

September 2023 report for the Thredling Division from Cllr Matthew Hicks

Suffolk Trading Standards unveils its 200th No Cold Calling zone

Residents in Kessingland, near Lowestoft, have become the 200th community in the county to be part of a No Cold Calling Zone. The zone was chosen by a Trading Standards officer after a resident was fleeced of more than £8,000 by a rogue trader who called at their door. The trader offered to clean the gutters for £30, which was agreed. However, upon starting the work they then claimed there was a broken tile on the roof, crumbling roof felt, and the timber was damaged by water, and the resident ended up paying £8,150 by cheque. Despite investigations, the trader was never traced although intelligence has been shared with other Trading Standards authorities and safeguarding is now in place for the victim, with their bank and family. Doorstep cold callers can often turn out to be unscrupulous people who prey on the elderly and vulnerable in their homes, the very place where they should feel safest. No Cold Calling Zones work to deter that from happening by making it clear that residents in that zone will not deal with any trader who knocks on their door out of the blue. I applaud the hard work of the community and the organisers on coming together in this way. These zones are proven to have a deterrent effect and I am delighted that we now have 200 such schemes in place. A No Cold Calling Zone (NCCZ) is a nominated area where residents state they do not want traders to cold call at their homes. They are set up if they meet criteria such as incidents of doorstep crime or distraction burglary, are a population more susceptible to doorstep crime, and are within a defined geographic area. Residents in the nominated NCCZ area are consulted and with their agreement a NCCZ is set up and an information pack, door sticker and street signage provided. Trading Standards have set up the zones across Suffolk in partnership with residents, councillors, police, and partners. The zones have been designed to:

Reduce doorstep crime and distraction burglaries

Deter cold callers

Educate residents and empower them not to engage with cold callers

The first zone was launched in Ipswich in 2009 and there are now more than 9,700 properties in Suffolk covered by them. Anyone wishing to nominate their road should go to the No Cold Calling page on the [Suffolk County Council website](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council/councillors-and-groups/councillors/councillor-matthew-hicks).

Formal opening of £1.3 million Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service training centre

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre at Wattisham Flying Station near Stowmarket has recently undergone a £1.3 million upgrade. It now boasts a tactical firefighting facility, which uses real fire and an LPG-fired facility to simulate incidents firefighters may be faced with. The most recent addition is the modular office complex, which features additional classrooms and welfare facilities for all delegates and staff. The centre was formally declared open at the annual base families' day on Thursday August 24 by Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Jon Lacey of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, and Colonel Toby R Moore MBE, Station Commander, Wattisham Flying Station. This is an exciting new chapter for the training centre. Our new training centre provides additional classrooms and office space, supporting various aspects of fire and rescue training, such as incident command. It also provides improved welfare facilities, which was designed to bring everyone together in an atmosphere where they feel they belong. Similarly, the new training complexes allow us to give new firefighters the best training possible in a way that is realistic yet less harmful to the environment, through us not having to use as much carbon-based burning material as before. I am delighted to see this superb new facility open. The work of the fire service is vital in protecting our community and often requires them to undertake hazardous work in extremely demanding conditions. Our firefighters deserve the best possible training to prepare them for such work and this facility will offer exactly that for many years to come. The training centre is used throughout the year for a wide range of training requirements which include refresher and ongoing assessments by all staff.

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