

## **News from Thurston Community College**

Proposed cuts to free school bus provision by Suffolk County Council could split the community in Pakenham. Suffolk County Council is proposing to stop providing free bus transport to Thurston Community College to residents that live nearer to another school, even though Thurston will remain the catchment school for all the children in the village. This means that some children will get free transport to Thurston Community College while friends who live a few yards away will not. We think this will be unfair and divisive.

**We hope all residents will respond to the Suffolk County Council consultation to oppose the proposed changes. Even if you do not have school-age children, this will affect your community.**

Suffolk County Council is consulting on three options:

1. Change to "nearest school only" wholesale in September 2019 (all students in all year groups would no longer qualify for free transport to Thurston Community College if they live closer to a different secondary school).
2. Change to "nearest school only" incrementally, from September 2019 (same as above, but existing students would continue to receive free transport while new students, including siblings, do not).
3. Make no changes to the school travel policy, but make savings from other Suffolk County Council budgets.

Thurston Community College will continue to oppose options 1 and 2 which we have shown will not make savings but will result in additional costs elsewhere. **Option 3 is the only way to ensure that all children in Pakenham continue to have the choice to attend Thurston Community College and its Sixth Form.**

We urge all local people to make their views known to Suffolk County Council by responding to the consultation by 28 February 2018. The questionnaire can be completed online here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5to16HtoS>

Full information about the consultation is available here:  
[www.suffolk.gov.uk/schooltravel](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/schooltravel)

If you want to know more about our campaign against the proposed changes, please visit the College website: <http://www.thurstoncollege.org/Information/Home-to-School-Transport/>