



IPSWICH TOWN DEAL

Board Member Profiles

David Ralph

David has lived in Suffolk for nearly 20 years and has been Chair of the Ipswich Vision Board since December 2022.

David brings over 20 years Executive and Non-Executive Board level experience of place making, place shaping and place marketing, with 25 years as Chief Exec of place-based delivery organisations in East Anglia, the Midlands, and the Southwest. As well as securing effective funding and delivery, David has a particular drive to secure a real and lasting increase in social mobility in all his roles.

James Davey

James is Personal Business Mentor working with the owners of small and medium sized businesses in the Suffolk/Essex area. As such he has an interest in issues impacting local business owners.

James has been a member of the management committee of the Ipswich & Suffolk Small Business Association since 2008, four years of which he was Chair. The association exists to support small business owners in Ipswich and Suffolk. It runs regular networking events and organises the annual Anglia Business Exhibition which celebrated its 25th year in 2021. The exhibition provides an opportunity for local businesses to showcase their businesses in a professional setting.

In addition to this, James is a governor of Ipswich School and has other business interests in the town and its surrounding areas. He has lived the majority of his life in Ipswich and has a keen interest in making the town a better place in which to live, work and invest.

Cllr. Paul West

Paul is a County Councillor for Bixley Division in Ipswich and Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding. He has served as a Councillor for the last eight years and lives and works in the town. Paul has been a member of the Town Deal Board since its formation.

John Dugmore

John is the Chief Executive of Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and has been involved in business development and support throughout his career. Before taking the reins at Suffolk Chamber he led the customer facing directorate of Liverpool Chamber during the city's acclaimed regeneration process.

John is a Fellow of the Institute of Marketing and Fellow of the Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs.

Suffolk Chambers places huge priority on meeting its members' needs and now sees it stand as the 7th largest Chamber in the British Chambers of Commerce network by membership numbers (the largest non-metropolitan Chamber) and benches in the top 4 for membership retention. Suffolk Chamber continues to lobby hard and successfully for the business community across the county and in Westminster and plays a lead role in issues affecting economic and business growth, from infrastructure to skills to red tape and legislation.

Jack Abbot MP

Jack Abbott has been the Labour and Co-operative Member of Parliament for Ipswich since July 2024. Jack grew up and went to school in Suffolk and came back from university to live and work in our county. Before entering Parliament, Jack worked as a teaching assistant at a local school but spent the majority of his professional career in and around the renewable energy industry. He sat as a Suffolk County Councillor for Bridge ward, Ipswich, between 2017 and 2021, and served as the Labour spokesperson for Children's Services, Education and Skills.

Patrick Spencer MP

At the General Election on the 4 July 2024, Patrick was elected as the Conservative MP for the constituency of Central Suffolk and North Ipswich. As a member of Parliament for the area covering North Ipswich, he has a seat on the Ipswich Town Deal Board.

Cllr. Neil MacDonald

Neil has been the Leader of Ipswich Borough Council since May 2023, with Portfolio Holder responsibility for Economic Development and Property. He previously served Ipswich Borough Council for 12 years, covering the Community Safety and then Housing portfolios.

He had a 35-year career in IT, starting out on video telephony, moving on to Internet projects and then Cyber Security.

Becca Jackaman

Becca joined the Board because of her work with disabled people within the local community. She led a support group (Progression Sessions) which allows people living with different disabilities to voice their experiences and make positive changes.

She was involved in a collaboration with Ipswich Borough Council to help improve the regenerated Cornhill. As a wheelchair-user, she can empathise, while also using her own experiences to offer a different perspective that will benefit the Board's project choices.

Becca is also a resident member and the Secretary for North-West Ipswich Big Local Trust. It engages with the community to find out what they think is needed in the wards of Whitton, Whitehouse and Castle Hill. She was also part of the now-disbanded Whitehouse Wanderers community group, which had a similar objective specifically for the Whitehouse area.

Andrew Cook

Andrew joined Suffolk County Council as their Executive Director of Growth, Highways and Infrastructure in 2022 and is responsible for Highways, Transport, Waste, Planning, Economy and Housing as well as being the authority's lead on Climate Change and the Environment. Before joining Suffolk County Council, Andrew held a range of Place based director and executive director roles with more than 25 years of local authority experience.

Alan Pease

Alan Pease was appointed as Principal and Chief Executive Officer of Suffolk New College in May 2023 having previously been Deputy Principal since August 2018.

Alan has worked in the FE sector since 2002. Alan, who holds a degree in Business Management with Sport Studies from Manchester Metropolitan University, was previously Assistant Principal at South Essex College, where he served in a variety of curriculum-based leadership and management roles. As part of the South East Essex College management team, Alan was involved in a successful merger with Thurrock and Basildon College in 2010 and was part of the senior management team who led the merged college to a 'Good' Ofsted rating in 2017.

At Suffolk New College, Alan is particularly passionate about providing an 'exceptional learner experience,' which is why the fit between his personal vision and the values of Suffolk New College are so strong. In his first year in the Principal and CEO role, Alan has focussed on maintaining a learner-focussed culture as an organisational priority. As part of this, the role that Civic, Community, Education and Employer stakeholders play in the learner journey has been of paramount importance to support learners acquire the right skills to facilitate their next steps. Through the innovative Industry Partner Programme, Suffolk New College now engages over 400 partners who support learners through a range of activities, both in college and in the workplace.

Jenny Higham

Professor Higham is Vice-Chancellor at the University of Suffolk, having previously been Vice-Chancellor at St George's, University of London which she joined in late 2015 as the first female leader in its 290-year history.

Professor Higham has a specialist medical background. She has previously chaired the Medical Schools Council and served as Vice-Dean for Institutional Affairs and Director of Education for the Faculty of Medicine at Imperial College London. Whilst at Imperial, she worked closely with Nanyang Technological University to create a new joint medical school in Singapore.

In addition to her Vice-Chancellor role, Professor Higham has national responsibilities in the university sector, sitting on the boards of both the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) and Universities UK (UUK). She is the UUK's Funding and Regulation Policy Lead and also a Council member for the All-Party Parliamentary University Group.

Lee Walker

Lee Walker is Chief Executive Officer at Ipswich Central, and a proven strategic leader across BIDs and the wider place agenda. With experience creating and delivering strategies and visions for place improvement, he's highly experienced in corporate governance, financial management and best practice and an effective stakeholder focused on ensuring meaningful collaboration and successful outcomes.

Ipswich Town Deal
Board Member Declarations of Interest
January 2025