

Rural Counties are great and Suffolk to my mind is the very best of the best

Rural counties economies are what we are about today and you will have noticed that this part of Suffolk has two main threads

A tourist honey pot with a proud history, lots of old buildings and a great Church opposite

Wonderful rural farmland, if you look on the back of my car it states "No Farmers No Food" and No I am not a farmer

Suffolk Farmers over the years have used Suffolk Punch Horses (Hosses if you care to speak Suffolk)

Garrett Traction Engines built in Leiston

Ransome's Ploughs made in Ipswich

Catchpole Sugar beet harvesters made @ Stanton

Suffolk products one and all

Farms that once employed hundreds now manage with two or three men.

The other day I saw a tractor pulling an 8 furrow plough and going at great speed across the field.

8 furrows would be 8 horses and men and then if the tractor was going three times as fast as a horse it would need 24 men and 24 horses to do the work of 1 man

Everyone has to move with the times

The County Council recently organised an Economic Summit and whilst we in Suffolk are supposed to be slow and dim witted the summit came up with 43 ideas on how to help our county through the recession

10 of these ideas were taken up and are being implemented as of now

April 29th we are holding a joint Business to Business fare with the Ipswich and Suffolk Small Business Association to try and help all Suffolk businesses, large and small, this is the 10th year of the event and the 1st that SCC have been involved, Our involvement was described as the Icing on the cake by the ISSBA c/man. ISSBA sounds like an Al Kayeda threat

The CAB and Credit Unions have both been granted extra funding to help them through the recession.

We are also having a crack down on loan sharks, often the curse of the most vulnerable in our society

As a County Council we have a team working constantly on levering in funding, not that easy since EEDA funding was cut so dramatically

We have a Leader project running with Norfolk working predominantly in the Suffolk Waveney and Norfolk Brocks area.

Leader support is about things Rural, farming forestry etc.

One downside to rural business is that markets are a long way away and Leader helps businesses to tap into those markets

Currently there are 7 leader projects running between our two counties

Not only do we have the Leader projects running we also give help to allow businesses to form partnerships, to do such things as purchase and share large seasonal machinery.

The recession may well prove to be a bit of a blessing for farming, people are more aware of the need to buy British, lets support our own for once. We all should look to see where the things that we buy originate from

Throughout history farmers have had to innovate and today is no different

Rural pubs are also on the radar for help; this may be a wicked wheeze to allow our officers to visit hostelrys. This scheme operates under the banner of the Suffolk Rural Economy Scheme and fits in with the banner the "Pub is the Hub". Grants of up to 5k are available

Our Leader Jeremy Pembroke is a keen advocate for Rural Pubs and the benefits they bring to our communities

Our very famous Adnams Brewery in Southwold is equally famous for its beer and green credentials

I mentioned Lavenham as a tourist destination, other famous Suffolk visitor attractions include Southwold and its pier, Felixstowe and its resort and Port attractions.

You would be amazed at just how many people come and watch the ships come and go

The Emma Maersk the worlds biggest container carrier made Felixstowe it's 1st port of call on her maiden voyage, You want big, just take a look at the Emma Maersk

The Port is the biggest in the country and as I live in Felixstowe it is also the best.

The port is currently undergoing a huge expansion programme which translates to faith in a recovery somewhere along the way

Felixstowe is still a community in the real sense of the word, go and buy a paper and you will see someone you know, take a walk along the prom and the same thing. This does not occur in our urban areas like Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft

We also have huge swathes of AONB and superb coast lines
Bring the family, come and visit

Our Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service are always on hand to give fire safety help to B & Bs and other businesses that may require assistance. Thus you can be assured your hotel or B & B is safe to stay in

Our chief executive works tirelessly to persuade people to choose the Suffolk Brand, via the Suffolk Tourist Partnership STP

Also the whole thrust of what we as a council buy has changed, we use Suffolk sourced goods from Suffolk firms where ever possible

We as a county Council support the Federation of Small Businesses, the Suffolk Chambers of Trade, plus we always have a large stand at the Suffolk Show to let people know what we do and who we are. Administration members are always in attendance

As a county we are working towards a low carbon economy which of course fits in with our Greenest County credentials. This is all helped by businesses working from rural areas, no travelling and a so much better place to work from

We also run a Corporate Regeneration Fund and I am delighted to report that the CRF was able to make a substantial grant to this very hall.

Lavenham has a desire to become a Transition Town which basically means it wants to be self supporting in food and power

Power.

Nuclear, we have got nuclear

Wind farms both onshore and off shore.

OrbisEnergy our flagship building in Lowestoft dedicated to renewable energy start-up firms.

EFW and residual waste fast becoming a reality, we have a suitable site and four companies very keen to do business with us

Biomass boilers and Suffolk woodchips are used by the counties schools and buildings wherever possible

Come to Suffolk and weather the recession.

Thank you