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Report – August 2018

Garden Waste Scheme Goes Hi Tech: Suffolk Coastal's successful Garden Waste Scheme will shortly go hi tech. Special ID tags - similar to the staff security badges some companies use to allow entry to buildings - will be embedded in the new, bigger green bins, before they are delivered to scheme members who have opted in for the upgrade. The hi-tech tags - radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags, to give them their official name, work in a similar way to barcodes and smart labels. A small amount of data (a unique identifier) is encoded in each tag which can be "read" by a special device that the bin lorry crews will have. We will record which bin has been delivered to which property using the unique identifier. Staff will also be going round to fit the ID tags to the smaller brown bins where people have not opted for the upgrade and want to stick with their existing bin.

The main delivery of the new larger green bins will start in October and will be carried out area by area, to households that have subscribed to the garden waste scheme and opted for the upgrade. These bins will already have had the tags fitted and an address/bar code sticker fixed to them. We will also be carrying out a phased 'retro-fit' of the tags to the brown bins, where people have joined the garden waste scheme but have not opted to have one of the new larger green bins.

Detailed rollout plans for the delivery of the new bins and retro-fitting of ID tags to brown bins will be publicised in September. So people do not have to do anything at this time We will publicise the plans on our website once they have been finalised.

Councils Call For Power Companies to Coordinate: Suffolk local authorities have used the response to Scottish Power Renewables current consultation to call for energy firms to co-ordinate their work plans better – to reduce the disruption of their project on local communities.

In a joint response, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council have highlighted the power company's plan to site a substation in Friston, despite fierce local opposition, as an example of the piecemeal approach to the planning of these projects – and how local needs are being ignored.

To read the full joint response to the consultation, see: <https://tinyurl.com/y92r3llo>

Rat Issue in Felixstowe – Update: We have reviewed our plans for taking further action on the rat problem in the Sea Road area of Felixstowe. Having looked into the issue in more detail and taken expert advice, we have been informed that poisoning the rats, by inserting gas pellets into the nests, is not a practical or safe option. The proximity of the treatment to human activity would create a health risk to people and their pets in the area.

As such, our colleagues at Suffolk Coastal Norse are implementing a series of changes in the short-term. They will be carrying out a late night sweep of the area, emptying the bins and cleaning the Promenade, between 8pm and 10pm each day – to ensure there is no food waste left in the bins, or on the Promenade, overnight to attract rats and seagulls.

Twelve extra, large lidded wheeled bins have also been placed in the area, to try to reduce the ability for seagulls and rats to access food waste in the bins in the area.

We will also be running a poster campaign in the area to actively encourage people not to discard their food waste, and to make sure they treat food waste like other litter and put it in the bins provided. These posters will emphasise the need for people to ‘Respect our Resort’ by not dropping food waste that attracts vermin. This will be supported by a social media campaign.

These measures are in addition to those we had already carried out to address this issue, including carrying out extensive work to remove much of the low level vegetation along the Sea Road Gardens (near Manning’s fish and chip outlets) which provides cover for rats to nest in.

Norse has also placed 20 bait trap boxes along the Sea Road area, which are checked regularly by our pest control officer. These pest control efforts are being increased as a result of the recent rat sightings.

We have also bolstered our street cleaning efforts, in response to the thousands of visitors who have flocked to Felixstowe during the recent hot weather. Norse employs a team of street cleansing operatives in Felixstowe, which include both pedestrian sweepers and vehicle-based cleaners.

The cleansing services are provided seven days a week, with each team patrolling an area and litter picking around the Sea Road Garden, Felixstowe Seafront Gardens and Town centre. There are continuous litter picks carried out daily along the Felixstowe sea front, with staff starting from 6am onwards, with some litter bins being emptied 2-3 times per day (as required).

We continue to monitor the situation, while we look at longer-term solutions, and are also liaising with commercial pest control experts to see if a more resilient solution can be found.

We continue to work to be responsive to these issues. Anyone wanting to report an issue with rats or litter bin collections should contact, Suffolk Coastal Norse on 01394 444000 or email: scs@ncsgrp.co.uk

Felixstowe Seafront Gardens wins prestigious award: Felixstowe Seafront Gardens have been awarded a Green Flag Award for the third year running and is officially one of the best parks in the world.

A record number of parks and green spaces in the UK will be flying the Green Flag this year, and the gardens sit among 1,883 others who have received the award.

Helen Greengrass, Felixstowe Forward Change Director, said: “This is fantastic news for the North Seafront. There is a real buzz in Felixstowe at the moment, and the gardens are the jewel in the crown of our vibrant seafront.

“We have spent a lot of time and money restoring the gardens, so they can be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike, and it is great to see it being recognised for being of the very highest quality.

“Particular congratulations should go to the Friends of Felixstowe Seafront Gardens and Suffolk Coastal Norse, whose continued hard work ensures that the gardens are maintained and looking their very best.”

The international award, now into its third decade, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities. The gardens have also received the much coveted additional Green Heritage Site Accreditation for the management of the historic features.