

How our government works

Parliamentary government

In this Suffolk area we have 3 Parliamentary Constituencies:

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Elections/Electoral-area-maps/East-Suffolk-electoral-area-maps/01-East-Suffolk-Parliamentary-Constituencies.pdf>

Waveney Constituency - held by Peter Aldous, Conservative MP for Waveney

Suffolk Coastal Constituency - held by Therese Coffey (The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions) Conservative MP for Suffolk Coastal

Central Suffolk and Ipswich Constituency - held by Daniel Poulter Conservative MP Central Suffolk and North Ipswich

These people represent a local area (constituency) in the House of Commons for up to five years. (The Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 provides that Parliament is dissolved automatically after 5 years.). The last General Election was in 2019.

Local Government

Local government in Suffolk operates under a two tier system – county and district councils.

County Councils

Map of East Suffolk County Divisions

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Elections/Electoral-area-maps/East-Suffolk-electoral-area-maps/02-East-Suffolk-County-Divisions.pdf>

County councils cover the whole of the county and provide the majority of public services in their particular area. County councils are responsible for: education, highways, transport planning, passenger transport, social care, libraries, waste disposal and strategic planning.

District Councils

Map of East Suffolk District Wards

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Elections/Electoral-area-maps/East-Suffolk-electoral-area-maps/03-East-Suffolk-District-Wards.pdf>

Each county is divided into several districts. District councils, which may also be called borough councils or city councils if the district has borough or city status, cover a much smaller area and provide more local services. District Councils are responsible for housing, leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection, planning applications and local taxation collections.

Local councillors are elected for 4-year terms by the local community to represent its views.

As of April 2021, there will be 339 local authorities in England, of which 25 are county councils, 188/192 are district councils, and 126 are single-tier authorities. Of the latter, 33 are London boroughs and 36 are metropolitan boroughs.

Parish, Community and Town councils

For example, Halesworth, Beccles and Bungay Town Councils

These operate at a level below District and County councils. They're elected and can help on a number of local issues, like providing: allotments, public clocks, bus shelters, community centres, play areas and play equipment, grants to help local organisations, consultation on neighbourhood planning. They also have the power to issue fixed penalty fines for things like: litter, graffiti, fly posting, dog offences, Local councillors and elections