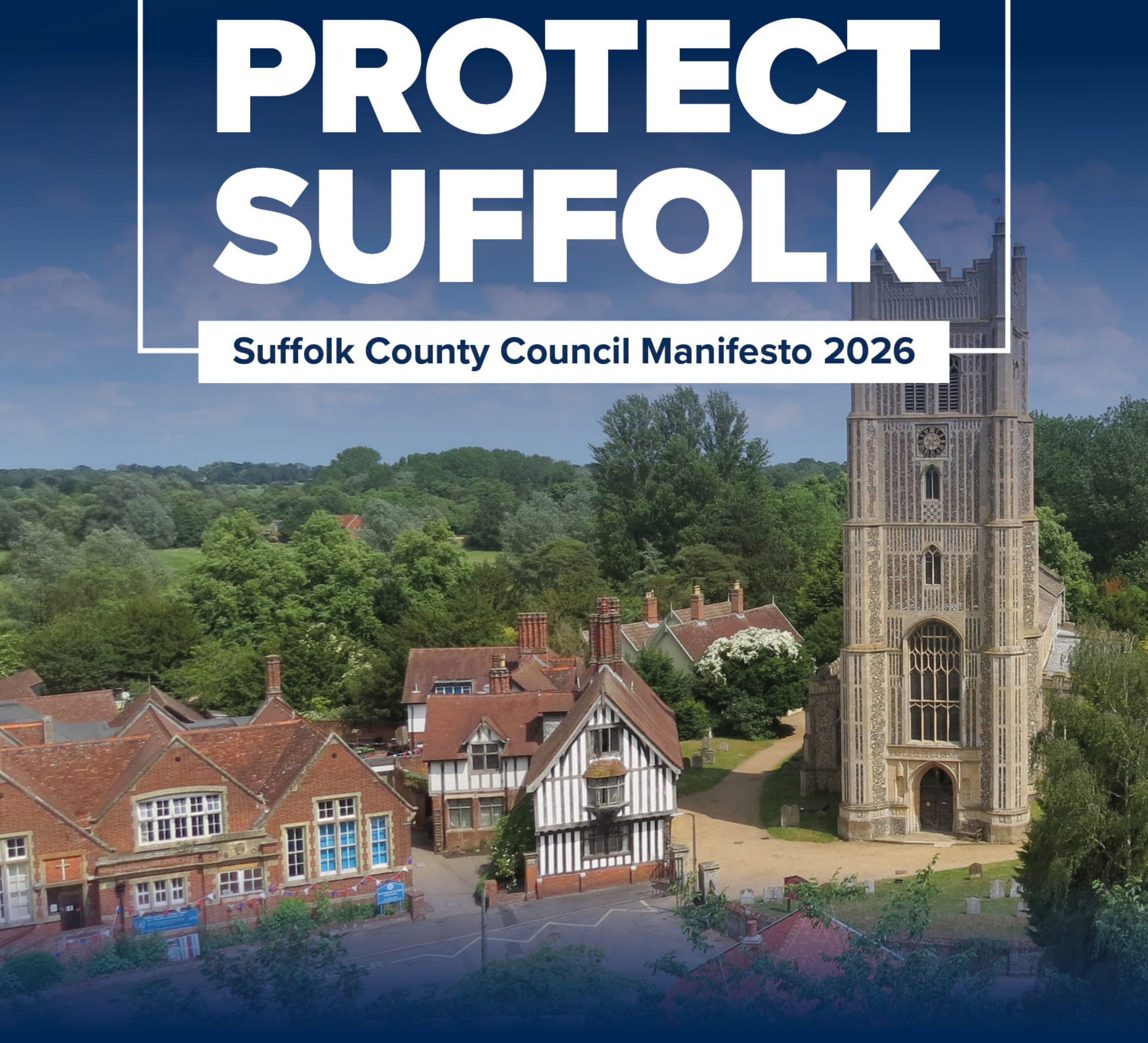
Suffolk Conservatives

OUR POSITIVE PLAN TO PROTECT SUFFOLK

Suffolk County Council Manifesto 2026



COUNTRYSIDE • TOWN CENTRES • ECONOMY • ROADS
PUBLIC TRANSPORT • HEALTH • EDUCATION • VALUE FOR MONEY

Promoted by Harry Richardson on behalf of Suffolk Conservatives both at St Andrew's Castle, St Andrew's Street South, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3PH. Printed by instantprint, Unit A Brookfields Park, Manvers Way, Manvers, Rotherham S63 5DR. Image: "The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Eye", by Martin Dawes. Used under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 licence.

OUR £40 MILLION HIGH STREET INVESTMENT PROGRAMME WILL REJUVENATE THE UNIQUE MARKET TOWNS SUFFOLK IS RENOWNED FOR

FROM THE LEADER

Leading Suffolk is a privilege I never take for granted. Over the last 5 years, we have emerged from the Covid pandemic and felt the global impact of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. I am proud of the role Suffolk played giving refuge to those fleeing Putin's war through our Homes for Ukraine scheme.

But life is also too hard for many people that already call Suffolk home. Conservatives have stood firm against the Labour Government's assault on business and their attempted erosion of our countryside. Whether it's a Forest City in the west, vast solar and pylon schemes, National Insurance hikes or the Family Farm Tax – we have consistently said no.

The answer to the challenges we face is not Reform UK, who promised to cut taxes only to hike local rates by as much as 9 percent on every county council they run. Across the country, Reform councils are embroiled in scandal and chaos. Nor is the answer a Green Party who, under their new hard-left leader, suggest legalising Class A drugs and leaving NATO. Only the Conservatives have the plan, and the experienced team, to protect Suffolk.

▸ This manifesto sets out our record, of which we are proud, and our plans for the future. Our plan for Suffolk would see a new £40 million fund for market towns and high streets, an extra £20 million for resurfacing residential roads and continued record investment in supporting vulnerable children and adults.

With kind regards,
Matthew Hicks

CARING FOR THE VULNERABLE

77p in every £1 the council spends goes on caring for those most in need, up from 65p a few years ago.

Not only does the council have a moral duty to care for vulnerable children and adults but it has a legal one too, this is work we must do.

So far, over 1,643 carers have used our online self-assessment, and a new digital inclusion project is helping carers use technology to make their lives easier and save you money.

▸ **With over £370 million a year invested into adult care alone, we will continue to work hard to innovate and make additional savings.**

WE'VE DELIVERED:

£3 million invested in keeping local homes warmer

160 new care businesses supported

WE WILL GO FURTHER:

We will address the need for **1,444** new SEND places by 2030

HEALTH, FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We recognise that young people are our future.

We've invested £3 million in keeping families warmer in winter, £12 million in making walking and cycling easier and a record £38 million creating an extra 1,200 Special Educational Needs (SEND) Places.

A majority of Suffolk's children's homes are rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted but we don't stop there, we're helping care leavers find jobs through our Family Business initiative.

▸ **We will continue to invest more in SEND and support all of Suffolk's children in care, alongside working with local schools to raise educational standards.**

WE'VE DELIVERED:

5,000 apprentices helped to kickstart their careers

3,000 learners helped to unlock new job opportunities

TOWN CENTRES

Suffolk is renowned for our unique market towns, that is why we put them at the heart of our vision for our county's future.

▸ We will introduce a £40 million fund to enhance our high streets and support local business. We will ensure local government changes include a review of parking charges to cut fees and support business, a revitalised approach to markets and a fairer approach to street trading licences.

Our town centres are economic centres, tourist attractions and a vital community resource.

▸ We'll continue to promote them and do all we can to ensure services like banking and post offices remain on our high street.

WE WILL GO FURTHER:

FIXING OUR ROADS

Every year, we spend more on fixing our roads than we receive from government.

We introduced an extra £10 million local roads fund that resurfaced residential roads and fixed over 22,000 potholes, so that you see improvements where you live. We have invested over £1 million in cutting edge 'Dragon Patchers' that can fill potholes whatever the weather.

▸ This winter's weather has been the worst since the 'Beast From The East' in 2018, so more needs to be done. That's why we will double our extra investment and put an extra £20 million into fixing our roads.

WE'VE DELIVERED:

£2.1 million
Europa Way link road in Ipswich on budget and ahead of schedule

WE WILL GO FURTHER:

£1 million
to replace rusted or damaged signs and white lines

£5 million
to improve pavements, footpaths and rights of way

BUSINESS AND TRANSPORT

As Conservatives, Suffolk's vibrant and diverse business sector and supporting job creation is at the heart of all we do.

The £145 million Gull Wing Bridge has unlocked economic growth in Lowestoft, while the Suffolk Business Board provides a platform for growth, skills and better jobs.

Last year, we helped nearly 5,000 apprentices kick start their career and build the skills Suffolk needs for the future.

▸ We will continue to push government to invest in the vital Haughley and Ely rail upgrades, alongside improvements to the A11 Fiveways, A12 and A14.

WE'VE DELIVERED:

17 new or enhanced bus services in the last year alone

£2 million
investment fund for Ipswich

WE WILL GO FURTHER:

A new bus station
for Sudbury

WE WILL GO FURTHER:

SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Access to services should not be a postcode lottery.

Suffolk Conservatives have invested £2 million in a new household waste recycling centre in Haverhill, ensured the Portman's Walk site in Ipswich is being replaced with a new £6.5 million facility and that sites across Suffolk continue to see improvements.

When sports facilities in Ipswich were at risk, we stepped in and funded the £350,000 resurfacing of the Northgate Sports Centre running track and we've also committed £2 million to a new sports facility in Newmarket following new housing growth.

▶ **We will keep all libraries and waste & recycling centres (HWRCs) open and maintain opening hours in addition to opening a new HWRC for Newmarket. Where there is a gap or need for community facilities, we will continue to act.**

WE'VE DELIVERED

45 libraries with opening hours & frontline staffing protected

Back in Suffolk a new state-of-the-art Fire Control Centre

50,000 homes powered each year by our Energy From Waste plant

New and enhanced waste recycling centres for Haverhill and Ipswich

VALUE FOR MONEY

Since 2019, we have saved taxpayers £82 million by modernising and changing the way we work.

We've reduced the number of senior managers at the council, most recently replacing the outgoing CEO by appointing internally – saving up to £90,000. Allowing us to invest more in frontline services.

We've cut energy use in our buildings by 40 percent, making them more efficient and reducing bills.

▶ **As local government is reorganised, we will insist on stripping out back-office bureaucracy, reducing the number of senior staff and more powers for town and parish councils that want to do more.**

WE'VE DELIVERED

£40 million in estimated savings thanks to 6,400 digital care users

£4 million annual savings thanks to a 40% cut in energy use across council buildings

LIBRARIES, HERITAGE & CULTURE

We are proud that we have never closed a Suffolk Library, in fact, under our leadership the number of libraries in the county has increased.

Last year we went further and, facing the risk of reduced opening hours, brought the management of our libraries back in-house to ensure frontline staff were protected and opening hours unchanged.

Our £500,000 annual arts and culture fund continues to support theatres, museums and community groups across Suffolk – with 70 grants issued in the last two years.

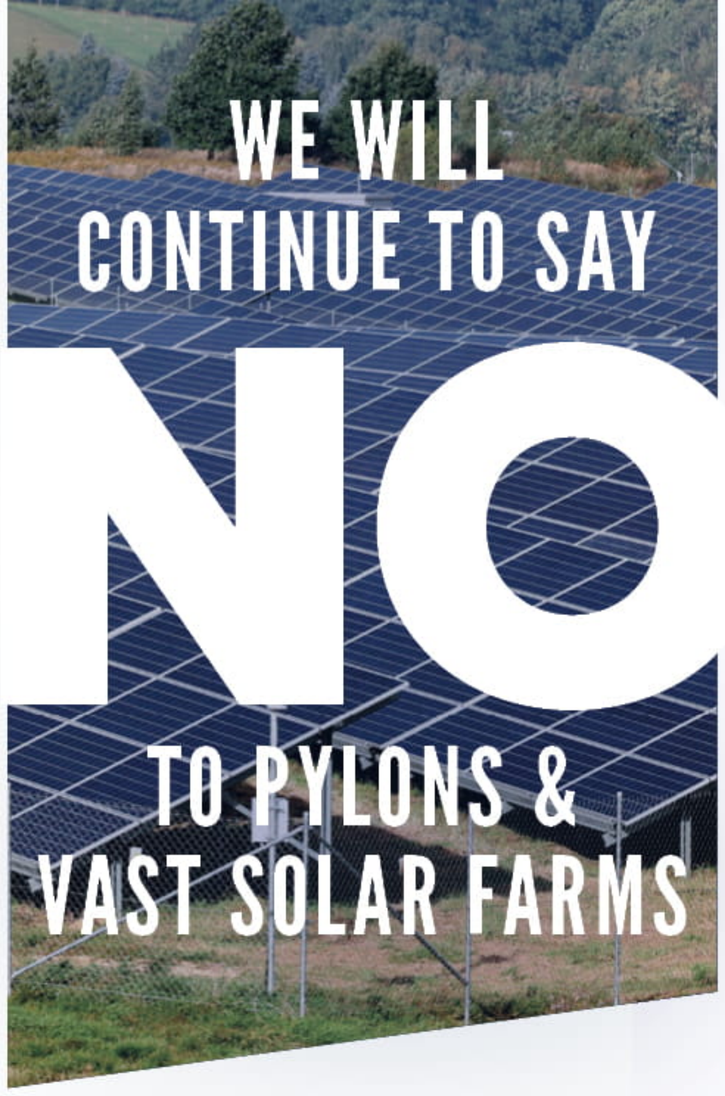
PROTECTING OUR COUNTRYSIDE

Ed Miliband's dash to decarbonise our electricity system by 2030 is placing our countryside at risk.

Under Labour's plans, tens of thousands of acres of our best farmland is threatened by solar, our coastal communities are being hammered by project after project and new pylon runs will carve through Suffolk.

Only Suffolk Conservatives have consistently resisted these plans.

- We've objected to major energy schemes, supported town and parish councils in their opposition and introduced new policies that seek to protect communities and our best farmland.



WE'VE DELIVERED

38km
of new river corridor unlocked

An extra £1.5 million
to reduce flooding risk following Storm Babet

RURAL WAY OF LIFE

Suffolk Conservatives recognise that food security is national security.

We have opposed Labour's cruel Family Farm Tax and ensured that meat and dairy remain on council menus.

In a rural county, cars are essential and we've fought against district plans to abolish free parking in towns like Sudbury.

We know the risk of rural isolation and the importance of bus provision, that's why – in the last year – we launched 17 new or enhanced bus services.

- To keep our roads safer, we've made it easier for communities to get 20mph limits where there is local support and will roll out more automatic numberplate recognition (ANPR) cameras.

Suffolk Conservatives

www.suffolkconservatives.org.uk facebook.com/SuffolkTories

office@suffolkconservatives.org.uk