

Report for Nedging PC by County Councillor Robert Lindsay 14.1.25

Conservative/Labour vote to centralise local government –

At the county council's extraordinary general meeting 9th January, Conservative and Labour councillors voted in favour of fast tracking a massive reorganisation of local government. This involves the scrapping of district councils and the imposition of a single, elected Norfolk/Suffolk mayor with wideranging planning powers. The county is also asking the Labour government to scrap the scheduled May 2025 county council election with county councillors serving an extra two to three years before having to seek re-election to a new unitary authority of unknown size or shape.

Although this has been tagged "devolution" I see this as centralisation of powers away from local councils into the hands of a single mayor and much larger local authorities under the mayor of around between 300k to 500k people. The mayor will be easily controlled by central government which can give or withhold funds to the mayor as it likes. The Green, LD and independent group voted against the proposals but the Conservatives have a majority on the county council.

Free home survey to find out how best to stop heat leaks from your home

Suffolk Public Sector Leaders are offering home owners a free or discounted "retrofit" assessment. The only criteria is that your home's Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band must be below C.

You can apply online at suffolkenergyassessment.co.uk

You can check your home's EPC on gov.uk/find-energy-certificate.

The approved retrofit assessor will identify the best measures for your home, eg insulation, draft proofing, ventilation repairs, heat pumps or solar panels. They will also give you a cost:benefit analysis of any measure recommended.

It is free if your property is smaller than 98m² There is a maximum fee of £30 for larger homes.

Loft Insulation Offer for Suffolk Residents

For the second year running, Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders are providing funding to help Suffolk residents make their homes warmer and save money on their energy bills by providing discounted loft insulation - an uninsulated home can lose up to a quarter of its heat through its roof. The Suffolk Loft Insulation Offer enables homeowners in Suffolk to receive a 50% discount (up to £200) and free delivery on orders of 200mm or 370mm wide eco-friendly thermal insulation rolls from High Loft, the UK's leading eco loft insulation brand. Last year, the project enabled the insulation of over 5,000m² of roofs in Suffolk, and this year the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership wants to double that figure.

The offer is open to anyone in Suffolk and will only close once the allocated funding has been spent. Visit <https://highloft.co.uk/pages/suffolk-council-200-loft-insulation-contribution> and fill in the form to receive your discount code.

£15k offer for home efficiency loan opens.

The council's new £3m fund for interest-free loans to residents wishing to undertake home energy efficiency upgrades that was mentioned in last month's parish report is now active, and applications can now be made at <https://www.lendology.org.uk/warm-home-suffolk-loan>. Energy efficiency upgrades such as insulation, solar panels, batteries, glazing, or heat pumps are possible with loans from £2,000 to £15,000 to be repaid over a maximum of seven years at 0% interest.