



Further details of Suffolk stage of 2019 OVO Energy Women's Tour on 10 June announced

Action will get underway in the centre of Beccles, with 96 riders from 16 teams due to take to the start at 10.30am. The finish on Ipswich Road in Stowmarket is expected between 2.30pm and 3.10pm.

Riders will tackle two SKODA Queen of the Mountains climbs and contest three intermediate Eisberg Sprints from Beccles to Stowmarket.

The first intermediate Eisberg Sprint, backed by the UK's number one alcohol-free wine, will come after 98 kilometres, or around two hours of racing, outside the entrance to RAF Honington, near Ixworth.

The day's second Eisberg Sprint comes not long after at Fornham St Martin on the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds. Riders will also contest a third Eisberg Sprint as they race through Stowmarket for the first time, before tackling a 12-kilometre finishing circuit.

The first three riders across the line at each Eisberg Sprint will earn points on a 3-2-1 basis, with the leading rider being presented the Eisberg Sprints Jersey on the podium in Stowmarket following Stage One.

Two SKODA Queen of the Mountains climbs are in the second half of the stage, with the first at Little Whelnetham after almost 125 kilometres. The second comes with just over six kilometres of racing remaining at Buxhall, giving riders the perfect opportunity for a late attack to try and steal victory in Stowmarket.

Following Stage One in Suffolk, the OVO Energy Women's Tour will feature stages in Kent, Oxfordshire and Warwickshire, before the final two days of racing in Wales. The final stage, in Carmarthenshire, finishes on the south Wales coast at Pembrey Country Park.

The race continues to form part of the prestigious UCI Women's WorldTour series, which began with the Strade Bianche one-day race in Italy on 9 March.

Council pushes forward with funding commitment to create more places for specialist education in Suffolk

Suffolk, like many other local authorities, faces a large increase in demand for placements for a variety of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Suffolk's SEND Sufficiency Plan (2018) identified that the number of children and young people with SEND will increase by 18% between 2017 and 2020. This compares to an overall growth in the school age population in Suffolk of 4%.

Working together with parents/carers, education providers, partners and children, Suffolk County Council wants to create more specialist education places in the county to give young people the best possible start in life with the right level of tailored support for their learning.

On Tuesday 23 April, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet agreed a financial investment of up to £45.6 million to support the development of a number of local specialist provisions for children and young people with SEND.

Providing more specialist education placements locally will mean that the county's children and young people with additional needs will not have to spend unnecessary time away from their family and home travelling to a specialist provision outside of Suffolk. They will also have the opportunity to strengthen their roots within their local community, so they are able to build strong local networks as they move into adulthood.

The recommendations for the investment followed the work by a cross-party Policy Development Panel (PDP) which was established to review the county's local offer and identify suitable specialist education places.

The work of the PDP involved a comprehensive analysis. They visited a variety of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities settings in and around the county, considering the views of service users and their families, partners and education providers on the best way to grow Suffolk's specialist education offer both in the short and long term to meet future demand.

A green light to move forward with the work of the PDP was given at the Cabinet's Committee meeting in January this year. Further work has now been done by the Council's Capital Strategy Group to provide an overview of the required level of investment for individual projects.

The £45.6 million investment will create over 800 new specialist education places in the county. This will include three brand new special schools and 36 specialist units attached to existing mainstream schools. A significant number of these specialist units will be opened by September 2020.

The proposal for new schools includes a provision on the former Riverwalk site in Bury St Edmunds for complex, social, emotional and mental health needs and two schools for those with complex communication and interaction needs, one in North

Suffolk and one in Ipswich. Suffolk County Council learned on 3 April that it has been successful in its bid to the Department for Education for the new school in Ipswich, which will offer up to 60 places for children and young people aged between 7 and 16 years old, who have complex communication and interaction needs, including autism.

The school will be co-educational, catering for girls and boys and will offer day facilities only. At present, it is expected that the school will open in 2022. The next step for the council to undertake is securing a sponsor for the new free school.

Greater Ipswich is an area of the county that is expected to experience a particularly large increase in demand for SEND provision. Currently there is no specialist provision to meet this need within the Greater Ipswich Area. The nearest appropriate school is in Haverhill, over an hour's travel from Ipswich – and this setting is already oversubscribed.

As well as providing up to 60 places for children and young people with Complex Communication and Interaction needs, there is an expectation that the new free school will provide a pool of professional expertise to support mainstream schools in developing their skills. This is particularly important when considering the management of any transition that a pupil may make back to a mainstream school setting.

Searching for Suffolk's environmental superstars – deadline extended!

Nominations are needed to celebrate Suffolk's green champions at this summer's 10th Creating the Greenest County awards.

The deadline for entries has been extended until Monday 20 May.

The awards are a chance to shine a light on anyone who inspires others to make Suffolk a better place for its residents and its wildlife. This could be someone in your workplace who has persuaded you to ditch single-use coffee cups for a reusable mug, or an organisation which has transformed its business operations to be carbon-neutral.

In the last three years, since the awards were last held, there has been a huge shift in attitudes and understanding about better caring for our environment.

Many individuals have taken it on themselves to lead the way in creating change, voluntary organisations have formed to help transform their local communities, and businesses are taking their environmental responsibilities even more seriously.

If you know an individual, business, community, school or voluntary organisation who should be recognised for the environmental work they do to combat climate change, or simply for improving the area where they live, put them forward for an award.

Nominations can be submitted online at <http://www.greensuffolk.org/awards/>. The awards ceremony will be held on 17 July 2019.

The Awards are sponsored by Adnams, BEE Anglia, Barnes Construction, East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board, Greater Gabbard Offshore Winds Limited, New Anglia LEP, Suffolk Waste Partnership, University of Suffolk and Vertas. The awards are in partnership with BBC Radio Suffolk, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

More than 98% of pupils receive a preferred primary school on National Offer Day

On 16 April 2019, the council reported that it had received 7,505 applications from parents indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to be educated at in Reception for this year.

Over 98.6% of children were offered a place at one of their parents' preferred schools. Some 7,037 children received offers for their first preference school and 7,403 children received an offer for one of their three preferred schools.

Gordon Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills at Suffolk County Council said:

"We have a good track record of offering places at preferred schools and this year is no exception. I am delighted that we have been able to give most parents a place for their child at one of the schools they want."

Suffolk's new school travel policy

September 2019 sees the implementation of Suffolk's new school travel policy for 5 to 16-year-old children. The new policy assesses a child's eligibility for Suffolk County Council (SCC) funded school travel to their nearest suitable school.

Children who will be starting at a new school in September 2019 will be eligible for SCC funded school travel when they live over 2 miles (under 8 years old) or 3 miles (over 8) walking distance from their nearest suitable school that would have had a place available for them.

The new policy is being phased in to protect travel arrangements for children who are already receiving SCC funded school travel under the current policy. This means a child can continue to receive SCC funded school travel to their current school as long as they continue to live at their current address.

Parents of children who are eligible for SCC funded travel must also now opt-in (apply) **by 31 May** each year so school travel can be provided in the following school year. Eligible families are now being asked to do this because research by the county council has shown that some families, although eligible to SCC funded school

travel, do not use their seat. Consequently, they are funding seats which are unused. To opt-in (apply) for SCC funded school travel visit www.suffolkonboard.com/optin

If a child is not eligible for SCC funded school travel, it's their family's responsibility to make sure they can get to and from school, accompanying them as necessary and paying for any travel costs.

For further information on Suffolk's new school travel policy visit www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel

Suffolk Domestic Abuse Champions Network needs you

The search is on for volunteers to join a network of Champions that will help spread the message of support for those experiencing domestic abuse.

The aim of the Champions is to offer a consistent response to domestic abuse across Suffolk and support which is rooted in the community.

The Suffolk Domestic Abuse Champions Network is looking for people who are passionate about domestic abuse awareness raising and who are motivated to make changes.

The Champions will be provided with free training to equip them with the skills to spread awareness and share information of where to go for support within their organisations and networks. The Suffolk Domestic Abuse Champions Network will offer Champions a variety of support, knowledge, multi-agency links as well as access to training and events.

Champions will be able to recognise the signs of abuse and will be confident in encouraging disclosures of abuse. They will respond in a professional manner, giving people the tools to stay safe and get the right support promptly.

Email dachampions@suffolk.gov.uk for more information and to register interest.