.**

We have also introduced three fully electric vans on to the contract, which have travelled thousands of miles since October, **saving more than 45 tonnes of Co2.**

In addition, we have implemented hot boxes in depots to reduce travel time and carbon, and have started using Warm Mix Asphalt, a lower carbon alternative to traditional asphalt.

Suffolk Highways was proud to sponsor a category at this year's Greenest County Awards and also hosted a Carbon Charter event for our Supply Chain Partners last month.



## BUILDING A POSITIVE LEGACY FOR SUFFOLK

Social Value is a key component of the new contract, as we work together to build a positive legacy for Suffolk.

Included within this, is supporting Suffolk County Council's ambition to strengthen the local economy. To date, **87% of our spend with Supply Chain Partners for the new contract has been with Suffolk based businesses**, helping to create local jobs for local people.

Suffolk Highways has also **recruited 58 new employees on the contract, including ten apprentices.** Developing our people remains a priority for us and we have **delivered more than 6,800 hours of training to staff** since October 2023.



In addition, we have started to inspire the next generation by delivering two road safety talks to primary school pupils and participating in multiple careers events at schools across the county, as well as having a presence at the Suffolk Skills and Careers Festival and Ipswich Careers Fair.

Our employees also volunteered at Suffolk Community Gardens, Suffolk Owl Sanctuary and Haughley Football Club and raised hundreds of pounds for charities such as EACH, Save the Children, Breast Cancer Now and FIND Foodbank.





# HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF SUFFOLK HIGHWAYS

Whilst there have been many positive achievements in the first year of the contract, we remain committed to continuously improving the service we deliver to Suffolk and its highway users based upon the feedback received from you and your community.

We would also welcome your assistance in helping us to build a positive legacy for Suffolk. Please **email [communications@suffolkhighways.org](mailto:communications@suffolkhighways.org)** if there is a local project that you want us to volunteer at, or a school or college you'd like us to visit. We also provide free use of our meeting rooms for voluntary groups and charities and these can be booked by also **emailing [communications@suffolkhighways.org](mailto:communications@suffolkhighways.org)**.







# UPDATE FROM SUFFOLK STREETLIGHTING

As we recently marked the one-year anniversary of Suffolk's streetlighting contract, we are proud to reflect on the significant progress and milestones achieved. Over the past year, we have established a range of new systems and processes, all tailored to build a solution that meets the specific needs of Suffolk residents and our key stakeholders.

From streamlining maintenance operations to successfully delivering capital works, we have maintained strong momentum in providing a reliable service. McCann's partnership with Suffolk County Council has been instrumental, fostering a close collaboration that supports major infrastructure projects, driving regional growth and development.

An important part of our journey has been the success of our social value commitment, which has brought many local initiatives to life. From investing in apprenticeships to creating employment opportunities that benefit the community, we are dedicated to making a positive impact on the local economy.

We have already employed four apprentices and two trainees from across Suffolk. Additionally, we are excited to continue exploring new innovations and technology trials focused on energy efficiency and carbon reduction, ensuring a sustainable future for Suffolk.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to delivering value not only to the council but to the wider region through meaningful social and environmental contributions.



## STREETLIGHTING STATS (OCT 23 – SEP 24)

**8,859 ROUTINE MAINTENANCE FAULTS COMPLETED**, THIS INCLUDES:

**768** EMERGENCY FAULTS ATTENDED

**73** PRIVATE CABLE FAULTS REPAIRED

**99** STREET LIGHTING ASSETS REINSTATED DUE TO VANDALISM OR ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

**603** NEW COLUMNS