

Thérèse Coffey MP

Newsletter



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

Energy/Environment:

Energy Infrastructure: I invited Energy Minister, Andrew Bowie MP to Suffolk to meet local stakeholders concerned about the amount of energy infrastructure planned for the Suffolk Coast. As well as a roundtable meeting in Aldeburgh, it was a good opportunity to show him the local impact of housing around 30% of the UK's future energy supply on a small stretch of the Suffolk Coast when there are other options available. I have previously been clear and pressed the case again with the Minister that onshore connections should be placed on brownfield land - and repeated my request for Bradwell in Essex to be assessed. The Minister was in listening mode and intimated that there may be future changes as part of the ongoing Offshore Coordination Support Scheme work. For example, it is now likely that the Nautilus project will be connected via the Isle of Grain potentially from a modular offshore grid.

I have also written to the Chief Executive of National Grid to arrange an urgent meeting on Bradwell and met the regulator OFGEM.



Bathing Waters: All the designated bathing waters in Suffolk Coastal have been rated Excellent by the Environment Agency. This includes Southwold The Denes which has improved in classification from Good to Excellent. Whilst Southwold The Pier, Felixstowe North and Felixstowe South retain their

Excellent status. The newly designated bathing site at Waldringfield will be rated this year.

Martlesham Creek: I visited Martlesham Creek to meet a constituent who has recently been sampling water and has raised concerns about water quality and potential e-coli. The Environment Agency explained that pollution will not only be coming from humans but from agriculture and wildlife. Especially wild birds that feed from the mudflats. I'm following up with Suffolk County Council from a public health point of view, asking them to consider putting signage by the sluice. This isn't, of course, a designated bathing water but I'm confident that with the designation of the bathing water at Waldringfield, coupled with the government's [Plan for Water](#), we will see more investment locally to improve water quality.

Health:

Dentistry: An additional 18,000 hours of NHS-only appointments will be delivered per year in ten new units at the University of Suffolk. The new teaching environment for students will also help attract more dental practitioners. The ICB now has the ability to tailor what is needed locally. Just as happens to recruit more GPs to rural areas, I hope they will also consider a package of financial support to incentivise dentists to either relocate or to extend the existing provision, continuing to boost capacity, especially in rural Suffolk.

Workforce Plan: Building on the Plan for Patients I launched when I was Secretary of State last autumn, the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan will create the education and training places required for the future. Crucially for Suffolk, as well as the massive increase in training places for doctors and nurses, it also commits to expanding dental training places by 40%.

The James Paget: It was announced that the rebuild of the James Paget Hospital in Great Yarmouth, which serves many Suffolk residents, will be further prioritised as part of the government's £20bn New Hospital Programme - to be completed by 2030.

Lung Cancer Screening: People aged 55-74 living in Suffolk and across the country, who are most at risk of lung cancer will be invited for screenings. Each year the programme is expected to detect as many as 9,000 people with cancer, deliver almost one million scans and provide treatment earlier. More information [here](#).

Mental Health: I met senior representatives of the local ICBs and Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust to discuss the latest situation. The Trust has been in a recovery support programme with the NHS for some time but hasn't made anywhere near enough progress to the detriment of patients and their families. The recent mortality reporting and recording report is also concerning and I'm following up my concerns with ministers.

NHS 75: I was honoured to attend the 75-year anniversary service of the NHS at Westminster Abbey.

Ambulances: I met the Chief Executive of the East of England Ambulance Service, Tom Abell for an update. I was surprised to learn that previously there has been a rotating shift pattern, meaning the same two paramedics wouldn't regularly be put on the same shift together. I'm pleased that's now changing. I was also pleased to see that staff turnover has halved. There are still issues with hospital handover delays, especially at the Norfolk & Norwich so, I'm writing to the Chief Executive to find out why.



Education:

Saxmundham Free School: Whilst I recognise the challenges the school has faced due to its Ofsted rating and falling pupil numbers, the forthcoming closure of Saxmundham is not welcome news. The priority, of course, has to be the pupils and I made representations that the current year 10 pupils moving into year 11 next year, should be able to stay together and complete their GCSEs. I'm pleased to see that has been confirmed. Given that I opened a new specialist centre to support and develop vulnerable young people on the school grounds last year, coupled with the fact that the government has agreed to fund a new special school for Suffolk as part of the Special Needs Improvement Plan. I have also made the suggestion that the Saxmundham school site should now potentially be considered for that.

Broadband/Mobile Signal:

5G Summit: At the recent summit hosted by the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, I made a plea for mobile network operators to contact me if they're struggling to get permission for the siting of critical infrastructure. The Better Broadband for Suffolk rollout was coordinated extremely well by Suffolk County Council and I'm pushing for something similar for mobile connectivity.

Project Gigabit: I attended the Project Gigabit launch in Orford, which will provide a total of £5 billion toward fast, reliable broadband across the UK. This significant investment in superfast, gigabit-capable broadband will massively level-up rural and poorly connected urban areas, including in Suffolk Coastal.



Business & Farming:

The Suffolk Show: I had a great day at the Suffolk Show meeting farmers and food producers of all generations. As Secretary of State, I also took the opportunity to announce more funding for innovative projects, helping agriculture advance for the [future](#).



Friston Farms: I visited Hazlewood Hall Farm in Friston to see first-hand how Suffolk Coastal pig farmers continue to champion industry-leading animal welfare standards and provide essential resilience and support to our domestic food supply chain.



Trimley Marshes: I visited Trimley Marshes, part of Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. I caught up with AONB Manager, Simon Amstutz and Nature Recovery Manager, Alex Moore da Luz. We discussed the opportunities of the Defra-funded Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, which gives farmers and land managers the support to carry out projects that support nature recovery, mitigate the impacts of climate change and provide opportunities for people to enjoy our precious landscape.



Transport:

The Orwell Bridge: In a recent response to my letter, National Highways have confirmed that any future repairs to the safety barrier on the Orwell Bridge should be carried out much more quickly by increasing their stocks of the bespoke barrier.



Bus Fares: The government extended the £2 fare cap, to make sure bus travel remains accessible and affordable for everyone. This is just one of the ways we're helping ease the burden of the cost of living.

Felixstowe Railway Station: I attended an event to celebrate 125 years of Felixstowe Railway Station and the Orwell Hotel. In recent years, I've successfully pressed for the need to retain a full passenger service, as well as enabling freight services to expand to support the port.



Constituency & Suffolk Matters:

Aldeburgh Lifeboat Station: The RNLI communicated its decision to remove the Mersey class all-weather lifeboat and replace it with an Atlantic 85 inshore lifeboat. Restricting the current capabilities of the station, its crew members and potentially putting lives at risk. This is a disgraceful outcome and I'm really disappointed with the lack of interaction with the local community and how the RNLI has treated its many volunteers who are out there saving lives or are ready to do so. The interaction I've had with them has also been less than desirable. I will continue to take this up both with the RNLI leadership and the Charity Commission though to try and ensure it's not the final chapter for the RNLI and Aldeburgh.

Swifts: I met SOS Swifts campaigners, Eddie Bathgate and Marie Baynham-Davies to promote the installation of swift bricks and boxes. I have subsequently written to the new leader of East Suffolk Council asking the council to consider putting conditions on new planning permissions to enable their installation to help turn around their declining population.



Grassroots Sport: Seven sporting facilities in Suffolk Coastal benefited from £53k worth of government funding to help level up access to sport and to improve mental and physical wellbeing. This includes £22k for Trimley Sports & Social Club and 10k each for Halesworth Town Juniors FC and Wenham United Football Club. Well done too to Wickham Market Youth FC, Leiston Football Club Youths, Saxmundham Sports FC and Benhall St Mary FC for their successful bids.

Suffolk Day: I joined fellow Suffolk MPs and school pupils from Ipswich to mark Suffolk Day in Westminster Hall.



Parliament & Ministerial Matters:

Water Quality: I tabled and Parliament adopted new legislation which removes the £250k cap on penalties that can be handed out by environmental regulators, paving the way for unlimited penalties for polluters. Future fines from water companies will be re-invested into the new Water Restoration Fund. Delivering on-the-ground improvements to water quality and supporting local groups and community-led schemes which help to protect our waterways.

Unleashing Rural Opportunity: I launched the government's new drive to support rural communities. Unleashing Rural Opportunity sets out what we have already delivered and new initiatives to build on that record. Split across four broad themes of housing, communities, connectivity and growth, the plan will help create jobs and drive growth in rural areas, such as here in Suffolk, including proposals to expand internet provision. More details [here](#).

Farm to Fork: I joined Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak at the Farm to Fork Summit to announce a package of measures to protect British farmer's interests in future trade deals, boost domestic fruit and veg production and support new investment in technologies. More information [here](#).

Backing British Fishing: I announced new measures to support our fishing industry. Including a boost for the small under 10-metre vessels which are the lifeblood of our coastal communities, including here in Suffolk. Making use of our post-Brexit quota increases by removing a cap on the amount of quota they can use and opening up more potential income for smaller businesses. More information [here](#).

Free Access to Cash: The government is ensuring the legal right of free access to cash as part of the Financial Services and Markets Bill, which is currently making its way through Parliament. This means that the financial services regulator will have the legal power to preserve access to cash - free to consumers at the point of withdrawal or deposit - for those who need it. Particularly important for the elderly and the most vulnerable in our rural communities who frequently use cash as their choice of payment.

King's Coronation: I was honoured to attend the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla in Westminster Abbey.

Tug of War: I captained the victorious House of Commons team in the annual Macmillan Tug of War match against Peers from the House of Lords. We raised £130k. Remember for cancer support and advice, call the Macmillan Support Line free on: 0808 808 00 00 (8am - 8pm, 7 days a week) or visit www.macmillan.org.uk



Work Experience: After a break due to the pandemic, I'm once again giving opportunities to local people for work experience in my Parliamentary office. Where young people get to join the office for up to a week, getting a taste of how Parliament works.

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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