

TOP-TEN REPORT FOR BUNGAY AND THE VILLAGES (SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2025)
East Suffolk Councillors Toby Hammond and Anthony Speca

1. Planning Committee North has granted the owners of the Kings Head Hotel in Bungay permission for their plans for this heritage building, including to rectify previous unlawful works. The consent was granted despite objections from some members of Bungay Town Council over the designs, and despite some reluctance on the part of Toby and the Committee. Ultimately, however, bringing this significant building back into some kind of use must be the priority for the town.
2. A consultation for the Suffolk Water Recycling Transfer & Storage Project has launched. This ambitious build would involve a pipeline network connecting water-recycling works at Corton with the River Waveney, Barsham water works, and new pipelines towards Eye and Sizewell C. The northern part of the pipeline route may involve landowners in the east of our ward, but it will more likely run north of the river. For more detail, see www.suffolkwaternetwork.co.uk.
3. Another part of a wider plan to alleviate water stress in our region is the huge North Suffolk Reservoir, intended to hold 30,000 megalitres of water. For comparison, we are told this will be similar in size to the Abberton Reservoir in Essex, which is a 700 hectare site. The reservoir would be located within 15km of the Barsham water works, so it could well be located in our ward. We understand that various sites are being considered, with further details expected in the spring of 2026. You can sign up for updates at www.northsuffolkreservoir.co.uk.
4. An application for an intensive poultry unit of ~138,000 birds is in the works for the fallow field near the aerodrome at Ellough. Anthony has written to the ESC Planning Team to argue strongly that the applicant's Environmental Statement must account for air-quality and climate impacts that have proven decisive in the rejection of similar proposals locally.
5. Anthony and Toby have submitted evidence to the UK Parliament Environmental Audit Committee's inquiry on the Seventh Carbon Budget. The inquiry is intended to help advise Government on the next set of carbon-reduction targets for the UK. In our view, these targets should include strict regulation of waste incinerators, which can be as dirty as coal-fired power stations. Had such regulation been in place, we might have been able to enforce more effectively the innovative carbon condition that we placed on VC Cooke's incinerator at Ellough.
6. The ESC Planning Team is inviting Town and Parish Councils, as well as the wider public, to submit suggestions for housing development sites to inform the development of the new Local Plan. Toby and Anthony encourage our Town and Parish Councils/Meetings to make their preferences known. The deadline is 9th January 2026, and submissions can be made at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/local-plans/new-local-plan/.
7. The ESC Licensing Team have now completed their update of street-trading policy across the District. Unless a street or area has been specifically prohibited by ESC, in consultation with Town and Parish Councils, all streets will now be open to street-trading within the usual regulations.
8. The East Suffolk Youth Council have been gearing up for their second civic year. Anthony is delighted to report that more schools are opting to fill their seats, with Faringaye High School, Kesgrave High School, Lowestoft Sixth Form College, Pakefield High School, and Woodbridge School holding elections for the first time this year. Bungay High School and Castle EAST School remain stalwart participants.
9. Turning to recent Green Party news, East Suffolk Leader and Beccles Councillor Caroline Topping has been selected as the Green Party candidate for Norfolk and Suffolk Mayor, a new position created by the devolution of certain powers from Westminster. Elections will be held in May.
10. As Chair of Council, Anthony was honoured to welcome HRH Princess Anne to Lowestoft on her visit to Citizens Advice East Suffolk. He also represented East Suffolk at a Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution fundraiser, the Battle of Britain Memorial Service at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, and at the 2025 University of Suffolk/East Coast College graduation ceremony.