

Thérèse Coffey MP

Newsletter



Please find below my latest newsletter covering issues I've been dealing with and events I have attended. I also update my website www.theresecoffey.co.uk and [Facebook](#) regularly. If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, there is a link to unsubscribe below.

1. Ukraine

Putin must fail. The UK stands with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people as they defend themselves from Putin's attempted invasion. I've been involved in various cabinet discussions and briefings. We will continue to provide defensive military aid to Ukraine and hit Russia with the most severe sanctions. If you are able to host an evacuee then please register [here](#).

2. Energy/Environment

Energy Infrastructure: I hosted an important visit from one of the directors of BEIS, the government department responsible for energy policy. With the help of local councillors and representatives from Suffolk Energy Solutions, I was able to get across the need for the cumulative impact of various energy infrastructure projects to be assessed as part of the site selection and planning process. Change is coming with the proposed National Policy Statements for Energy placing an expectation on applicants to demonstrate how the optimum connection locations have been identified and a requirement to coordinate multiple projects. But I also wanted to get across the current risk to our precious landscape and the risk of the eroding cliffs with cabling.

OffSET: I reiterated these points when I met Energy Minister Greg Hands at the Offshore Electricity Grid Task Force meeting. OffSET has been set up to lobby government on the need for more coordinated energy infrastructure.

SPR: The Secretary of State gave permission for the East Anglia One and East Anglia Two offshore wind farms. Whilst I have always supported the offshore elements of the application, I have consistently spoken against the associated onshore infrastructure and the impact on Suffolk Coastal, particularly in relation to the proposed substation at Friston. Engaging extensively in the planning process and suggesting alternatives. So whilst I'm disappointed in the decision, I will now read the reasoning very carefully and provide further comment in due course.

Sizewell C: £100 million of government funding is being made available to support the continued development of Sizewell C. Nuclear power as a low carbon energy source is a key strand of the government's plan to achieve net-zero by 2050. There will also be huge benefit locally with high-quality jobs and economic gain. EDF have recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Suffolk New College to upskill students, which will mean local people will be able to take advantage of the opportunities throughout the construction phase and during operation.

Energy Prices: The energy regulator Ofgem has provided comprehensive advice to ensure consumers pay no more than is necessary and are supported by suppliers in any way possible. You can find the advice [here](#).



3. Health & Care

Coronavirus: The Prime Minister announced the end of all the remaining Covid restrictions – unveiling our plan to live with the virus as we get back to normality. We've built up strong protections against Covid over the past two years through the vaccine rollout, tests, new treatments and the best scientific understanding of what the virus can do. This doesn't mean that Covid will suddenly disappear and there may be times when infection rates rise again. However, now that vaccines have broken that link between cases, hospital admissions and deaths I think it is right that we get back to as near normal as possible. An additional booster is being offered to all adults over-75, those who live in care homes or have weakened immune systems. Eligible people should be contacted directly. You can find more information [here](#).

NHS Dentists: The lack of NHS dental provision continues to be an issue. I've been constantly pressing the case on behalf of patients, lobbying Ministers and NHS bosses. An additional £50m has now been made available to boost capacity in NHS dentistry. Under the scheme, 350,000 extra appointments will be offered including outside of normal hours to treat people in the early morning, evenings and at weekends. I've written to local NHS Commissioners encouraging them to make an urgent bid for our share of the money, which should really help boost capacity in our part of Suffolk.

Ambulances: I met the new Chief Executive of the East of England Ambulance Service, Tom Abell, at the Saxmundham Ambulance Station. We discussed response times, particularly in relation to stroke patients.

Norfolk & Waveney Health & Care Partnership: I was briefed about elective care recovery and the new integrated care system by NHS colleagues. There is a new CEO of the Clinical Commissioning Group who I plan to meet soon.



4. Education

Education Investment Area: Suffolk has become an Education Investment Area as part of the government's detailed Levelling Up plan. This extra investment will include retention payments to keep the best teachers and specific support for SEND children and their families. There will also be a focus on skills helping to support adults with free, flexible training and the expansion of skills bootcamps.

Special Educational Needs Centre: I formally opened the specialist SEND centre at Saxmundham Free School, offering a great learning environment for some of our most vulnerable young people.



5. Transport

Saxmundham Station: I opened the refurbished Saxmundham Station. Following a severe fire in 2018, the first floor of the building was condemned but the single-storey upgrade now provides a much better experience for passengers – including seating, heating and power points.



6. Business

Tourism: I welcomed Tourism Minister, Nigel Huddleston to Suffolk to show him some of the highlights of our successful visitor economy. Our tour took in Southwold Pier, Adnams Brewery, Snape Maltings and the new visitor tower at Sutton Hoo.

Adastral Park: I opened the new DigiTech Centre in Martlesham. The research and engineering facility is a joint project between the University of Suffolk and BT, providing cutting-edge digital skills for people looking to pursue careers in information and communications technology.

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce: I met representatives from the Chamber to discuss the Levelling Up White Paper and the Suffolk County Deal



7. Constituency & Suffolk Matters:

County Deal: As part of the detailed Levelling Up plan unveiled by the government Suffolk has been invited to agree a new County Deal. We are one of just nine areas across the country being trusted to take on a lot more power and responsibility in the first phase, which will also come with more money locally. I have had various meetings and conversations with local councillors and ministers on this.

Kickstart: Our Kickstart scheme has been hugely successful here in Suffolk - with three-quarters of participating employers providing permanent roles for the young people following the government's wage subsidy.

Culture Recovery Fund: The Government has provided several arts organisations in Suffolk Coastal with over half a million pounds from the latest tranche of the Culture Recovery Fund. The Spa Pavillion in Felixstowe, The Leiston Long Shop Museum, The Riverside Restaurant & Theatre in Woodbridge and the Sole Bay Arts CIO have received a combined total of £564k helping them to continue to provide rich cultural experiences for our area.

The Racehorse Inn: The community pub company in Westhall received £96,600 from the government to save the Racehorse Inn. I backed their bid with a supportive letter to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The money will help reopen the pub as a community enterprise - ensuring its continued role as a valued village facility.

Camper vans at Southwold: I asked the police to take action against untaxed camper vans that were seemingly permanently parked in North Parade car park.

Trimley Level Crossing: I followed up with Network Rail to get them to urgently fix the gates on the level crossing at Trimley St Mary railway station. The new gates were getting stuck regularly, causing long waiting times for motorists.

Reydon Road Closure: I followed up on the road flooding issue on the B1127 near Reydon, which had closed the road - contacting both Suffolk County Council and the Environment Agency. The road has subsequently reopened.

Dock Spur Roundabout Fuel Spill: I followed up with Highways England and Suffolk County Council to understand what emergency planning and resilience measures were in place, what support was provided - and what can be done to ensure that disruption is minimised in any future incident.

Broadband Investment: It was confirmed that up to 92,000 households in rural Suffolk will benefit from top-of-the-range broadband connections as part of the government's £5bn Project Gigabit investment.

Water Bills: I spoke to Essex and Suffolk Water about how they're helping pensioners with their water bills. If you, or someone you know, receives pension credit then you may be entitled to a 50% reduction if your annual bill is more than 3% of your total income. Find out more and claim via their website [here](#) or call 0345 782 0111.



8. Parliament & Ministerial Matters:

Spring Statement: The Chancellor set out plans to try and minimise the impact of rising energy prices. This included giving a tax cut to nearly 30 million people through a rise in the National Insurance threshold - saving the average employee over £330 a year. As well as the biggest cut in fuel duty ever. This builds on the previous £9bn package of support to help households, including a £150 energy bill rebate for around 80% of homes in the country.

Paralympics: As Secretary of State for disabled people, I was privileged to witness our amazing Paralympians win over 100 medals in Tokyo and listened to their thoughts on our new Disability Strategy.

COP26: I was in Glasgow to promote the power of pensions to invest in green infrastructure. We are the first country in the world to introduce mandatory reporting of climate risks for pensions.

The Environment Act: This new legislation, which I helped shape when I was Environment Minister, has now become law - improving air and water quality, tackling waste, increasing recycling and improving our natural environment.



9. Other Meetings & Events

- Met representatives from Substation Action Save East Suffolk to talk about energy infrastructure.
- Met the Environment Agency to discuss energy issues, including Sizewell C.
- Met members of Transition Woodbridge to discuss the climate emergency.
- Met the Chief Executive of the New Anglia LEP, Chris Starkie.
- Met a range of local businesses facilitated by Lloyds Banking Group.
- Met the senior leadership team at the Port of Felixstowe.
- Visited Felixstowe Library to look at the refurbishment of the children's section.
- Attended Brampton Plough Day.
- Attended Aldeburgh Food & Drink Festival.
- Attended the Adnams Beech Clean.
- Visited Orford Ness.
- Visited the Suffolk Punch Trust.
- Hosted the People's Postcode Lottery virtual funding workshop.

10. Next Surgery

I hold a number of surgeries both online and in person. To make an appointment please call my office on 0207 219 7164.

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