

District Council Report

The big talking point locally has been the flooding caused by storm Babet. The storm which hit the county on the 20th cut off many villages across both Mid Suffolk and Babergh leaving homes, and businesses counting the cost. With another storm due this week, we need to do what we can to ensure everyone remains safe. The strength of the storms we are getting is further demonstration of the effects of our changing climate. We have always had extreme weather, but the frequency is now the problem.

Listed Building consultation

One of the lovely things about our district is the old buildings that give our area character. Unfortunately, a lot of these buildings have terrible energy performance that can leave residents freezing during the winter. While we must conserve this rich heritage, we also need to allow energy efficiency upgrades which are balanced and sensitively designed. The current system creates a barrier for homeowners to do this. Led by Green Party councillors Babergh & Mid Suffolk have opened a consultation until the 29th of Dec. It is something that we want to encourage as it would help reduce energy bills, protect buildings from climate change, cut carbon emissions and help preserve aging properties.

Housing Repairs

Babergh's new Green Councillors have discovered that there are significant issues with the state of Council housing stock across the district. The group have made this matter a priority and will be pushing the council to improve on the situation as soon as is possible. To help with this the council have released £943,000 from reserves to help clear the repair backlog. The money would also support wider improvements to the council housing service in the district.

Storm Babet: Flooding

Following the storm that caused extensive flooding across the county Babergh were able to provide emergency contact numbers and worked through the weekend and subsequent days to help people in the most need. Fortunately, a small number of our tenants were affected by flooding. Where needed, Building Services have supported with some dehumidifiers to help dry out our council properties and welfare checks were made on tenants too.

The team also collected information about any businesses affected by flooding, making sure support and advice was given where possible.

Joint Local Plan

Part one of the joint local plan has now been fully approved by the examiner and will go before both councils next week for adoption. The decision, which has been long in coming will provide the council with up-to-date policies to direct planning decisions.

Young people wellbeing

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils have introduced a new scheme to improve the wellbeing of young people in schools and connect them with their communities.

The purpose of the project is to act as an early intervention for students, addressing vulnerabilities such as low self-esteem while helping them develop important skills and forge new relationships.

This is being achieved through the implementation of a 'youth link worker' in the schools and will complement existing work that already takes place. These workers have been embedded in time for the start of the new term and will work with young people and their families to identify and access community activities that suit their interests.

They will also work to overcome any barriers that are in the way of individuals participating in the activity in which they are interested. This might involve setting up new after-school clubs, securing new equipment, improving facilities and beyond.

New Website

The council has launched a new website that it hopes will be more user friendly and easier to use for people across the district. The first step, which you can now see the results of, was to refresh all our content – ensuring our information is easy to read and up to date. Upgrading report forms is part of the next phase. Once complete, you will be able to login to your account and track any reports you make to us step by step.

Silver Sunday support

Babergh and Mid Suffolk councils are once again supporting the Silver Sunday campaign. The councils are joining forces with local groups to help tackle loneliness for older residents, by bringing generations together for free sing-alongs, games, and fun. The Silver Sunday campaign is designed to help tackle the issue of social isolation, particularly for older residents in rural communities.

Local events include the Sporting Memories group at the Kingfisher Leisure Centre, and a rock and roll themed party hosted by the Ansell Memories Café at the Ansell Centre in Hadleigh.