

News

EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES

index

Weather Page 6

Announcements Page 14

UK & World Pages 32-34

Opinion & Letters Pages 35-38

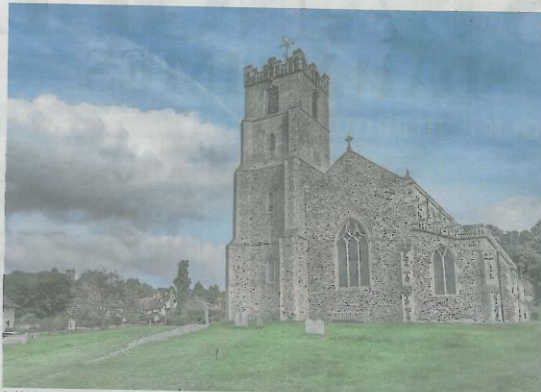
Contact us Page 37

TV 8-page pull out

Business Pages 46-47

Classifieds Pages 48-52

Sport Pages 53-64



Coddenham is one of the 'fossilised' villages, according to the CLA

Picture: BARRY PULLEN

# Warning of 'fossilised' villages across county as services disappear

Nearly 100 villages across Suffolk have been labelled as 'fossilised' by a leading countryside organisation because they have become unsustainable as services disappear.

And the number could be higher



Fiona Cairns of the Suffolk Preservation Society

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because three of the county's rural councils don't believe they have any unsustainable villages in their districts.

The figures were produced by the Country Land and Business Association (CLA), which represents landowners across the county.

It said there are 53 "fossilised" villages in Suffolk Coastal, 26 in Mid Suffolk, and 15 in Forest Heath, Babergh, St Edmundsbury, and Waveney, which all have villages in their districts, did not provide any data for the survey.

The CLA says building new homes in these villages is considered "unsustainable" due to a lack of services, such as post offices, GP or primary schools. That means new housing is

forbidden or highly restricted.

The CLA said this planning criteria is causing a shortage of affordable rural housing and that younger people are being forced to move to towns and cities.

They encouraged local authorities to update the rules to reflect how people access services in the 21st century.

Tim Brettmeyer, CLA president, said: "Updating rural planning policy means English villages will not be trapped in analogue when the rest of the world is in the digital age."

Just like of local authorities include broadband despite the range of services digital connectivity can facilitate."

The survey shows that 90 affordable homes were built in settlements of 3,000 or fewer inhabitants in Suffolk Coastal between 2012 and 2017. A total of 285 were built in Mid Suffolk and 36 were built in Forest Heath.

### Which villages are becoming 'fossilised'?

**Suffolk Coastal:** Beyton, Bromeswell, Chediston, Clopton, Cransford, Great Glemham, Craftfield, Creetingham, Falkenham, Farnham, Foxhall, Friston, Great Bealings, Hevingingham, Huntingfield, Kettleburgh, Levington, Melton Park, Newbourne, Pettistree, Playford, Saxtead, Sudbourne, Sutton, Sweffling, Tuddenham St Martin, Walpole, Boulge, Brightwell, Burgh, Capel St Andrew, Cookley, Culpho, Dallington, Debach, Gedgrave, Hemley, Hoo, Iken, Letheringham, Linstead Magna, Linstead Parva, Monewen, Ramsholt, Sibton, Sizewell, Sternfield, Stratton Hall, Swilland, Thorington, Ubbeston, and Wantisden.

**Mid Suffolk:** Bedfield, Beyton, Coddenham, Combs, Creeting St Mary, Felsham, Henley, Horham, Mellis, Menham, Metfield, Occold, Onehouse, Palgrave, Redgrave, Ringshall, Stoke Ash, Stonham Aspal, Thorndon, Tostock, Wattisfield, Wetheringsett, Wilby, Wortingham, Worlingworth, and Yaxley.

**Forest Heath:** Barton Mills, Elveden, Eriswell, Freckenham, Gazeley, Holywell Row, Icklingham, Moulton, Tuddenham St Mary, Worlington, Cavenham, Dalham, Herringwell, Higham, and Santon Downham.

Fiona Cairns, from the Suffolk Preservation Society, felt the survey only told part of the story – and that some small villages had remained essentially unchanged for many years anyway.

Some councils like Mid Suffolk and Babergh already need to increase the number of new homes that are being built – but many of these will go in a few larger villages that already have services.

Mrs Cairns said: "If you look at somewhere like Thurston where 500 homes could be built, it is on the rail line and close to the A14. It is better able to sustain growth than smaller villages in the area."

**BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS**

**£20,000 WORTH OF BOOKS UP FOR GRABS**

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The four schools that collect the most tokens as an average of total pupils will win £2,500 to spend on books. Every school that collects 1,000 tokens will receive £100 to spend on books.

**Rules and conditions:** 1. On collection of 1000 tokens every school will receive £100 to spend on books of their choice from a 'specialist list' of over 700 titles. 2. The prizes will be awarded monthly to pupil libraries unless there is a school collecting 1000 tokens in the space of 100 pupils (minimum 1000 tokens). 3. No alternative prizes. Cash can be spent on books to be added to the list on Friday, December 14, 2016. 4. Schools' prizes in final week of competition will be entered into a draw. 5. Books must be returned and stored by March 31, 2017. 6. Prizes are non-transferable and are cash alternatives as available. 7. Schools are not responsible for the prizes. 8. Only registered schools can enter and non-registered schools cannot collect their books collection.