

Minutes of the **Annual Town meeting** held at the Woodbridge Town Football Club on **Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 7pm**

Councillors:

Present: Cllr. Nigel Phipps (Mayor of Woodbridge), Mr G E Diaper (Town Clerk) and sixty-nine parish electors.

In Attendance: MP for Suffolk Coastal – Jenny Riddell-Carpenter
Suffolk County Councillor for Woodbridge – Ruth Leach
District Councillors of Woodbridge – Ruth Leach and Stephen Molyneux.

1. Welcome

The Mayor of Woodbridge, Cllr. Nigel Phipps welcomed those in attendance to the Woodbridge Annual Town meeting.

2. Consideration and approval of minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 8th May 2025.

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 8th May 2025 were adopted as a true record.

3. To receive a report from the Town Mayor on the Civic Year 2025/26

The Town Mayor reflected briefly on his year in post, which he summarised as a fantastic, rewarding but sometimes challenging role.

Four takeaways from the year were noted:

- The success of the Council's decision to bring in house the gardening of its estate.
- His delight at the repair work to the exterior of Shire Hall being undertaken.
- The positive sale of 15 Tide Mill Way to local, arts focused Community Interest Company.
- The improved communication strategy of the Council.

The Mayor spoke to his position on Local Government Reorganisation – the local Community has set its ambition following the response to the Council's public

engagement, but with ambition must come an understanding that costs will also be forthcoming.

The Mayor gave his thanks to the many volunteers he had met in the year, his fellow Councillors, and the Officers of the Council.

The letter from the Mayor to residents as part of the agenda is appended to these minutes.

4. Public question time

The Mayor invited those people who had pre-registered to speak to address the meeting:

A parent from Kyson ward with children at both Kyson and Farlingaye Schools spoke of her experiences with speeding and anti-social driving during the local school run. She advised that many parents now drive their children to school as they are too concerned about their safety on the walk to school in the town. This is not a good outcome for those who do walk to school and it negatively affects a child's development of greater independence. A townwide 20mph limit and traffic calming is needed immediately to slow vehicles – Woodbridge should champion the safety of children, remain focused on the long-term health and safety benefits of Active Travel proposals, support safer road crossings and infrastructure to allow children to travel safely to school and to be outside. A child's safety should not be on par with driver convenience.

A parent with children at Kyson School who agreed entirely with the first speaker – the town must support at 20mph zone and Active Travel proposals. It is eccentric and reckless to allow children to walk to school in Woodbridge – her child had been struck and hospitalised by a car on Old Barrack Road which thankfully was travelling below the speed limit. Living on Ipswich Road, speeding vehicles in this area make it difficult and dangerous to access the footpaths in that area; the dangers posed by speeding vehicles in the town centre pose a huge risk to the reputation and economy of Woodbridge.

Resident of Castle Street – The ever-increasing number and speed of vehicles using Castle Street, alongside the lack of footpath provision, make using the road as a pedestrian extremely dangerous and is an accident waiting to happen. Concerns were also raised about the condition and quality of the River Deben that was simply unsafe for children.

Michael Grist – Provided background on the history of Barrett's and then some statistics about the change in shopping habits in the last twenty years – for

household item/ furnishing, the High Street share has fallen from 50% to 25%, with online increasing from 5% to 30%. These changes, alongside ever-increasing operational costs (minimum wage, pensions, business rates), have contributed to the sad closure of the store this last week. Expressed an opinion that a Town Centre manager would be useful addition to support the Thoroughfare.

Dan Cornford/ Carol Steptoe – Representatives from Transition Woodbridge spoke to the recent publication of their 'Local Food and Drink guide', which provides information on ninety producers within a twenty-mile radius of Woodbridge, as well as information about cafes, shops and restaurants who use local products.

Transition Woodbridge focus on sustainability and local resilience, and encourage people to seek out local business when shopping.

Sean McMillan – The Chair of the Sutton Hoo Ships Company spoke to the ongoing work of that organisation in reconstructing the Sutton Hoo ship. An extraordinary achievement undertaken mostly by volunteers, which attracts over 200,000 visitors per year and is of international significance. The ship is nearing completion, with the launch scheduled for late spring, 2027.

Barrie Ray – Grundisburgh Road resident – spoke to the significant increase in traffic using that road compared to nearby Hasketon Road. Pollution feels significant and the majority of traffic leaving the three schools in the area mostly use Grundisburgh Road. A suggestion that the small layby on the southside of Grundisburgh Road close to the A12 roundabout be removed to allow better access for residents. Also expressed disappointment about the proposed 'improvements' to the roundabout as part of the A12 MRNI scheme.

Ben Osbourne – Spoke to the ongoing work of the Woodbridge Twinning Group, highlighted last year by the highly successful and enjoyable visit to the town by a delegation from Doullens. Hopefully, this year will see the formal arrangement of twinning between the towns. Everyone invited to the 3rd Annual International Picnic on Kingston Field on 12 July.

5. To receive a response from the Member of Parliament for Suffolk Coastal, Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP spoke to her report (appended) – the Suffolk Coastal constituency includes sixty-nine villages and six market towns; a population of 75,000 – understanding the legislative process to help people with their local issues has been key during the start of her term. The MP spoke about four main areas of her work:

1 – Rural road safety – Her ten-minute rule bill allows for greater rights for residents to question the County Council on road safety. There does not need to be an accident or near miss for the County Council to consider something an issue – a report or concern should be sufficient. She will shortly be part of the launch of national campaign to improve road safety.

2 – ‘Boy racers’ – Jenny thanked the 200 people who responded to her survey about the increase of ASB driving – in Woodbridge, the narrow roads, lack of pavements and natural circular route around the town makes for a dangerous situation. This problem won’t get any better without intervention.

3 – Rail network – Jenny explained that Sizewell C have booked out slots/ times on the railway network which is impeding efforts to get an increased service on the East Suffolk line – Sizewell C to be held to account to provide alternative means of transport during those times. She will be publishing a report shortly based on the huge response she has received to her questionnaire.

4 – Labour rural research group – Rural areas are neglected; budgets come to rural areas last which increases rural poverty. Jenny has been part of a group of Labour backbenchers who have been lobbying for increased spending in rural areas, and a report, written by her, is has been published.

The MP also addressed the events of the day at Westminster, and stated publicly for the first time that she had put her name to a letter supporting the Prime Minister.

6. Public question time

Residents addressed the meeting on the following topics:

- The Asparagus Festival scheduled for May 23rd on the Market Hill. This event, others to follow in the summer, aims to promote the town, the Market Hill, and local producers.
- A resident of Suffolk Place raised concerns about the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Lime Kiln Quay Road with the Thoroughfare and St Johns Street, namely that the time permitted for pedestrian crossing needs to be increased as those with reduced mobility simply do not have time to cross.
- A concern was raised about the ‘rusting hulk’ moored in the River Deben at Woodbridge Boatyard – has planning permission been received for such an installation?

- A resident proposed that a Neighbourhood Plan for Woodbridge must be adopted.
- A resident of Tennyson Close spoke in agreement to earlier concerns about traffic on Grundisburgh Road, and the 'not brilliant' parking availability in Woodbridge in general. It was also requested that proper planning involving local schools and residents be undertaken as part of the plans to upgrade the Seckford Hall and Grundisburgh Road roundabouts.
- A resident of Mussidan Place advised the meeting of the poor condition of the pavements following recent work by utility companies.
- A resident bemoaned the lack of competition in the town to the Co-op, whose prices are high compared to out-of-town supermarkets.
- A representative from the River Deben Organisation spoke about their upcoming work on the mapping of historic watercourses through the town and welcomed any input from residents with knowledge of the old water courses many of which have been lost.
- A resident enquired if there is any update on the development of the Melton Hill (ex-District Council office) site.

8. To receive a response from the County Councillor for Woodbridge.

County Councillor Ruth Leach first addressed the questions raised at the meeting:

- A thank you to Jill Barrett and Michael Grist, and the staff at Barrett's for their contribution to Woodbridge.
- A thank you to all the speakers this evening – the points made are invaluable and helps to keep me fighting for the people of the town.
- Active Travel Woodbridge – Phase 1 works soon to be begin including new pedestrian crossings on Hasketon Road and Grundisburgh Road, and the trial one-way system on Bullards Lane.
- Castle Street – Cllr. Leach would like to see this road made one way, but the knock on effects yet to be considered. Double yellow lines installed on the junction with Lockwood Close have helped; new pavements would be difficult to install due to the narrowness of the road.

- River Deben water quality – continue to work with ‘Save the Deben’ and ‘Deben Climate Centre’ to champion water quality.
- Woodbridge Boatyard – the vessel was proposed as an extension of their working space; discussion ongoing with the owners.
- Tennyson Close – could propose H lines to protect driveways.
- Parking in general – Woodbridge Parking Review underway – potential for resident parking zones to be created.
- Mussidan Place – City Fibre appears to have caused the first issue; when they investigated, Open Reach had completed additional works on top so an ongoing battle to get someone to reinstate the pavement to a good condition.
- Woodbridge Neighbourhood Plan – Championing a plan for a while, but prefer a focused plan on the Conservation area.
- Lack of supermarket competition – A meeting has been called to discuss a potential site off the A12 for a new supermarket in the Parish.

Cllr. Leach also her the four priorities she is currently working on:

- 1 – Safer streets – secure funding to allow more police presence in the town.
- 2 – Provide alternative forms of recreational outlets for young people to try and reduce ASB.
- 3 – Thoroughfare issues – work to resolve the ongoing issue of cars vs cyclists vs pedestrians.
- 4 – Motorbikes with L plates – Police are now issuing s59 notices and are able to seize offending bikes.

9. To receive a response from the Suffolk County Councillor and the East Suffolk District Councillors for Woodbridge, Cllr. Ruth Leach and Cllr. Stephen Molyneux.

District Councillor Stephen Molyneux congratulated Ruth on her re-election as County Councillor Woodbridge. In turn, he was congratulated on his election as the County Councillor for Framlingham and Wickham Market.

Cllr. Molyneux also congratulated all the projects that had been presented throughout the meeting and championed the good attendance, noting this as symptomatic of an engaged community and pride for their town.

Cllr. Molyneux spoke to his full support of the 20mph zone and echoed the concerns raised by parents as his own daughter also walks to school in the town.

Cllr. Molyneux then focused on the main question that overlapped into District jurisdiction, focussing on the development of the local plan and a neighbourhood plan – he noted that neighbourhood plans are overridden by the local plan and the local plan adheres to the NPPF. Due to increased national housing targets, the local plan now no longer has a five-year land supply, meaning we have to carry out a call for sites and start a new local plan.

He noted that potential sites are all over East Suffolk, but none directly affect Woodbridge, however, ones around Woodbridge will have a potential impact on traffic through the town. He noted that the increased housing targets pose difficulties for East Suffolk Council as not meeting such targets means being placed into special measures, which means the removal of all local decision making, and the difficult task of the Planning Authority in refusing significant developments – they must be confident of winning appeals and reviews.

He also noted the conflicting demands that were observed by the gentleman in that people in the meeting were asking for quieter roads, whilst also hoping for a busier high st whereby we don't lose beloved local brands such as Barretts.

As a way of resolving the issues of managing the development of increased housing targets for East Suffolk, Cllr Molyneux pointed to the Developer's Charter, the undertaking of research into a Design Code that involved placemaking based on data and building communities and also the local plan itself for providing frameworks for getting the kinds of developments we want to see in East Suffolk.

Regarding the Melton Hill site, Rose are understood to be waiting for the right economic condition before commencing the development of that location.

Cllr Molyneux also noted that even though there were no questions around the introduction of new bins, the launch of the East Suffolk Council App was happening the day after the meeting and that people should download it for all the relevant information about the new bins and give feedback.

7. To receive a response from the Town Mayor.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting with the following comments:

- Local Government Reorganisation – the move to unitary authorities will be noticeable on this town. Woodbridge Town Council will undertake the necessary due diligence before taking on any extra liabilities for the taxpayer.
- Housing – Woodbridge Town Council are supportive of the provision of Youth Housing and are working to find a solution.
- Woodbridge Parking Review – Everyone must engage!
- Suffolk Constabulary – Promises have been forthcoming about extra community policing – sadly, no sign of this at the current time.
- NSIPS – A12 MRNI will cause major disruption in the town – Woodbridge Town Council are very worried about the plans for the Grundisburgh Road roundabout upgrade and will continue to press for improvements.

10. Closure

The meeting was closed at 8.42pm.

Councillor Nigel Phipps
Mayor of Woodbridge

8 May 2026

Dear resident

2026 – Annual Town Meeting

I look forward to meeting many of you at our annual town meeting on Tuesday 12th May.

My first year as Mayor of Woodbridge is now complete. And, with a slight feeling of trepidation, a second year may begin shortly! It is a privilege to be Mayor of a town like Woodbridge. I have had the opportunity to meet a huge number of people and get a very wide range of views and help as I try to fulfil my role both as Mayor and Chair of your Town Council. If this town is to continue to thrive it needs a strong local democracy that has ambition and the willingness to pay for that ambition.

In my year as Mayor, I have been exposed to a number of challenges including:

1. The **cost-of-living crisis** and whether we can find more local answers to this crisis and not just hope that someone else will step in.
2. **The transformation of East Suffolk** into one of the UK's main centres for the generation and transmission of electricity – with Sizewell C and the national grid projects to link wind, solar and the interconnections with continental Europe. Unfortunately, the need for a radical upgrade to our road and rail infrastructure was not given sufficient weight in the planning phases and was generally seen as an unnecessary cost. We are now paying the price as construction ramps up and the infrastructure begins to fail. We see rising mental health issues and frustration and costly delays in getting around East Suffolk. We need to continue our road & rail campaigns and insist that this is fixed.
3. **The underfunding of local government.** The economic pressures on Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council are real with the spiraling cost of adult social care and children's services coupled with the diminishing support from central government. East Suffolk is a relatively wealthy part of the UK and central government's fiscal position is tight. Are we as a community prepared to share more of the burden so as to enhance our town and support its continued development?



WOODBIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk: Mr G E Diaper

Shire Hall, Market Hill, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4LP

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4. **Active Travel Woodbridge.** How do you improve the road system in an historic town like Woodbridge so that it becomes more friendly, and safer, for pedestrians and cyclists while allowing sensible vehicle use for residents and businesses? A compromise is within reach but it is hardwork arriving at solutions that benefit the most, and inconvenience the least. The first road crossing has gone in outside St Mary's School and more should be following shortly. Recently we've had issues with reckless joyriders causing excessive danger & noise and these new traffic schemes and our greater engagement with the police should help.

In my year as Mayor, I have met many volunteers and business people who all play a big role in making the town what it is - thank you for all you do. And do keep reminding the Town Council and your Councillors where we could be doing moreor doing less. We will always need more volunteers and more people willing to create and run businesses for the Town to thrive. The recent bank closures and the devastating loss of Barretts just last week leaves some big holes in the Thoroughfare, and the Town will need to pull together going forward.

I have also benefited enormously by having in place a full set of Councillors willing to work, in a voluntary capacity, for the town. It is also pleasing to note that when a vacancy arises for health, work, family or other reasons, we have been able to co-opt excellent new Councillors. I would like to thank all for their contribution of time, expertise, insight and humour. And a reminder to you all as residents - the Town Council elections will be in May 2027. Do think about standing to help your town find ways forward in the face of the challenges I have set out above.

A thank you also to our "office" - Greg, the Town Clerk and the rest of the staff at the Shire Hall. It is currently a very small unit that faces enormous demands and I am pleased that the Council has agreed to increase the size of the team in 2026. We simply cannot have public officials running ever faster to try and keep the weakened state afloat. They need to have the capacity to deliver what we ask of them. This has included bringing our gardening team in-house with Jess, our head gardener, and Frankie, our assistant gardener. Not renewing our unsatisfactory out-sourced model for gardening is one of the decisions I am proud that this council took in 2025, and just take a look at Elmhurst Park to see some early results of an ongoing transformation

And talking of the Shire Hall - the first stage of our long-awaited repairs are almost complete, but the bigger project of internal renovation & bringing the upper floors back into public use is yet to start. We continue to work with local experts & interested groups to try and secure grant funding to fully revitalize this Grade I listed landmark of Woodbridge.

This last year, we also shook up the way we let Woodbridge know about our council projects and progress with our "Mayor's Monthly Update" videos, which I hope you've seen online, on

social media and in the Riverside cinema. The videos are produced by one of our Councillors, and scripted, directed & edited by a Woodbridge film maker – so it's a proper local enterprise! You can see all our efforts so far on our YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/@WoodbridgeTownCouncil>

Finally, I would like to send my best wishes to all of our residents, workers and visitors as we look forward to the summer. For those who need help and support, I do hope you can find it within the Community that is Woodbridge.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nigel Phipps', written in a cursive style.

Nigel Phipps

Mayor of Woodbridge.

Together we have a great opportunity to shape our future and your Town Council can play its part in this.



REPORT TO WOODBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP, Member of Parliament for Suffolk Coastal Annual Town Meeting 2026

1. Introduction

Representing Suffolk Coastal as your Member of Parliament remains a real privilege. Over the past year, I have continued to spend as much time as possible out across my large and diverse constituency - through workshops, community coffee mornings, surgeries and meetings with residents.

It has always been important to me to be visible, accessible, and rooted in the day-to-day lives of the villages and towns that I represent. Each of the conversations I've had over the past year have been invaluable in shaping my work in Westminster and in trying to bring change here in Suffolk Coastal.

I am grateful to Woodbridge Town Council for the opportunity to provide this written update. Woodbridge is a town with a strong sense of place and community, and throughout the year I have heard from residents on a range of issues including energy infrastructure projects and their coordination across Suffolk coastal, the protection of the natural environment, local infrastructure, access to services, and the importance of ensuring that rural communities continue to have a strong voice in national decision-making.

This report provides an overview of some of the work I have undertaken over the past year both in Parliament and across the constituency. If there is anything you would like to know more about, or if you need any support, please do email me at jenny.riddellcarpenter.mp@parliament.uk.

2. My Work

My work in Parliament has been shaped by the issues facing communities right across Suffolk Coastal, including Woodbridge. That has included education, healthcare, farming, transport, the environment, energy costs and access to services - all areas where decisions made in Government and Whitehall are felt very clearly in rural communities like ours.



You may be aware that in Parliament I founded and now chair the Labour Rural Research Group, which brings together more than 40 rural and semi-rural Labour MPs from across England, Scotland and Wales. Through that work, I have been pushing to make sure the realities of rural life are far better understood at the heart of Government and Whitehall, and that rural communities are no longer treated as an afterthought in national policymaking. The LRRG is focused on developing the research, evidence and policy ideas needed both to unlock the potential of rural communities and to confront the challenges they face. Our recent report, *Poverty in Rural Britain*, made clear that hardship in rural areas is too often overlooked or misunderstood, and set out the case for policies that reflect the higher costs, and reduced access to services that many rural residents face. You can read more about the Labour Rural Research Group and its work online here: <https://www.labourruralresearchgroup.com/>.

Elsewhere, this year I was pleased to secure a new SEND school in Saxmundham, after campaigning hard both locally and in Government departments to secure the necessary funding. This new school will provide 126 places for children with the most severe mental or physical needs who can't be taught in mainstream school. I think that this is one of my personal top achievements over the past 12 months and means the most to me personally.

More recently, I have been working hard to mitigate the impacts of the conflict in the Middle East. We have seen sharp rises in heating oil and LPG prices, as well as energy prices more generally. In Parliament and with Ministers, I have been leading the calls for stronger protections for households reliant on heating oil and LPG – and I have been calling for these markets to be capped. Working with rural colleagues, I am determined to see change and protections for customers that match the same standard “gas-grid” customers enjoy. I have been clear throughout that this is not just an economic issue, but a matter of fairness for rural communities.

I have been pushing Suffolk County Council to make sure that the £1.5 million that the Government has allocated to support the most vulnerable households who are reliant on oil and LPG is delivered as quickly as possible. I am also pushing for that support not to be restricted to those in receipt of benefits but made available to households that are struggling – either in work, retired or otherwise.



In March, I was delighted to host a roundtable in Suffolk Coastal with the farming Minister, Dame Angela Eagle DBE MP, and local farmers – allowing local farmers and growers to speak directly with the Minister and share the challenges (and opportunities) facing farming in east Suffolk.

Elsewhere, road safety has been a major priority in my parliamentary work this year. In November, I brought forward the Road Safety (Schools) Bill as a Ten-Minute Rule Bill to create a legal duty on councils to work proactively with schools to improve safety outside school gates. You may be aware that, in my constituency, Bucklesham School had been campaigning for 25 years to get the road that their school sits on, reduced down from 60mph to 40mph. Once I got elected, I supported their campaign and took it to Parliament, and we finally saw action this year. I have been very clear in challenging the myth that councils can only act after a serious incident occurs on our roads. There is no truth to this at all – and all councils can make roads safer without waiting for an accident to happen first.

As part of my work on rural transport, I am campaigning for major improvements to local rail services, including better early morning and late evening trains, a regular half-hourly Ipswich–Lowestoft service, and a renewed effort to reinstate the Lowestoft–London line. I have already received over 450 responses to my rail survey and will be publishing a report shortly. I have also launched a rural bus survey, which is gathering evidence about the impact of infrequent and unreliable services. I will be convening a roundtable with local bus operators to discuss these issues directly, as I continue pressing for more reliable and accessible transport across rural communities.

3. Energy Infrastructure Development

One of the other key issues I have focused on over the past year has been the coordination of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) across Suffolk Coastal. I have consistently raised concerns about the cumulative impact of these developments and the need for a more joined-up approach, rather than decisions being made in silos without proper consideration of what that means for the communities affected. I have repeatedly made the point that residents are being asked to shoulder the combined impact of multiple major energy projects, without the coordination or strategic oversight that should come with that. I have led two Westminster Hall debates on this issue, where I set out the lack of coordination along the Suffolk coast and called for a stronger national framework to move away



from what I have described as a fragmented “whack-a-mole” approach to development.

Alongside that, I have held a significant number of private meetings with developers, Ministers and officials in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to raise constituents’ concerns directly and press for better coordination, communication and accountability. I also convened a coordination meeting bringing together senior representatives from the main energy projects, to press for better alignment of delivery, less disruption for local communities, and clear accountability to local residents.

I have been clear throughout that I will continue to challenge developers and hold them to account, both individually and collectively, and I will keep using every parliamentary and ministerial route available to me to push for better coordination and to ensure that communities are properly heard and protected here in Suffolk Coastal.

As part of my wider work on energy infrastructure, I continue to raise concerns about the pressure being placed on the A12 and local road network as a result of the major energy projects being developed across Suffolk Coastal. If local communities are being asked to host these projects and face this level of disruption, they need to see clear and lasting benefits. I am working hard to hold developers to account, including by pressing for stronger mitigation and real investment in local roads and infrastructure so that these projects leave lasting benefits for residents.

4. Local Casework and Support

Over the past year, my team and I have supported thousands of residents across Suffolk Coastal with a wide range of casework, including housing, access to healthcare, SEND provision, pensions, local infrastructure, and difficulties navigating public services. As well as a significant volume of casework relating to the energy infrastructure projects and engagement with developers, where my team hold regular meetings with Sizewell C to raise constituent concerns directly.

In towns such as Woodbridge, that often means helping residents work their way through systems that can feel slow, frustrating or difficult to navigate — whether by contacting public bodies directly, following up on outstanding issues, or pressing for answers where they are needed.



In October, I was pleased to welcome the Nature Minister, Mary Creagh MP, to Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Martlesham Wilds, and used the visit to raise concerns with her in the context of national planning and policy. This included reinforcing the importance of holding energy developers to account and ensuring that major infrastructure delivery is properly coordinated and responsive to local community impacts and concerns.

5. Anti-social behaviour and “boy racers” in Woodbridge

I have recently launched a campaign to tackle anti-social behaviour linked to motorcycles, cars and other vehicles in Woodbridge. Residents have raised with me serious concerns about so-called “boy racers” speeding around the town, carrying out dangerous manoeuvres, and causing disruption late into the evening. This is not just a noise issue — many people are rightly worried that, unless action is taken, someone could be seriously hurt. I have been raising these concerns with Suffolk Police and other local partners, and have launched a survey to gather residents' experiences, identify where and when incidents are taking place, and strengthen the case for proper action.

If you have been affected by dangerous driving, excessive noise, repeated speeding, or other anti-social vehicle use in Woodbridge, please complete the survey that can be found here: <https://www.jennyforsuffolkcoastal.org/boyracers>.

6. Future priorities

Looking ahead, my focus will remain on the issues that matter most to rural communities and towns like Woodbridge.

That means continuing to press for a planning system that respects local communities and rural character; protecting Suffolk Coastal's rivers and the wider natural environment; holding water companies and regulators to account; continuing to hold energy developers to account where major infrastructure is being delivered; and lobbying Government for further legislative change to better reflect the cumulative impact of development, alongside standing up for farming and the rural economy.



Jenny Riddell-Carpenter
Member of Parliament for Suffolk Coastal
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

I will also continue to make the case in Parliament and with Government that rural and coastal communities must not be an afterthought in national policymaking. Too often, the needs and realities of towns like Woodbridge are overlooked or poorly understood, and I will keep working to ensure that rural voices are heard clearly and consistently at the heart of decision-making.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide this report. It is a privilege to represent Woodbridge and the wider Suffolk Coastal constituency in Parliament.

Takeaways from Thoroughfare engagement on Friday 8 May from 10 to 12 noon.

Councillors Phipps, Bale and Turner were based with a table to promote the annual meeting outside Boots. The two hours passed very quickly.

- 50% of those we engaged in were non-resident.

Some key takeaways

- Quite a load on road safety issues - the speed that cars come off the Grundisburgh roundabout and the behaviour of cars leaving Woodbridge and going on to the roundabout; the zebra crossing on Station road by the Anchor and the behaviour of drivers; the thoroughfare - why can't it be pedestrianised and there should be signs to stop cyclists coming the wrong way; car access for older people who cannot carry heavy loads....
- The woeful state of the Deben that is simply unsafe for children - from a family that had just moved down from further north and this problem seemed to be something they had not experienced where they came from.
- The model boat pond was great. Could we not have a shop in town that sold model boats?
- Housing costs and the impossibility, due to cost, of opening a small shop/unit.
- Misallocation of money - a priority should be to fix the river wall path. It is in a shocking state and yet money is spent on hedges and forests.
- The closure of Barretts and the number of empty shops - some pessimistic views about the direction of travel. But countered by many positive comments on Woodbridge and warnings about not changing too much.
- Quite a few people did not know where the football club was.
- For those in a wheelchair - Woodbridge presented many challenges.
- Not convinced by the benefit of a public meeting.
- A lot of positive reaction but quite a number were not free on Tuesday.