

Welcome to West Suffolk

A guide to services in West Suffolk
Forest Heath Edition



Forest Heath
District Council



Make life better
Western Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership

This guide to services in West Suffolk has been produced by, Babergh District Council, Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council and supported by the Western Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership.

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Further information

Forest Heath District Council, Main Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Opening hours: Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm, Friday 8.30a.m – 4.30pm

Telephone: 01638 719000

Alternatively you can visit: www.forest-heath.gov.uk

Each of these sections is designed to provide an introduction to the topics rather than all the information that might be needed. Where possible, contact details are given for organisations that provide specialist advice. Some of the organisations will be able to arrange for an interpreter to assist you in your own language, but most of the people you speak to first will only be able to speak English.

Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) cannot accept responsibility for the acts or omissions of any of the organisations, third parties or websites mentioned in this information pack. Inclusion of any organisation, third party or website does not signify FHDC endorsement. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained within the booklet, details may change: FHDC cannot be held responsible for any errors appearing within this document.

Section one

Employment and benefits

- Working in the UK
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- Joining a Trade Union at work
- The Gangmasters Licensing Authority
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax and Council Tax Benefit
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- Credit unions

Working in the UK

If you are a British citizen, a Swiss national or a national of a country in the European Economic Area (EEA) you do not need permission to work in the United Kingdom (see www.workingintheuk.gov.uk).

Work registration scheme: Most nationals from A8 states (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) who wish to work for more than one month for an employer in the UK need to register under the Worker Registration Scheme.

Bulgarian and Romanian nationals do not have a right to reside as a worker unless they have permission to do so under the Home Office's 'Worker Authorisation Scheme' or are exempt from that scheme.

For more information see www.workingintheuk.gov.uk. If you prefer to speak to someone more locally and in person, please contact either Job Centre Plus or the Citizens Advice Bureau

Looking for work

Job Centre Plus: is the place where you should go if you:

1. Are looking for work
2. Need advice on training, work or benefits
3. Are making an application for benefits (*Not everyone can receive state benefits; it depends on your situation*)
4. Need advice on getting a National Insurance Number – which you need to work in the UK

You can access Job Centre Plus either via their website on www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk or by contacting the national helpline Job Seeker Direct 0845 606 0234

Jobcentre Plus has offices all over the UK where staff can help. You do not have to be unemployed to access these services which are provided free of charge

Job Centre Plus can offer you a wide range of training opportunities to help you back into work. These include:

1. ESOL Training – English for speakers of other languages
2. Basic Skills Training – basic work related skills such as reading, writing or arithmetic
3. Work Based Learning for Adults – available to anyone over the age of 25
4. New Deal for Young People – available to individuals aged between 14 – 18

If you need an interpreter when you visit this can be arranged but let them know in advance of your visit.

Further information

Jobcentre Plus Centres:

Newmarket, Wellington Street, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8
0WJ

Telephone: 01638 683400

Mildenhall, Breckland House, 8, Churchyard, Mildenhall,
Suffolk, IP287 EE

Telephone: 01638 683400

Thetford, Townsend House, Guildhall St, Thetford, Norfolk,
IP24 2DT

Telephone: 01842 723000

Welfare Benefits

To claim benefits within the UK you will need to take certificate E301 – obtained from the social security office in your own country, to the local Job Centre Plus Office to make a claim.

Benefits in the UK cover unemployment, illness, invalidity, maternity and others.

Jobseekers Allowance: If you become unemployed you should register with Job Centre Plus who will help you to look for employment. To receive benefits from the date of unemployment you must register straight away.

In work benefits: If you are working you may still be eligible for benefits called tax credits which are added to your income. There are two types of credit:

1. Child Tax Credit – based on your income and can be applied for regardless of your employment status.
2. Working Tax Credit – Added to working households who are on a low income.

For further information on benefits please visit www.hmrc.gov.uk and follow the link for individuals and employees or telephone 0800 300 3900.

National Insurance Number: Is needed by everybody prior to starting work or claiming benefits and the number is unique to you.

For more information on National Insurance Numbers please visit: www.dwp.gov.uk follow the link for service and benefits.

Joining a Trade Union at work

You have the right to work in safety without harassment because of race, nationality, disability, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation or union membership. Employers must make sure you are safe at work.

A Trade Union is an organisation, set up to help workers with their rights and to improve terms and conditions of work. All unions belong to the TUC (Trades Union Congress) which is the national governing body.

Members pay subscriptions to the union on a monthly or yearly basis and in return the union can help with work issues.

Everyone is allowed to join a trade union and when you start work you should find out from other trusted workers if there is a union in your work place. If there is your work place will have a union representative and they will be able to explain to you about the union and how to join.

If there is no union in your workplace you will need to contact the TUC www.tuc.org.uk/international and follow the migration link, or telephone 0207 636 4030 or www.gmb.org.uk or telephone on 0115 960 7171 (regional office).

Trade Unions can assist you with a number of issues including: pay and the minimum wage, working hours, health and safety at work, your contract, legal advice, training and education, discrimination and redundancy.

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA) was set up to stop the exploitation of workers in the agriculture, horticulture, shellfish gathering and associated processing and packaging industries.

It is illegal to supply workers to the agriculture and food processing and packaging sectors without a GLA licence.

Safeguarding the welfare and interests of workers is central to the GLA's mission and it is determined that workers' legal rights will be upheld. The new licensing scheme will make sure those supplying labour and where they work, meet the minimum standards required by law.

A public register listing the licensed Labour Providers is available online. Workers will be able to check this to see if their current employer is allowed to provide labour.

The GLA also provides advice for workers on:

1. Rights and responsibilities
2. Where to seek advice and help

Further information

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority, PO Box 8538,
Nottingham, NG8 9AF

Telephone: 0845 602 5020

Alternatively you can visit: www.gla.gov.uk or email:
enquiries@gla.gsi.gov.uk

Housing Benefit

Housing Benefit is paid by the local district council and can help you pay your rent. If you are on a low income or in receipt of state benefits you **may** be entitled to claim Housing Benefit. This will be dependant on your individual status and needs.

How to claim: There are three ways you can claim for Housing Benefit:

1. With a claim for Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance
2. Applying straight to the district council's Benefits Department
3. With a claim for Pension Credits

How will I be paid? Your benefit claim will be assessed and, once granted, can be paid directly to your landlord or you can receive it yourself.

If you are granted council housing tax benefit you must tell the council if your income changes or some one leaves or moves into your household.

Housing Benefit may not cover all of your rent if:

1. The rent charged for the property is high
2. The accommodation is too large for your needs
3. You have a high income
4. You have large savings
5. The rent you pay includes other things such as water rates and electricity

Council Tax and Council Tax Benefit

Council Tax: Council Tax is paid by all tenants and home owners to pay towards local services for local residents. The amount you pay will depend on the size of property you rent or own. You can pay your council tax in a number of ways, please contact the district council for more information.

The amount you pay can be reduced if you live alone or if you are on a low income (see Council Tax Benefit).

It is important your council tax is paid on time. If you don't pay or pay late you may have to go to court.

Council Tax Benefit: If you are on low income or receive state benefit you may be entitled to help with your payments. Your claim will depend on your status.

Council Tax Benefit can pay up to 100% of your council tax but can be dependant on the amount you have to pay, the circumstances of you and your family and your income and savings.

Further information

Anglia Revenue Partnership, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford, IP24 1BT

Forest Heath District Council, Main Office, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Telephone: 01842 756566 or 01638 719000

A benefits Officer will be available at the Mildenhall District Council Offices: Daily 9 am – midday and 1 pm to 4pm

Alternatively you can visit: www.angliarevenues.gov.uk or www.forest-heath.gov.uk and follow the link for "benefits information" or email benefitsenquiries@angliarevenues.gov.uk

Money and banks

Keeping and sending money in the UK: You can keep your money secure in a number of places including:

1. Post Office Savings Account – to open an ordinary account you will need proof of identity and proof of address
2. High Street banks and building societies – to open an ordinary account you will need proof of identity and proof of address

It may be difficult for you to open a high street bank account or building society account as these establishments usually run credit checks on customers, which can prove difficult if you have not lived in the UK for at least three years.

The banks and building societies may offer their facilities but with limited access to credit cards or withdrawal from automatic telling machines (ATMs)

Most banks will allow you to send money overseas but you will have to pay for this service.

Alternatively you can buy postal orders from the Post Office to send money throughout the UK and some overseas countries. You need to ask at your local post office which countries will accept these.

Credit unions

Credit Unions are savings and loans organisations, they are as safe as a bank but based in the community.

It is easier to open an account with a credit union than with a bank. You will still need to provide identification but credit unions can accept a wider range of documents, and also accept a letter of referral from organisations which are helping you, or an employer. If you have a credit union account, this can help you open a bank account later.

Some credit unions are introducing debit cards so you can spend at shops or withdraw at ATMs

Fair cost loans are offered to members, usually after you have paid money in for three months or longer, but sometimes a loan may be available sooner. Credit unions offer the following advantages:

1. Safe place to put your savings, wages or benefits
2. PayPoint cards available to deposit cash, or you can pay in by standing order or payroll from your employer, or you can pay in at a local community location.
3. Your employer can pay your wages into the credit union if you don't have a bank account.
4. Fair Loans after a short qualifying period of membership
5. Free Life Insurance for ages 18 – 79
6. Rent Deposit Loans in some districts
7. Some credit unions do international money transfer
8. Get experience and skills by volunteering at your local credit union branch

Further information

Ipswich and Suffolk Credit Union Ltd (ISCU) is open to people who live in Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich, and other places in Suffolk. Call 01473 690690 to find out where the nearest branch is, or email ipscreditunion@tiscali.co.uk

Rainbow Saver Anglia Credit Union Ltd is available in Thetford, Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Norfolk. Call 01502 584854 to find out where the nearest branch is or visit www.rainbowsaver.co.uk

Section two

Housing

- Renting or buying a home
- Housing associations
- If you are homeless
- Health and safety
- Household services
- Heating your home – Warm Front

Renting a home

This section gives you a basic guide to renting and buying a house within the area and you should ask for independent advice from your local Citizen Advice Bureau.

Renting private accommodation: Information on what is available can be found in local newspapers, shop windows and estate/property agents.

Estate/property agents manage the property for landlords and they will be able to provide you with a list and cost of properties in the area – this list is free and you should not be charged for this service.

When you agree to rent a private property you will be asked to pay – one months rent (in advance) and a deposit (usually a month's rent)

The deposit will be put into a deposit protection scheme by the landlord until you move out of the property and will be returned in full if there is no damage to the property.

There is no limit to the amount that a private landlord can charge for a home, usually the monthly rental cost in the Forest Heath area is:

- One bedroom properties - £400-£525 per month
- Two bedroom properties - £475-£650 per month
- Three bedroom properties - £550-£850 per month

You will also need to pay an administration fee (approx £100), provide the agent with bank details in order to pay your monthly rent and references to ensure you are reliable and can afford to pay your rent.

Tenancy Agreement: You will normally be asked to sign a tenancy agreement when you move into a property, this is a legal contract

that explains your rights and responsibilities and those of your landlord.

Make sure you read and understand the agreement before you sign it as it will include important information such as how much rent you will pay, how long you will rent the property, how much notice you need to give and what bills you are responsible for.

Help with paying the rent in advance and damage deposit

Forest Heath District Council has introduced a scheme to help certain people to rent in the private market. The scheme is aimed at those households with a local connection who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The scheme is a Rent Deposit Guarantee and works by providing the landlord with a guarantee that the council will pay up to one months rent should there be any damage at the end of the tenancy. No money is given to the landlord at the start of the tenancy but a bond is in place to safeguard the landlord should any damages occur.

Other points to consider:

1. Make sure the property you rent is affordable – most agreements are for six months and you will be liable for the full period.
2. You may be eligible for Housing Benefit – see relevant section.
3. Eviction – you may be asked to leave the property because you have not kept your tenancy agreement. There are certain procedures that must be followed in order to evict someone. If you are asked to leave your property and you are not sure of your rights contact the Housing Advice and Options Team at Forest Heath District Council or Citizen Advice Bureau immediately.
4. As well as paying rent you will need to pay for water, gas and electricity bills, your council tax and TV licence if you have a TV.

5. You can “lodge” in a room within a family home – this is usually cheaper than renting a property but it is possible for landlords to ask you to leave with very short notice.

Further information

Forest Heath District Council, Main Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Opening hours: Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm, Friday 8.30a.m – 4.30pm

Housing Advice and Options Team: 01638 719345
Out of hours emergency number: 01284 763252

Alternatively you can visit: www.forest-heath.gov.uk and follow the link for “housing”

Buying a home

Buying a home is a very popular option in the UK but can also be very expensive so most people take out a mortgage to buy the property.

A mortgage is a type of loan usually from a bank, building society or finance company. You will have to pay back every thing within an agreed time frame (usually 25 years) plus interest.

It is possible to lose your home if you do not keep up repayments on the property. If you are planning to get a mortgage you will need independent financial advice and should contact you local Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB).

Low cost home ownership - help to join the property ladder

Rising house prices are putting the prospect of home ownership further out of reach for many people in our area. But did you know that help is at hand right on your doorstep? Keyhomes East, a specialist in affordable housing across Central and Eastern England, has helped thousands of people to find a home of their own at a price they can afford. And you could be next!

Keyhomes East is a government-appointed HomeBuy agent, responsible for marketing all low cost home ownership schemes in St Edmundsbury.

Further information

visit our Low cost home ownership page
www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/sebc/live/Shared-Ownership.cfm

Key Homes East website: www.keyhomes-east.org.uk

Phone: 0845 456 6757

Email: info@keyhomes-east.org.uk

Housing associations

Housing associations, also known as Registered Social Landlords provide affordable housing for rent and through shared ownership on a part rent part buy basis. These properties are allocated to those people with most need.

Rents are usually lower than private rental but there are some rules on who can apply for housing association accommodation. To apply you will need to join the housing register, and how quickly you get accommodation will depend on your personal circumstances.

Choice Based Lettings

Choice Based Lettings (CBL) schemes have been introduced successfully in around a third of authorities across the UK and the results of the schemes have been very positive. Although CBL does not mean more homes are let, CBL schemes are more popular with customers, tenants and staff as they are a fairer, simpler way to let homes. Under CBL Forest Heath District Council advertise properties and you express an interest in a property. The person who has had the highest need for the longest time will then be offered the property.

Home-Link is here!

Home-Link is the new Choice Based Lettings scheme for the Forest Heath District and the Cambridgeshire sub-region. It started on 22 February 2008. Under the scheme, anyone interested in housing in the Forest Heath District or any other local authority areas in the Cambridge sub-region will need to register with the scheme. There is a Home-Link website that fully explains the scheme and how you can register. There is also an on-line application form on the website.

The new scheme allows people on the housing register to express an interest in an individual home (known as making a bid). Each

fortnight we advertise homes in a variety of ways, including on the internet, in council and housing association offices and in a property magazine. We provide details of what homes are available and there is information about the property itself, for example number of bedrooms, type of heating and other facilities.

Further information

Forest Heath District Council: Main Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Opening hours: Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm, Friday 8.30a.m – 4.30pm

Housing Advice and Options Team: 01638 719345
Email: home-link@forest-heath.gov.uk

Alternatively you can visit: www.home-link.org.uk or www.forest-heath.gov.uk and follow the link for “housing”

If you are homeless

Forest Heath District Council must, by law give help and advice to certain groups of homeless people.

Am I homeless? You can become homeless if:

1. You have no where to stay at night
2. You have no legal right to stay where you are living
3. You have a home but are in fear of violence at that address
4. You can't live in the same home as the people with whom you would normally live

If you think you will become homeless it is important to seek advice from the Housing Advice and Options Team at Forest Heath District Council

It is important you provide us with the information we need to complete all enquiries and you must ensure that information given to us is accurate and that you inform us straight away of any changes to your circumstances.

Normally you will be given an appointment to discuss your situation with a housing officer, however in an emergency it may be possible to be seen straight away.

The council only has to find accommodation for certain groups who are in priority need. Not everyone is eligible for help.

Am I eligible? Some things could make you ineligible for help. We must, by law make sure applicants meet our criteria and therefore must ask you questions in relation to your immigration status.

Do I have priority need? Priority need categories are:

1. People with children
2. Pregnant women
3. People made homeless through fire, flood or emergency

4. People who are vulnerable though age, physical or mental disabilities, learning disabilities, fleeing from violence, leaving care or prison (dependant on circumstances)

If you are **NOT** in priority need the council does not have to secure housing if you become homeless, however advice and assistance will be offered to you.

Am I intentionally homeless? The council will consider if you have intentionally made yourself homeless – usually through failure to do some thing which results in you losing your home. This can include causing a nuisance to neighbours, committing criminal acts, failing to pay rent or voluntarily leaving your property.

If you are priority need but are considered intentionally homeless the council may only have a duty to temporarily accommodate you for a reasonable time (usually 28 days).

For the council to secure accommodation for you, you must be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and have a priority need

Do you have a local connection? You must have a local connection with Forest Heath for this council to secure you accommodation.

The local connection can be through one of the following:

1. You are normally or have in the past been a resident of the area or
2. Have a permanent job in the area or
3. Have close family living in the area or
4. Have special circumstances which make it necessary for you to live in the district.

What type of accommodation can I expect? This will depend on your needs and status and will be decided once you have met all criteria. Further information on the type of accommodation can be

discussed by calling the Housing Advice and Options Team at Forest Heath District Council

What if I am unhappy about the decision? If you disagree with the decision reached by the council in relation to the accommodation on offer you can apply in writing for a review, within 21 days of the date notified. Further information on the review process is available upon request

Further information

Forest Heath District Council, Main Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Opening hours: Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm, Friday 8.30a.m – 4.30pm

Housing Advice and Options Team: 01638 719345

Out of hours emergency number: 01284 763252

Alternatively you can visit: www.forest-heath.gov.uk and follow the link for “housing”

Health and safety

Landlords must make sure their tenants are safe in their home, these include the following provisions:

1. Gas Safety – homes must have a valid gas safety certificate and a copy should be given to you. Appliances should be checked annually.
2. Electrical Safety – equipment must be safe although there is no requirement to produce certificates as there is with gas.
3. Fire Safety – all furniture provided with the property should be fire resistant and show a label saying this. If your property does not have a smoke detector it is a good idea that one is bought.
4. If you share a house with people who are not part of your household then the owner must ensure that it meets minimum standards for the provision of amenities and had a means of escape in case of fire.
5. Repairs – your landlord is usually responsible for major repairs to the property however you will be responsible for maintaining the decoration and furniture inside.
6. Carbon Monoxide – carbon monoxide poisoning can kill and can be due to a faulty gas appliance. It is vital a detector is purchased and displayed within the property.

A gas leak emergency: If you smell gas at home:

- Find the main gas tap and turn it off
- Phone the gas emergency service on 0800 111 999
- Don't light any flames and put out cigarettes
- Don't switch electrical appliances or lights off or on
- Open windows and doors
- Check if the gas has been left unlit or if a pilot light has gone out

What to do about an electricity problem

- Turn off the main electricity switch

- Call the power failure hotline 0800 783 8838
- Contact your landlord or housing association

Further information

Forest Heath District Council, Main Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Opening hours: Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm, Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm

Environmental Services: 01638 719284

Alternatively you can visit: www.forest-heath.gov.uk and follow the link for “your environment” or email envhealth@forest-heath.gov.uk

Heating your home – Warm Front

Over 60's Scheme

A freephone telephone service is available for over 60's offering help and advice on how to keep your home warm. Residents can call 0800 0288 938 for information on grants and energy efficiency.

Warm Front

Government funded grants are available to homeowners and private tenants receiving certain income or disability related benefits or credits, to help them keep warm and save money on energy bills.

Warm Front grants provide a package of insulation and heating measures tailored to meet individual needs. All you have to do is call free on 0800 316 2814 (between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday or 9am and 5pm on Saturdays) to check you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to and to find out if you're eligible.

Further information

Forest Heath District Council

If you have contacted Warm Front and their recommendations exceed their grant, Forest Heath District Council may be able to cover the shortfall. Contact the Housing team on 01638 719270 or email psh@forest-heath.gov.uk for further information.

The Housing team may also be able to help with other issues such as health and safety hazards in your home. This includes cold homes. Grants are available to homeowners receiving certain income or disability related benefits or credits.

If you are concerned about paying your bills or simply need some help and advice telephone 01638 719232 or email enviroprotection@forest-heath.gov.uk

Section three

Health services

- Using healthcare in West Suffolk
- NHS Direct
- Hospitals – West Suffolk, Addenbrookes and Ipswich
- Dental care services
- Pharmacy services
- Births and deaths

Using healthcare in West Suffolk

The National Health Service (NHS) provides you with health care in the UK. Our local services are managed by NHS Suffolk. Interpretation services are provided where necessary free of charge.

It is important you access health care as soon as you think you need it. Do not wait until your need is urgent.

The NHS have places where you can go to get help from doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, usually in a small surgery, clinic or health centre. You can find out where your local surgeries are at:

- PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) 0800 389 6819
- NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
- NHS Suffolk – www.nhsuffolk.nhs.uk/
- www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx

Once you have found a surgery you are happy with you, need to register with them by completing a form with your name, address, age and medical history.

Usually your new doctor will ask to see you for a general check of your health.

You must remember that not every one is entitled to free healthcare and you should check with your doctor first.

Doctor's surgeries will offer consultations and treatments by appointment only, as well as other health related services such as:

- Antenatal and Postnatal care
- Immunizations
- Community Nursing
- Referrals to specialists
- Advice on medication and treatments
- Treatment and advice on sexually transmitted diseases

- Giving up smoking
- Support groups
- Blood and organ donation
- Specialist clinics for ongoing problems

If your doctor cannot deal with your problem they may refer you onto a specialist service for treatment. Please do not go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital unless it is an emergency.

NHS Direct

This service offers health information and advice 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Please telephone: 0845 4647:

1. If you are unable to speak English or English is not your first language an interpreter can be provided when you telephone the service (maintaining confidentiality)
2. When they answer the phone say the English word for the language you prefer and wait on the line and you will be connected to an interpreter.
3. You can also access NHS direct via website
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
4. They can also provide you with details of the local surgeries and health care providers in your area on 0845 4647

Hospitals

In most cases you will need to make contact with your doctor's surgery to make an appointment if you are unwell and need treatment. You should only go to a hospital if:

1. You have been injured in an accident. There are Accident and Emergency Departments open 24 hours a day seven days a week at the hospitals listed below. OR
2. Your doctor feels that you need to be seen at the hospital and arranges an appointment for you to go. OR
3. You are feeling very unwell and can't get to a doctors surgery

If you have a concern about your experience at any hospital and you have been unable to sort this out by speaking to staff at the hospital or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service, then you can make a formal complaint.

If you require some help in making a complaint there is an Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS). The local ICAS office is based in Cambridgeshire but covers Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.

Further information

West Suffolk Hospital, Hardwick Lane, Bury St Edmunds.
Telephone: 01284 713000

Ipswich Hospital, Heath Road, Ipswich. Telephone: 01473
712233

Addenbrookes Hospital, Hills Road, Cambridge. Telephone:
01223 245151

ICAS, Unit 26a, E-Space North, Wisbeach Road, Littleport,
Cambridgeshire, CB9 1RA
Telephone: 0845 456 1084, email: enquiriesoe@cppih.org or
visit www.pohwer.net

In an emergency always call 999

Dental care services

The NHS also provide dental care service and dentists work out of practices or surgeries. You can find a list of your local dental practices at:

- PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) 0800 389 6819 or email: pals@nhssuffolk.nhs.uk
- Suffolk Primary Care Trust – www.suffolkpct.nhs.uk
- www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx
- NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

As with doctors surgeries, once you have found a dentist you will need to register with them and provide them with your name, address, age and medical history before you can receive treatment.

Registration usually lasts for 15 months and you should see your dentist for a check up at least once every 12 months to keep your registration.

You will have to pay for dental treatment unless:

1. You are under 18 or aged 18 and in full time education
2. Pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months
3. In receipt of certain types of benefit when your treatment starts

All treatment costs are set by the government and will be the same at all NHS dentists and covers basic dental treatment to maintain oral health. Any other dental treatment such as cosmetic work is available on a private basis and prices should be discussed first.

If you are entitled to free or reduced cost treatment you will need to complete a Claim for Help with Health Costs (HC1) form and these can be found at your local hospital, job centre or dentist surgeries. If you cannot obtain a form from any of these places you can get one by calling 0845 610 1110. When you have completed this form you will be able to apply for a HC2 and HC3 certificate which will aid you when paying costs.

In an emergency you should contact your dental surgery for treatment. If they are closed most dentists will have an emergency number to contact if this is not the case please contact NHS direct on 0845 4647 for further advice (see NHS Direct section).

Pharmacy services

Pharmacists, also known as chemists are experts in medicines and how they work. When you visit your doctor or dentist and are advised to take a medicine you will be given a prescription which you take to the pharmacy in exchange for the medicine

Your doctor or dentist will be able to tell you where your local pharmacy is or a similar facility may be at the surgery. You can also find out your nearest pharmacy on line at www.nhs.uk/england/pharmacies.co.uk and follow the 'Find your local pharmacy' link.

Pharmacists can also give advice and assistance on a range of minor illnesses and specific health issues including:

- minor aches and pains
- minor injuries
- stomach upsets
- women's health
- skin problems
- allergies
- colds and flu

You will be expected to pay for your prescription unless you can prove you are entitled to free medicine. You may be entitled if you are:

- Under 16 or under 18 and in full time education
- Aged 60 and over
- Named in a NHS low income scheme
- Pregnant or a nursing mother
- Sufferer of certain long term illnesses or disabilities
- Prescribed contraception
- Hold an exemption certificate

If you think you are entitled to free medicine you need to complete a "claim for help with health costs (HC1)" form. These can be found at

your local hospital, job centre or doctors surgery. Remember you may be asked to prove your entitlement to free medicine. Once you have completed a HC1 form you will then be able to apply for an HC2 or HC3 certificate to help with the costs.

If you need to take medicine regularly please ask your doctor about Prescription Prepayment Certificate which allows you to pay a set fee for specific period of time regardless of the amount of prescriptions you need.

Births and deaths

Every birth or death that happens in the UK **MUST** be recorded even if the person is not a British citizen.

Births: A new baby must have details of their name, parents and place of birth recorded at a register office within 42 days of being born.

Deaths: Whether the person dies at home or in a hospital, a medical professional must be called to certify the death. When a person dies in the UK a doctor will issue a medical certificate with details of the cause of death. The death will need to be recorded at the Registers Office within five days.

When registering a birth or death you will need to make an appointment at the local register office.

Further information

The Register Office, St Margarets, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 1RX.

Telephone: 01284 352373

Opening hours: Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk and follow the link to 'births, deaths and marriages'

Section four

Education

- Child education
- Using Childcare
- Children's centres
- Adult Learning and Development Support
- West Suffolk College
- Youth and Connexions Service

Child education

Education in state schools is free in the UK and all children aged between five and 16 must go to school. There are also private schools, where fees are charged.

Pre School Education: Children under five do not have to go to school, however you may wish for your child to attend preschool or nursery and your local public library will have full details of these.

Education for five-16 year olds: The school your child attends will depend on their age and the type of school available in your area. The school year is divided into three terms starting in September and ending the following July.

Education is free and schools can be found by contacting Suffolk County Council.

To register your child you will need to contact the school direct and arrange a visit. Suffolk County Council is the local education authority who can help you.

Online applications are now available for when a child is either starting school for the first time at the beginning of the Autumn term, transferring from Primary to Middle or transferring from Middle to Upper. All other applications, ie mid-year, must be made by paper form.

Further information

For pre-school education contact: Suffolk Families Information Service.

Phone: 0845 60 800 33 (local call rate number)

Lines are open Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:30pm

Online: www.suffolk.gov.uk/family

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am – 6pm and Saturday 9am – 4pm

Council Offices

131 High St, Needham Market, Ipswich, IP6 8DL

School admissions: 0845 600 0981

By calling the number above you will be advised as to which appropriate office will handle your admission.

School admissions

www.suffolk.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/Schools/AdmissionsToSchools/Listing.htm

Suffolk Childcare Information Service

www.suffolk.gov.uk/childcare

Using childcare

When you are thinking about returning to work or study there are a range of childcare options:

1. Childminders for birth – eight year olds: Who look after your children at home. They can be flexible and provide one to one care for your child.
2. Day Care /Day Nursery from birth – five years: Provide day care and early education usually between 8am and 6pm.
3. Maintained nursery for under five year olds: Offering early education for children in the morning, afternoon or full day sessions. It is important to note that these nurseries are usually closed during the holidays.
4. Playgroup or Pre School group from two – five year olds: Offering morning or afternoon care and early education.
5. Out of School care five year olds onwards: Available to school age children who need a safe place to go before and after school.

The choice of childcare will depend on your individual needs and the age of your child.

The Suffolk Families Information Service offer free impartial advice about childcare, early education, children's centres and a range of services for you and your family. They offer advice about help with paying for childcare, and information about free early education for three and four year olds.

* While you are at work it is your responsibility to provide care for your child to ensure they remain safe. In the UK the law states that you must not leave your child alone "in a manner which is likely to cause suffering" the law defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.

Further information

Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road,
Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX

Early Years and Childcare Services: 0845 608 0033

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday: 8.30am – 5.30pm and
Saturday: 9am – 4pm

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk and follow
the “education and learning” link or email
childcare.planning@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Children's centres

Children's centres offer a range of services for families with children from birth to five in Suffolk, in a location that is handy for them.

You're welcome at any one of our children's centres across Suffolk. We have a fantastic variety of free drop in sessions, fun activities and helpful services.

Come along for advice or simply chat with other parents over a drink.

Most of the services are completely free. You will have to pay for any childcare you would like.

From children's health to housing benefit and breast feeding to childcare, if we don't know, we'll find out. Services will be slightly different at each children's centre. Below is an example of what may be on offer:

- child and family health services
- information for families
- free baby massage, rhyme and song and messy play sessions
- childcare and early education
- adult education classes with crèche facilities
- training and employment advice
- support for parents

The Suffolk Families Information Service offer free impartial advice about childcare, early education children's centres and a range of services for you and your family.

Further information

To find your local children's centre:

Phone: 0845 60 800 33 (local call rate number)

Lines are open Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:30pm

There is an answering service outside these hours.

Write:

Suffolk Families Information service
131 High Street
Needham Market
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP6 8DL

Email: childcare.planning@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Online: www.suffolk.gov.uk/childrenscentres

Text: 07624 801060

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk and follow the “education and learning” link.

Adult Learning and Development Service

The Adult Education department provides opportunities to gain local learning and training if you are over 16 year olds. A range of courses are usually offered throughout the district and information on all courses and cost of courses can be obtained from Adult Learning and Development Service at Suffolk County Council.

Some courses are free of charge and they are available to everyone. Adult learning courses are held day and evening across the region at venues close to communities.

The Adult Learning and Development Service offers a wide range of high quality opportunities that can help you develop new skills, gain confidence, adapt to changes in your life and in many cases achieve a recognised qualification.

Learn Direct: is an organisation which offers a wide range of computer based courses including learning English as a second language. Some areas have Learn Direct centres where computers are provided for you. For further information please contact www.learndirect.co.uk and follow the “search for a course” link or telephone 0800 101901.

Further information:

Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX.

Adult Education: 01473 264649 or 08456 066067

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am – 6pm and Saturday 9am – 4pm

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk and follow the link for “education and learning”

West Suffolk College

West Suffolk College is one of the leading providers of post-16 education and training in the region. As well as the main campus in Bury St Edmunds, the college has centres in the main market towns in West Suffolk.

The college offers full and part-time courses at all levels including Apprenticeships and Workforce Development opportunities, which include funded training to NVQ Level 2 or 3 through Train to Gain. As part of University Campus Suffolk, a range of higher education courses is available including Foundation Degrees which combine study with employment.

Young people: For students at West Suffolk College, the experience of further education is both intellectually stimulating and personally supportive. The college manages to combine a high standard of excellence in teaching and learning with a culture which values each individual. A School Link programme enables 14-16 year old upper school pupils to attend vocational courses at college on one day a week.

Adult education: There are over 1000 classes to choose from and they are on offer in more than 100 different venues. As well as leisure and learning courses, adults can benefit from e-Equals IT courses, earn Skills for Life qualifications or enrol on an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) course.

Apprenticeships: A team of Work Based Learning Advisers will help people of any age to find jobs which combine Apprenticeships and NVQ training with paid work. Apprenticeships are available across a wide range of trade and craft topics, from Carpentry, Engineering or Hairdressing to Business Administration, Accounting and Pharmacy Services.

Further information:

West Suffolk College, Out Risbygate, Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk, IP33 3RL

Telephone: 01284 716333

Alternatively you can visit: www.westsuffolk.ac.uk or
email: info@westsuffolk.ac.uk

Youth and Connexions Service

The Youth and Connexions Service work with a wide range of agencies and organisations, particularly the voluntary sector and help to provide the following:

1. youth clubs and activities for young people aged 13-19
2. drop-in centres for information, advice, guidance, support and counselling
3. support in schools (youth work and Connexions personal advisers)
4. detached youth work
5. outdoor and adventurous activities
6. a range of targeted projects
7. a website for young people at www.thesource.me.uk

Further information

For more information about the Suffolk Youth and Connexions Service and where to find your local youth centre or drop-in centre, please contact us on 0800 085 4448.

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk and follow the link for “youth services” or email enquiries@connexionssuffolk.org.uk

Section five

Community services

- Police
- Hate crime
- Domestic violence
- Victim and Witness Support
- Suffolk Fire Service
- West Suffolk Library Services
- Leisure Centres and tourist information
- Marriage, civil ceremonies and partnerships
- Services for children and adults

Suffolk Police

Suffolk Police work hard to ensure that people living, working and visiting the area are safe and secure. Suffolk Police work hard to deliver a service which meets the needs of our diverse communities in order to keep Suffolk safe.

We have a number of police stations throughout Suffolk as well as public enquiry offices and mobile units that can be accessed by any one.

Driving offences: If you wish to drive a vehicle on a road you must have the following documents:

1. A full driving licence either UK or from your home country. A driving licence from your home country may not be valid after 12 months from the time of your arrival and you should check your licence for restrictions. Full details are available on the DVLA website – www.dvla.gov.uk
2. Insurance for your vehicle which specifies that you are the driver.
3. A vehicle test certificate (MOT) for vehicles over three years old.
4. A vehicle excise licence (road tax)

You must ensure you can produce these documents at the request of the police at any time.

You must also ensure that:

1. You do not drive a vehicle if you have been drinking alcohol or using drugs.
2. All occupants of the vehicle wear seat belts or in the case of smaller children are restrained in a car seat.
3. All lights on your vehicle are in working order.

Failure to comply may result in you being taken to court, and fined or imprisoned.

Sexual offences: Any sexual touching or intercourse that takes place without the consent of the other person is against the law.

It is also against the law to have sexual intercourse with any person under the age of sixteen even with their consent.

The police take these crimes very seriously and you may be arrested and taken to court, which may result in a fine or imprisonment.

Offensive weapons: It is against the law to carry any type of weapon including a knife. It is also illegal to carry anything you intend to use as a weapon such as a bat or piece of wood in a public place.

The police will take these crimes very seriously and you may be arrested and taken to court, which may result in a fine or imprisonment.

Criminal offences: If you take part in any criminal activity, harassment or intimidation you will be dealt with through the legal system. If you are arrested your rights will be explained to you and you will be able to get legal advice in your own language.

Personal safety: The police want to ensure you are safe and secure at all times and there are things you can do to look after yourself.

1. Use well lit, busy roads and avoid shortcuts you are not familiar with.
2. If you think you are being followed or feel threatened go to a shop or any where lots of people are and ask someone to call the police.
3. You can also purchase a personal attack alarm from your local police station.

Further information

In the case of an emergency call **999** immediately and ask for the police.

Police officers operate throughout Suffolk as part of Safer Neighbourhood Teams. To contact your local team telephone 01284 774100.

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.police.uk and follow the link for “safer neighbourhood teams”

Suffolk Police will be able to provide you with an interpreter either on the phone or face to face, free, for police related matters.

Hate crime

Hate crimes are motivated by prejudice or hate. Hate crimes can happen anywhere to anyone at any time.

If you feel you have been attacked, threatened, insulted or discriminated against because of your colour, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability or you have witnessed this happening to someone else then you are a victim of a hate incident.

Harassment can take many forms such as offensive remarks, name calling, abusive or obscene phone calls, physical violence and graffiti. This type of behaviour will not be tolerated.

You should report all hate incidents, this can be done by:

1. Dial 999 for emergencies or if you wish to report a crime. For non emergencies contact your local police station
2. Report it on line at www.report-it.org.uk through the True Vision web site
3. Forest Heath District Council is a reporting centre and trained staff will be able to assist you and complete a Racial Incident Reporting Form and help you with a course of action
4. Report the incident to the Racial Harassment Helpline on 0800 138 1643 – your report can be left in a variety of languages and you can remain anonymous.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence and abuse affects people across all social, economic, geographic, racial and religious boundaries. One in four women report experiencing violence and abuse at some point in their lives, men can also experience domestic violence as can people in same sex relationships.

Domestic violence can be physical, sexual or emotional abuse and can happen repeatedly. Do not ignore this behaviour seek help. Domestic violence is a crime and is unacceptable.

Confidential support and information is available:

- Suffolk Domestic Violence and Abuse 24hr – 0800 783 5121
- National Domestic Violence 24hr helpline – 0808 2000 247
- www.breakthepattern.org.uk
- Police Victim Care Centres – Western Area – 01284 774007
- Emergency dial 999
- Bury St Edmunds Women's Refuge Centre – 01284 753085
- National Women's Aid – 0845 702 3468
- Victim Support
- Childline (free phone) – 0800 11 11
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) – 0808 800 5000
- www.there4me.com – NSPCC website for children aged 12 – 16 years

Victim and Witness support

Victim Support: Anyone can become a victim of crime and people react to crime in many ways. Although most victims don't suffer long term harm, both adults and children can be seriously affected. People who have suffered a crime may need practical information and advice or simply someone to talk to.

Victim Support Suffolk is an independent local charity which helps people cope with crime. Trained volunteers based in local branches contact people after a crime to offer free, confidential support and information. People are referred to Victim Support by the police and other organisations, or just contact them direct to ask for help

Victim Support Suffolk offers a full service to all sections of the community and is committed to ensuring that all kinds of people are welcomed and involved throughout the organisation. Victim Support also works for the rights of victims, witnesses and their families and for greater awareness of the effects of crime

Victim Support Suffolk offers:

- Someone to talk to, in confidence
- Information on police and court procedures
- Liaison with other organisations on behalf of victims
- Information on compensation and insurance
- Contact with other sources of help
- Victim Support Suffolk can arrange for volunteers to accompany people to the police station and to court

Witness Support: The Witness Service is part of Victim Support Suffolk and helps witnesses, victims, their families and friends before, during and after a hearing in court. The service is confidential and free of charge by trained volunteers who can provide emotional support and practical information about court proceedings.

Suffolk Witness Service offers:

1. Someone to talk to in confidence
2. A visit to the court centre and, where possible, a look around a courtroom before you are called as a witness
3. Information on court procedures
4. A quiet place for you to wait before and during the hearing
5. Someone to accompany you into the courtroom if you have to give evidence
6. Practical help, for example with expense forms
7. To put you in touch with people who can answer specific questions about your case (**the Witness Service cannot discuss evidence or offer legal advice**)
8. A chance to talk over the case when it has ended and to get more help and information

Further information

West Suffolk Victim Support, 90 Risbygate Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3AA. Telephone: 01284 717188

Witness Support, The Court House, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1HF. Telephone: 01284 747329

Alternatively you can visit:

www.victimsupport.org.uk/vs_england_wales/contacts/suffolk/

Suffolk Fire Service

The Suffolk Fire Service is part of the emergency services in the UK. Firefighters are available and ready to deal with emergencies 24 hours a day 365 days a year.

They respond to many different types of emergencies including:

- fires
- chemical spills
- floods
- rescues
- road accidents

The fire service does not charge for attending genuine emergencies

If you are not confident giving the information necessary in English, when the operator answers your call, say the English word for the language you require, and wait, an interpreter will speak to you in the language you need.

The fire service can also give you advice about how to keep your home and work place safe. Advice leaflets are available in a range of languages and can be found at www.firekills.gov.uk

In an emergency

- Phone 999 and tell the operator that you need the fire service.
- Give them details of the emergency such as location and type of emergency.
- Tell them as much as you can

Library Services

Public libraries provide free information to everyone. They provide national and local information via books, internet and notice boards. Suffolk Libraries operate a mobile service that visits villages throughout the area.

Libraries have lots of information about local organisations and classes and offer free use of computers and the internet.

Contact your nearest library for more information and opening hours:

- Newmarket Library – 01638 661216
- Mildenhall Library – 01638 713558
- Brandon Library – 01842 810184
- Lakenheath Library – 01842 860723
- Mobile Libraries – 01284 352553
- At home library service – 01473 211210
- Email: help@suffolklibraries.co.uk or visit www.suffolk.gov.uk and follow the link for “leisure and culture” and then click on “libraries”

To join your local library you will need official proof of your name, address and a signature.

Leisure centres and tourist information

There are a range of leisure and cultural services throughout Suffolk, including sports facilities, parks, entertainment and museums. Leisure centres are found in most towns, offering sports and gym facilities.

Tourist Information centres are also found throughout Suffolk and can offer information on facilities in the local area.

Further information

Brandon Leisure Centre, Church Road, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0JB. Telephone: 01842 813748 or email bhc@angcomleisure.com

Mildenhall Leisure Centre (The Dome), Bury Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7HT. Telephone: 01638 717737 or email dlc@angcomleisure.com

Newmarket Leisure Centre, Exning Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 0EA. Telephone: 01638 662726 or email nlc@angcomleisure.com

Mildenhall Swimming Pool, Recreation Way, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7HG. Telephone: 01638 712515 or email msp@angcomleisure.com

Studlands Park Community Centre, Brickfields Avenue, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7 RX. Telephone: 01638 662726 or email nlc@angcomleisure.com

George Lampton Playing Field, Fordham Road, Newmarket. Telephone: 01638 662726 or email nlc@angcomleisure.com

Anglia Community Leisure: www.angcomleisure.com

Further information

Tourist Information Centres:

Newmarket, Palace House, Palace Street, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 8EP. Telephone: 01638 667200 or email tic.newmarket@forest-heath.gov.uk

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm and Saturday 10am – 4pm

Brandon Country Park, Visitor Centre, Bury Road, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0SU. Telephone: 01842 814955 or email tic.newmarket@forest-heath.gov.uk

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm and Saturday 10am – 1pm

Mildenhall Bus Station, King Street, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EX. Telephone: 01638 715484 or email tic.newmarket@forest-heath.gov.uk

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday 9am – 6pm

Alternatively you can visit: www.forest-heath.gov.uk and follow the link for “leisure tourism and culture”

Marriage, Civil Ceremonies and Civil Partnerships

If you wish to marry in England you may do so either by religious or civil ceremony. In this country the term 'marriage' has a legal definition as defined in the Marriage Act 1949 which states that for a marriage to be legal it must be for one man and one woman.

Religious ceremony: The rules for marrying in a Church of England church are that usually you can only marry in your local church. Similar rules apply if you wish to marry at another place of worship. For further information contact your local place of worship.

Civil marriage ceremonies: You can marry in a civil ceremony at any Register Office or licensed Approved Premises in England. In civil marriages you do not have to marry in the area in which you live.

Civil Partnership: A Civil Partnership is a legal union between two people of the same sex, giving a same sex couple many of the same rights as a married couple.

If you would like to arrange a Civil Ceremony or Civil Partnership Ceremony please contact the number below.

Further information

The Register Office, St Margarets, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 1RX.

Telephone: 01284 352373.

Opening hours: Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk and follow the link for "births, deaths and marriages".

Services for children and adults

Services for Children: Suffolk County Council provides a range of services for children and their families. They include:

1. Support parents to look after their children
2. Support children living away from home in foster care, residential care or adoption
3. Support children with disabilities and their families
4. Support young carers who are caring for a relative, for example, parent, brother or sister

Services for Adults: Suffolk County Council can also help:

1. Older people living at home, in residential or nursing homes
2. People with mental health problems
3. People who seriously misuse drugs, alcohol or other substances
4. People with learning difficulties
5. People with physical and sensory disabilities
6. Carers who have their own needs

Suffolk County Council provides a range of service including:

1. Home care, day services, short term or respite care, rehabilitation, equipment to promote independence and adaptations to your home
2. Residential care, nursing care and housing with care

Many of these services, such as learning difficulties and mental health, are run jointly with health organisations.

Further information

Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road,
Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX

Telephone: 0845 602 3023 (during opening hours) and 01473
299669 (emergency only)

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday: 8.30am – 6pm and Saturday
9am – 4pm

Alternatively you can visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/careandhealth
or www.suffolkcarers.co.uk for information on carers

Section six

Useful contacts and advice

- Citizen Advice Bureau
- INTRAN
- META @ Keystone
- Voluntary work
- Support agencies
- Community Legal Service
- Voting
- Television licence
- Local transport
- Owning a vehicle
- Environment Agency
- Waste

Citizen Advice Bureau

The Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) is available to everyone. You can ask for information and advice on a range of subjects such as:

1. Housing
2. Work related issues
3. Debt and money problems
4. Benefits and how to claim
5. Information on other advice and organisations
6. Contacting companies and service providers on your behalf
7. Help with letter writing and form completing

They offer an impartial, confidential service which is free of charge. To book an appointment please contact your local CAB

Further information

Mildenhall CAB, Willow House, 40 St Andrews Street,
Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7HB.

Tel: 01638 712054 or email Mildenhall@brandoncab.co.uk

Brandon CAB, 11 High Street, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0AQ

Tel: 01842 811511 or email advice@brandoncab.co.uk

Newmarket CAB, Foley Gate, Wellington Street, Newmarket,
Suffolk, CB8 0HY

Tel: 01638 665999

INTRAN

INTRAN is a free and confidential service. They provide British Sign Language, interpreters, lipspeakers and foreign language interpreters in 150 languages.

If you need to use INTRAN you can do the following:

- tell the member of staff the language you speak; or
- show your INTRAN card;
- or you will be shown a card/poster where you can point to the language you speak.

Then you will need to wait while they telephone the interpreter, you then need to explain what you need to the interpreter, they will then pass the information on either by phone or arrange a face to face meeting.

Whenever you see this sign  in public reception areas, someone will be able to help in your language.

META @ Keystone

Mobile Europeans Taking Action

META Drop-in

META Drop-in is a face-to-face information and support service staffed by migrant workers to help mobile communities settle down quickly and effectively.

Support provided include:

- issues related to Consulates/Embassies;
- applying for National Insurance number;
- reading and writing letters;
- filling in forms;
- finding employment;
- enrolling in training courses;
- qualification equivalency (NARIC); and
- engaging in volunteer work

META staff provide support in the following languages: English, Portuguese, Polish, Lithuanian, Russian, Czech and Slovak.

META Hotline 0871 423 1334

Launched by META@Keystone, and delivered in partnership with Advice for Life, the META Hotline is a telephone service providing information to migrant workers in the Eastern region

Areas of information include:

- where to get help and advice in the UK
- information about rights to live and work in the UK
- welfare benefits
- housing
- public services

- driving in the UK
- specialist advice from Community Legal Service

META Hotline provide information in the following languages:
English, Portuguese, Polish, Lithuanian, Russian and Czech



Further information

META drop-in: The Limes, 32 Bridge Street, Thetford

Opening hours:

Monday – 10am to 5pm

Tuesday – closed

Wednesday – closed

Thursday – 10am to 5pm

Friday – 10am to 5pm

META Hotline: 0871 423 1334

Opening hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 8am – 12 noon and
2pm – 6pm.

Voluntary work

Volunteer work opportunities are widely available both locally and nationally.

Becoming a volunteer can involve you in your local community and it can also be a great challenge. It may help you to get new skills and gain a better job.

There are a wide range of activities to take part in from working in charity shops and day care centres to work in the community.

For more information on becoming a volunteer visit www.volunteering.org.uk and follow the link for 'local and regional' and click on "I want to volunteer".

Further information

Bury St Edmunds Volunteer Centre, 86 Whiting Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1NX

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm. Telephone: 01284 766126

Forest Heath Volunteer Centre (The Voluntary Network), The Old Courts, 147 All Saints Road, Newmarket, CB8 8HH. Telephone: 01638 608048

Norwich and Norfolk Volunteer Service (Thetford Area), Charing Cross Centre,
17-19 St John, Madder Market, Norwich NR2 1DN. Telephone: 01842 761377

Support agencies

Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE)

ISCRE provides information, advice, assistance and support to individuals, families and organisations on community and race relations. It also provides training and works very closely with Suffolk's black and minority ethnic groups in the areas of education, employment, health, housing, immigration, social care and the criminal justice system.

Social Care Services, Suffolk County Council

Social Care Services are responsible for providing support and accommodation for all asylum seekers and refugees under the age of 18, who have no adult friend or relative that can look after them. We also provide some support to families or individuals who need it due to child care problems, disability, mental health or other needs.

Eastern Region Asylum Support Team, Refugee Council

The Team will:

1. Respond immediately to the needs of newly-arrived port asylum seekers
2. Provide a service to those asylum seekers awaiting a decision on their asylum claim
3. Provide advice and assistance to those asylum seekers who receive a positive or negative decision on their asylum claim

Suffolk Refugee Support Forum

The Support Forum is an independent organisation that provides you with advice, support and guidance on issues such as local services refugees are entitled to, clothing and registering with a doctor.

Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource (SIFRE)

The Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource has members who are Bahai's, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Humanists, Jews, Muslims, Pagans and Sikhs. Books on these faiths are available at its centre. It can give you information about places of worship and try to put you in touch with people from your own faith and culture.

Suffolk ACRE - 'Get it on'

Suffolk Acre offer free training and support for Black, Minority Ethnic and Traveller community members aged between 16 and 65 who are looking for work or a better job.

Further information

ISCRE, 46a St Matthew's Street, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 3EP

Telephone: 01473 408111

Fax: 01473 400084

Email: office@iscre.org.uk

Social Care Services, Customer Service Direct, PO Box 771,
Needham Market, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 8WB

Telephone: 08456 023 023

Email: customer.first@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Suffolk Refugee Support Forum, 38 St Matthews Street,
Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 3EP

Telephone: 01473 400785

Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource, C/o Suffolk College, Rope
Walk, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 1LT

Telephone: 01473 343661

Get it on

Suffolk Acre, 2 Wharfedale Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 4JP

Telephone: 01473 242557

Community Legal Service

The Community Legal Service is a national network of organisations which give free and confidential information, advice and help with your rights, questions and legal problems.

Their service includes:

1. Help with finding a solicitor or legal adviser
2. Answering questions on your rights on employment, welfare, benefits and debt in the UK
3. Help in finding information from other sources
4. Advice on legal aid
5. Free initial advice from qualified legal advisers
6. Access to legal information leaflets
7. Recorded messages about common legal problems 24 hours a day

Further information

Community Legal Service - Telephone: 0845 345 4345

Alternatively you can visit: www.clsdirect.org.uk

Voting

The UK has democratically elected local and national and European government representatives. Councillors are elected by the community to work with their council on behalf of the community.

Only certain people are allowed to vote at the elections:

Local Elections: You must be 18 or over resident in the UK and a British, Commonwealth, Irish Republic or European Union citizen.

National Elections: You must be 18 or over, a British, Commonwealth or Irish Republican citizen and resident in the UK or registered as an overseas elector.

European Elections: You must be 18 or over, a British, Commonwealth or Irish Republic citizen and resident in the UK or registered as an overseas elector or be an EU citizen who has opted to vote here.

To be able to vote you must register your personal details with your local district council for the register of electors. **If you are eligible to vote british law says you must register all members of your family who are over 18 years old.**

Further Information

Forest Heath District Council, Main Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Opening hours: Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm, Friday 8.30a.m – 4.30pm

Election: 01638 719364 or 01638 719366

Alternatively you can visit: www.forest-heath.gov.uk and follow the link for “your council” or email elections@forest-heath.gov.uk

You can find out more about elections and who can vote at The Electoral Commission website: www.aboutmyvote.co.uk or contacting your embassy or consulate.

Television licence

If you use a television you are required by law to have a valid television licence.

The type of licence you'll need and how to go about getting one will depend upon your individual circumstances.

If you share a house with other families it is necessary for each family to have its own licence.

Further information

Telephone 0870 241 6468 or visit www.tv-l.co.uk for more information on buying and renewing your television licence or visit your local post office.

Local transport

A network of local transport operates throughout Suffolk and you can get further information from a range of sources:

Further information

Mildenhall Bus Station: Contact for times and details within the area: 01638 581091

Traveline: For public information on local and national bus, coach and rail service – 0871 200 22 33 or visit www.traveline.info

National Rail Enquiries: For information about services or ticket prices any where in the UK call 0845 74 84 950 or visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or www.thetrainline.com

Owning a vehicle

If you own or drive a vehicle in the UK you have legal obligations which must be met before you take the vehicle onto the road.

It must:

1. Be registered with Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA)
2. Have a valid vehicle license tax disc displayed
3. Be insured
4. Have a current MOT (if you car is over three years old)

To drive a car **you must:**

1. Hold an appropriate driving licence
2. Be over 17 years old
3. Meet the legal eyesight standards

You must tell DVLA if you:

1. Change your name or address
2. Make alterations to your vehicle
3. Sell your vehicle
4. Have a medical condition

For further information you can visit the DVLA website:
www.dvla.gov.uk and follow the link for vehicle information

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency looks after the environment and works towards a better place for the community.

The environment is the air you breathe, the water you drink and the ground you walk on. The agency work with businesses, government and communities to make a cleaner and healthier place.

Contacting us: National Customer Contact Centre (NCCC) provides a single point of contact for all customers. Telephone 08708 506506 between 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday.

Floodline: The information line provides 24hour flooding information and can offer practical advice on flood risk and what to do during and after a flood. Telephone 0845 988 1188 (all calls are charged at local rate)

Language Line: The Agency can provide an interpreting service from language line and can be used either face to face or on the telephone.

Incident Hotline: You can telephone free of charge on 0800 80 70 60 to report a number of incidents including:

1. damage or danger to the natural environment
2. pollution to water or land
3. poaching or illegal fishing
4. fish in distress or dead fish
5. collapsed, blocked or badly damaged rivers or canals
6. disposing of waste
7. unusual drop in riverflow

Fishing: If you are over 12 years old and fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish or eels you must have a valid fishing licence.

1. Rod licences are available from every Post Office and failure to produce a valid licence could result in prosecution and a fine of up to £2,500.

2. You must get permission from the owner of the water before you start fishing, even if you have a valid licence.
3. A rod licence does not give you the right to take fish from any water. This will depend on local byelaws. You must have permission from the owner of the water where you are fishing. Failure to gain permission may result in prosecution.

Fishing Close Seasons: Fishing is not permitted during certain months. For further details please telephone the Environment Agency on 08708 506 506 who will be able to advise on the close seasons.

Waste management

The council operates an alternate weekly collection of waste and recycling. Different areas are covered each day of the week so depending on where you live will determine which day of the week you need to place your bin out for collection.

What goes where...

Blue bin (dry recyclables)

plastic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bottles such as milk, shampoo and drinks bottles (remove lids) • all plastic food containers • (margarine tubs and yoghurt pots) • no bags, film or wrapping • no polystyrene packaging
cans and foil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aluminium drinks cans • tins (pet food and baked beans) • foil (clean food trays) • no aerosols
cardboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all cardboard (including cereal packets and food packaging) • no waxed cartons
paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newspaper and magazines • catalogues and brochures • junk mail - remove plastic covers • office-type paper and envelopes • phone directories • greetings cards, wrapping paper • no shredded paper
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no food or garden waste • no glass or textiles • no video or audio tapes, string or wire <p>Please ensure material is clean</p>	

Brown bin (compostable)

garden waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• grass cuttings• weeds• dead flowers• leaves• light shrub cuttings
green kitchen waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fruit and vegetable peelings• tea bags and coffee grounds
paper and card	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• plain brown cardboard• cardboard egg boxes• newspaper (may be used to wrap food waste)• shredded paper
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• no cooked food, meat, fish or bones• no pet waste• no plastic bags or biodegradable bags	

Black bin (landfill)

household waste which cannot be recycled as part of our scheme	If in doubt, please contact us on 01284 757320
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• no hazardous waste, garden waste or liquids	

Household Waste Recycling Centres

These sites are operated by Suffolk County Council and have facilities for recycling many items that cannot be recycled through the blue bin scheme. You can find these sites at Mildenhall off the A1065, 1 mile North of the 5 ways roundabout and Newmarket, Depot Road off Exning Road and Bury St Edmunds Rougham Hill, off A134, These centres are **only** licensed to accept household waste, **not** trade or commercial waste.

These sites offer recycling facilities for the following materials:

	green waste	wood	glass	paper	cardboard	plastics/plastic bags	textiles	metals	cans	car oil	household and car batteries	fridges/freezers	Tetra Pak/cartons	electrical goods
Newmarket	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mildenhall	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bury St Edmunds	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Local recycling sites

There is also a wide network of bring sites offering facilities for glass textile and paper recycling. These can be found at most supermarkets, community centres and village halls. To find your nearest site call 01638 719284 or go to www.recycle-more.co.uk

Bulky furniture and electrical goods: Please do not leave these items out for collection. There is a special waste collection service available for a small additional charge.

Collections must be pre-arranged and paid for in advance of collection.

Charges for the service are currently:

- bulky (internal) household items including other white goods £22.00 for five items and £3.00 for each additional item up to a maximum of ten items;
- fridge/freezer (domestic only) £20.00 per item.

To use this service telephone the Waste Management office on 01638 719284. Payments can be made over the telephone by debit or credit card or in person by cheque or cash. Residents who are in receipt of certain benefits are eligible for a 50 percent discount.

Further Information

Environmental Services: telephone 01638 719284 or email: es@forest-heath.gov.uk

Recycling centres:

Newmarket – Depot Road

Mildenhall – Brandon Road off A1065

Bury St Edmunds – Rougham Hill, off A134

**Welcome to West Suffolk
Feedback form**

Name

Address

Age

Nationality.....

Sex Male/Female

Did you find the guide to services useful? Yes No

If not, please state which areas could be improved?

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Is there anything else that you think we should have included?

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Thank you for taking time to complete our feedback form.

Please return to Community Safety Officer Forest Heath District
Council Offices: College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY