

# FEAR FOR BEES AS SUGAR BEET PESTICIDES BAN IS LIFTED

A major new threat to bees and other plant pollinators has emerged with the lifting of the ban on a dangerous pesticide used on sugar beet crops - just as Suffolk County Council rolls out a hard won Biodiversity campaign to protect our local wildlife.

Last December, leading Green councillor Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw convinced all political parties at Suffolk County Council to support her landmark Biodiversity motion, designed to get Suffolk County Council to develop and embrace biodiverse land management strategies.

But even as this is being enacted by the council, Environment Secretary George Eustice sanctioned the emergency use of previously banned Thiamethoxam, following lobbying by the sugar industry and the NFU.

Thiamethoxam is a dangerous neonicotinoid pesticide banned EU-wide in 2018 because of devastating effects on bees and other pollinators, so dangerous that then Environment Minister Michael Gove said, "the weight of evidence now shows the risks neonicotinoids pose to our environment, particularly to bees and other pollinators which play such a key part in our £100bn food industry, is greater than previously understood. We cannot afford to put our pollinator populations at risk."

However, according to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), sugar beet yields for this crop widely grown in the Waveney Valley, were estimated down around 25% in 2020 compared to previous years, and many are pointing the finger at a virus carried by aphids.



GREEN CAMPAIGNER ANNETTE ABBOTT

Saints villages resident and Green Suffolk County Council candidate Annette Abbott is outraged. "It is beyond any scientific doubt that neonics devastate our wildlife. They not only wipe out bees, but a wide variety of insects which birds and other animals in the food chain depend on. Only 5% of the chemical protects the sugar beet, the rest ends up in our soils and ultimately in the River Waveney where it causes further havoc with freshwater life," she said.

John Sanderson, who farms in South Elmham and grew 16 hectares of sugar beet this year said: "We stopped using neonic-treated sugar beet seeds many years back, when we realised the damage it was causing. We've actually found our beet yields are far more affected by recent droughts than by the virus yellows disease."

"Insect populations have crashed - butterfly numbers have halved since the 1970s, for example. These toxic chemicals are being used to grow more sugar for use in processed foods. It's utter madness and has to stop," Annette Abbott said.

Meanwhile, a legal challenge is being threatened by the Wildlife Trust. Join the campaign at <https://wildlifetrusts.org>

# FARMERS BACK GREEN PAYMENT PLANS

Local farmers have welcomed a new Government farm management subsidy scheme which will help protect wildlife in the region.

For years, farmers in the Waveney Valley have been paid subsidies under the EU's Common Agricultural Policy for their land under production, known as basic payments. The payments have mostly been made regardless of what farmers grow and how they grow it.

But since 2016, thirteen farmers from Norfolk and Suffolk have been part of an experiment to try out new nature-friendly models of funding support, working with DEFRA. Instead of being paid for their acreage, they have been funded for measures such as hedgerow improvements, habitat creation, and even growing crops designed to offer birds food during winter.

Crucially, farmers are not forced to follow a strict rule book, but are rewarded for using their own experience to make these projects successful on their farms.

Most people involved report that these trials have been a huge success, with some farmers even competing amongst themselves to see how many new wildflower species they could record. As a result, the Government have announced a new Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme which will soon begin phasing out basic payments for all farms, replacing them by 2024 with nature-friendly farm subsidies of equivalent monetary value.

Biodiversity campaigner and SCC candidate Annette Abbott of St Michael South Elmham welcomed the change: "The new ELM scheme is hugely positive news for the wildlife of Norfolk and Suffolk, and we're all looking forward to more details being announced by the Government. Since 80% of farmers say they are concerned about biodiversity losses, and 64% want to make tackling climate change more of a priority, if the scheme is properly run, both the region's farmers and wildlife will benefit."

# SPRING 2021 GREENVIEW

## GETTING WAVENEY VACCINATED!



DR ANNETTE ABBOTT AND NURSE JANEY LAWRENCE WHO ARE VACCINATING HOUSEBOUND PEOPLE IN THE AREA

Green campaigners Dr Annette Abbott and Dr Andrew Eastaugh are two of the many GPs, nurses and volunteers who have come out of retirement to help with the unprecedented COVID-19 vaccination effort in the Waveney Valley.

by Dr Andrew Eastaugh, retired Southwold GP

It has been remarkable for me to witness first hand the dedication and huge effort from local NHS teams helping to achieve the Government's target of vaccinating all at risk groups against Covid-19 in Waveney by the end of February and the rest of the UK population by the summer.

Due to stringent requirements to keep the Pfizer vaccine at very low temperatures until just before use, the vaccination has been given at specially equipped centres. South Waveney patients are being vaccinated through Sole Bay Health Centre., while other vaccines are being rolled out through surgeries and some community pharmacies.

It's a huge logistical challenge. No new staff have been hired and the whole programme is dependent on existing staff fitting extra work around their usual job, giving up days off. Most vaccinations are carried out by ancillary staff, the lower pay grades who have worked throughout the pandemic, who often get overlooked and deserve an equal mention to the doctors and nurses. They are supported by a band of volunteers from across the community, retired health care workers, and retired doctors like myself and many others.

The sense of relief about being able to help fight the pandemic is also motivating other retired GPs to get back to work. Dr Annette Abbott, who was in practice in Halesworth until early last year, has sprung back

into action immunising. 'It is really crucial that we take this on, so regular doctors and nurses can get on with the rest of general practice, otherwise we'll have even more problems,' she said. I have come out of retirement and will gladly continue to help for free because the people deserve so much better than the often shameful shambles created by politicians, contributing to the loss of over 100,000 citizens and causing misery to many more.

The success of this vaccination campaign is due to the heroic effort by the scientists who have designed the vaccine, the companies who make and distribute it, the NHS staff and volunteers who administer it and the patients who patiently have waited for this and now come out on cold wet January and February days with gratitude and relief.

The most at risk group to Covid-19 are people in their 80s and 90s who have lived through the war and can remember how it was before there was a National Health Service. They are expressing huge relief that at last there is some light at the end of the tunnel and some hope of coming out of a year of lockdown induced isolation.

## LOCKS, STOCKS AND BARRELS

There's still time to buy your shares!

see page 2



## WAVENEY GREEN PARTY NEWSLETTER FOR BECCLES, BUNGAY, HALESWORTH AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES



## THANKS FOR THE GREAT SERVICE

Patients have heaped praise on the seamless service they encountered at local vaccination centres, despite the large numbers attending for their Covid-19 protection jabs each day.

Many have journeyed to the Sole Bay Health Centre for their jabs. Michael Imison from Halesworth was very pleased: "I was ushered straight in for the vaccination, then I had to wait 15 minutes to see if there were side effects, but no one seemed to suffer any. Things all moved quickly but without any sense of hurry. All the volunteers seemed to know exactly what to do. Amateurs were stepping up to unfamiliar roles with the wartime spirit of commitment and cheerfulness."

For many it was the first trip out after nearly a year of self isolating. They were very relieved to see effective social distancing and sanitisation in place, and not surprisingly, it was very emotional for some, to suddenly see so many people again.



Candidate Annette Dunning ready to help out

Volunteers from the community have been keen to help out. Fiona from Wrentham, one of 20 volunteers helping with car parking at Sole Bay Health Centre, said it was wonderful to be out doing something positive. "It was the first anniversary of my partners' death and it really helped me by being involved," she said.

Halesworth Green candidate Annette Dunning was asked to help organise volunteers for the new Sole Bay vaccination centre in Reydon, having supported the Beccles Medical Centre before Christmas organising patient appointments to James Paget Hospital. She continues to support the great team of medics and volunteers in Reydon utilising her experience with those older and socially isolated within our communities. Annette said being able to sit and talk with the many who had been isolating at home for so long had been a pleasure and a privilege.

**CAN YOU HELP? GREEN VIEW IS DELIVERED BY RESIDENTS LIKE YOU IN YOUR AREA. IF YOU CAN SPARE A COUPLE OF HOURS, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH.**



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**Green Party**  
for the common good

DELIVERED BY ROYAL MAIL DUE TO COVID GUIDELINES



# PEOPLE’S FORUM EXAMINES SOCIAL ISOLATION

Tackling loneliness exacerbated by the Covid pandemic lockdown was the topic under discussion at the Social Isolation People’s Zoom meeting organised in January by the local Green Party.

The meeting drew in ideas from across the area. Annette Dunning, Halesworth town councillor, told of her work with the Rural Coffee Caravan (<https://ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk/>) . This charity exists to counter loneliness in rural settings by ensuring people are connecting with local support services.

She added that through her role supporting the vaccine roll out she had talked to people arriving who had not socialised for nearly a year, and that it was important to engage with these over 80s.

Members of the public spoke about how isolation affected them and what was needed to address the issue: Keri gave good examples of ways to communicate - her keep fit classes on Zoom, walks with a friend, doorstep drops and checking on your neighbours - which all embraced elements of socialisation and conversation as well as helping stay fit and healthy.

A Beccles resident noted that most programmes to alleviate isolation were aimed at the over 65s, neglecting younger people who might have disabilities or mental illness which prevented them from working or otherwise engaging with the community. Beccles Councillor Caroline Topping said funding for projects was available from the Community Partnership (CP) scheme using funds from East Suffolk District Council. For example, in Beccles an orchard had been funded, and in Halesworth a Friendly Bench scheme was proposed. The public were invited to put forward ideas to their local councillors for the CP scheme which they felt would help beat social isolation within the community.

One issue is isolated older people who are wary of technology and could benefit from coaching on their own or loaned equipment. Caroline said East Suffolk are trialling lending out 24 Grandpads, tablets made easy for the elderly, together with training. Five are still available (<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/>).

A Barnby Parish councillor and COVID volunteer co-ordinator said that a poor broadband signal adversely affected isolated people in her community. This was important to note as broadband connections was set to be the subject for February’s People’s Forum where it will be discussed further and actions recommended.

A final suggestion was to contact the Eden project outreach scheme which aims to promote community involvement. (<https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/>)



CANDIDATE ANNETTE DUNNING TALKED ABOUT HER WORK WITH THE RURAL COFFEE CARAVAN

## HALESWORTH DISTRICT SURGERIES

We are pleased to introduce Annette Dunning as our Halesworth Candidate for Suffolk County Council. Annette and her team have arranged a series of open Zoom surgeries during March and April to give residents the opportunity to meet her. She hopes there will be further opportunities to get together on village greens or even in pub gardens in the future. Meantime, Annette would like to know about and understand any ongoing issues in each community and would welcome the opportunity for you to get to know her too.

These meetings will take place on Saturdays between 11.00am and 12.00 noon. If you wish to attend please send an email to [halesworthgreens@gmail.com](mailto:halesworthgreens@gmail.com) for the Zoom login details. Should you miss a date please let us know and we will arrange for Annette or one of her team to contact you directly.

Schedule and Timetable	
6th March	Wissett, Spexhall
13th March	Wrentham, Frostenden, Uggeshall
20th March	Holton, Blyford, Sotherton
27th March	Brampton with Stoven, Westhall
3rd April	Wangford with Henham

## WAVENEY GREEN PARTY PEOPLE’S FORUMS

### YOUR VOICE CAN BE HEARD

Our People’s Forums offer a safe and informed platform to discuss issues important to our communities. Held on the third Monday of the month at 6pm on Zoom, they are open to any members of the public from the Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and Lowestoft districts.

Monday March 15th:  
*Refuse collection, Fly tipping and Recycling:*  
What’s happening to all the throw-away PPE face-masks and gloves? This is a subject coming up for scrutiny by East Suffolk Council. Please bring your questions - some of which we may be able to answer and those that we can’t we can email to the Officers.

Monday April 19th:  
*Flooding and house building - Long term strategies:*  
It’s been the wettest and most flooded winter here in the Waveney Valley for some time. Why are we building on flood plains and water meadows (Pilgrims Way in Bungay for example)? Where does the effluent water from the new houses go to? The water table is higher than it has ever been!

You are also welcome to make suggestions for future People’s Forums.

To learn more or to register, email us at [info@waveney.greenparty.org.uk](mailto:info@waveney.greenparty.org.uk). We will send you a link for each Zoom meeting.

## BUY THE LOCKS INN

### CAMPAIGN BUILDS DESPITE FLOODS

The recent floods haven’t put a dampener on the campaign to turn the Geldeston Locks into a community pub, with shares selling well.

There was 12 inches of water inside the bar at the pub over Christmas, but this was shrugged off by resilient landlords Jodie and Frank Barratt who live on site. “The pub is used to being flooded”, says Jodie, and is easy to dry out again thanks to the tiled floors.”

Councillor Graham Elliott, Chair of The Locks Inn Community Pub said, “We are delighted with the response to our share issue so far but we still have a long way to go. We urge people not to be complacent and to come forward and invest in our iconic pub. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to be a founder member of this amazing community project.”

The community share issue closes on 15 March. Shares are £50 each with a maximum investment of £50,000.

If you love The Locks, head to [www.savethelocks.com](http://www.savethelocks.com) or phone 01502 714661 to find out more.



## PULLING TOGETHER TO LIMIT TOWN FLOODS

Thanks to everyone that came out over Christmas and helped fill hundreds of sand bags and got them down to Beccles quay and other areas at risk from flooding.

Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw, Peggy McGregor and Caroline Topping were overwhelmed with the support from residents, the Town Council and local businesses.



Peggy McGregor patrols the quayside

“Rachel Betts who owns C.C. Betts & Son rose to the occasion as usual,” Elfrede said. “I felt pretty bad knocking on her door on Boxing Day to ask if she’d help with sand and straight away she dropped everything and opened her shop to find sandbags and let us use her sand which was completely depleted. A resident later popped into the shop to pay for the sand so it was a very heartwarming story.”

Peggy McGregor who is keen to help develop the town’s resilience to flooding said, ‘I was really pleased to hear that as a result of our actions East Suffolk are looking at how they can better support the community, and will be engaging with the Environment Agency to make sure that everything is being done to prepare our communities for the future.’

The whole community was pulling together in Bungay too, which was heavily flooded along Pirnhov Street and Ditchingham Dam on Christmas Eve with many homes evacuated by the fire service.

## ? LOVE YOUR GREENS?

Test your environmental knowledge with our online quiz  
Go to [www.waveney.greenparty.org.uk](http://www.waveney.greenparty.org.uk)  
for your chance to win a local produce voucher

## DONATE A LAPTOP TO HELP A CHILD

The lockdown has meant schools and parents taking on the task of home schooling children, but not every family has the laptops or tablet computers needed. Members of the Beccles community have been in touch with us to see how they can help.

Caroline Topping, Sarah Plummer and Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw are members of the Fauconberge Trust which has been supporting the Leman School by providing some new laptops and collecting laptops from the community to deliver to the school. The school is then able to clean them and make them ready for students.

The Fauconberge Trust helps children from financially disadvantaged families access education.



Sarah Plummer makes a collection

## LOCAL SUPPORT FOR HUNGRY FAMILIES

The inadequate food boxes provided to families needing free school meals and the increase of food poverty in the area has led to the community stepping in to make sure no-one goes without. Please don’t go hungry, there are many ways of accessing support if you live locally.

Beccles Parish St.Michael’s & St.Luke’s are supporting the community by offering a brilliant pop up shop on Saturday morning 9:30-11am at St Luke’s Church. Anyone can go along and fill a bag with food for £2.

Our food banks are very busy supporting a record number of people. Beccles has three food banks run by Waveney Foodbank. If you need this help a box of food will be given to you. The food banks are operating as follows:

**BECCLES**  
St Lukes (Rigbourne Hill) on Monday and Friday 2-3pm  
Hungate Church Friday 10.30-11.30am  
Baptist Church on Station Road Wednesday 10.30am.

**BUNGAY**  
The Community Centre, 50 Upper Olland St, Bungay NR35 1BH  
Tuesday 10-11am and Friday 1-2 pm.

**HALESWORTH**  
St Mary’s Church, Steeple End Wednesday 10.30 -11.30am.  
The Community Larder is open Monday, Wednesday and Saturday 10.30-11.30am in St Mary’s Church Hall.  
For more information or help telephone 07771 556 391.

In Beccles, Worlingham, North-Cove and Barnby your local Green Councillors Caroline Topping and Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw have funded children’s meals at the Town House cafe. Send the Town House Cafe a message on FB if you need this help.

• If you need emergency food email [elfrede.brambley-crawshaw@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:elfrede.brambley-crawshaw@suffolk.gov.uk)  
[caroline.topping@EastSuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.topping@EastSuffolk.gov.uk) or [graham.elliott@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:graham.elliott@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) and we will organise it for you.

If you would like to donate a laptop you can contact Tom at the Fauconberge Trust, [fauconberge.trust@gmail.com](mailto:fauconberge.trust@gmail.com).

Caroline said: “We are really proud of the Fauconberge Trust for stepping up and supporting schools and parents. The Trust has a long history of supporting children in Beccles to access education and continues to do so in these difficult times.”

The Beccles Academy school is taking laptops and anyone interested in supporting can contact them directly.

A few laptops are being collected locally to support parents who have been unable to get help. Edge Computer shop has kindly agreed to refurbish these at a reduced rate. If residents are interested in supporting this with a donation please get in touch.

Sarah Plummer, who has been involved in setting up the scheme and personally donated a laptop, said: “As a retired teacher it really worries me that some children won’t have access to their school work just because they don’t have the right equipment. The Government are providing a limited number of laptops but it is taking a long time for these to be delivered and they won’t reach everyone that needs them.”



Caroline Topping donates a laptop