



Welcome to our joint newsletter. Our aim is to keep you informed about relevant council business across Babergh and Mid Suffolk and other information useful to your towns and parishes.

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We upload every issue of the newsletter to our website: if you would prefer to share the newsletter from there rather than as an email attachment, you can always find the latest edition online at:

<http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/home/town-and-parish-council-newsletter>

Or:

<http://www.babergh.gov.uk/home/town-and-parish-council-newsletter>

Across Babergh & Mid Suffolk

Councillors back vital Public Access Strategy

Councillors in Mid Suffolk and Babergh have given their backing to proposals to improve the delivery of public services from new accommodation in the county.

In a report to the Councils on Public Access Strategy, which included deciding on four options for the new co-location of the joint Councils Headquarters, Councillors in both Mid Suffolk and Babergh backed the Strategy and the move to Endeavour House in Ipswich by clear majorities.

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“There is no doubt that the world of government and the public service sector is being transformed by technology, new ways of working and a challenging financial environment.” said Leader of Babergh District Council Councillor Jennie Jenkins straight after the meeting in Hadleigh. “Councillors have agreed that standing still is not an option. Their bold decision is the next step to ensuring services are better for residents, simpler for staff and more cost effective for tax payers.”

Both Councils considered four options including locating all services to Hadleigh, all services to Needham Market, the sharing of accommodation in Endeavour House with Suffolk County Council or a new building for the councils.

“Work has been underway since 2013 on the integration programme for both councils.” said Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council Nick Gowrley after the Full Council meeting. “The decision made tonight shows that our members see a move to Endeavour House as one that puts cost, modernisation, simplicity, reliability and convenience at the heart of the future delivery of Babergh District Council services”

“The current ways the public access the Council’s services are antiquated, confusing, difficult and bureaucratic. This important vote is local councillors saying they want this to be a thing of the past.” he said.

The Public Access Strategy sets out the case for change with a focus on improving access and contact to modernised local services for residents and refining the way the Councils work.

The Strategy also sets out the five key access channels for the local community that will be radically improved following the decision which are the fundamental service of Face to Face service being improved, changes to the telephone system that will see one main phone number, charged at a local rate, channelled through a customer contact centre, the creation and promotion of a single email address for the Councils, new Online – Digital Services and the introduction of Webchat and SMS services.

“We want to ensure that we have a fully integrated workforce that while considering cost savings, has a focus on the quality of arrangements for the public, staff, Members and partner organisations.” said Leader of Babergh District Council Councillor Jennie Jenkins. “Members have said decisively that the status quo is not an option. They are not prepared to see inefficiencies and high costs block the full integration and collaboration of future services.”

Funding Support Event coming to Lavenham

Need some Funding? We’re holding another of our funding support events on Wednesday 19 October at Lavenham Village Hall.

It’s aimed at ANY voluntary community group or parish council looking for funds to carry out major projects; play areas, village or community hall improvements, capital projects for support groups. Book your place NOW! These are limited to two per organisation, contact Josephine.beever@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk.

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Our main presenter is Andrea Pittock from Suffolk Community Foundation, who'll be able to offer advice on the current funds open with the Foundation. Community Action Suffolk are also attending and there will be a number of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Communities Officers available to offer information on our grants and other activities carried out in our team. The event encompasses three workshops covering different elements around fundraising of this type. One of the most important elements of a good application is making your case for evidence of need, and Chris Knock, Babergh and Mid Suffolk's Funding Officer, will be there to offer advice to you through his workshop.

All our previous events have been well received and comments have shown that these events are also an invaluable source of networking opportunities.

Combined Legal Service created by four councils

Shared services among council partnerships in Suffolk are already well-established but four councils are now taking one step further by setting up a shared legal service.

Babergh District, Forest Heath District, Mid Suffolk District and St Edmundsbury Borough councils have similar requirements when it comes to dealing with legal issues. These include working on planning, property, commercial and contract law, land and lease agreements, prosecutions, agreements with developers, and advising on everyday legal matters. Almost every project has a legal aspect to it, whether it is technical legal advice, understanding options and mitigating risk, or ensuring that the councils always keep within the law. There will always be times when councils need specialist advice from external sources but work done by our own legal teams reduces the spend on external law firms.

Bringing the services together will mean the teams can work collaboratively, sharing both their own individual expertise and the experience gained from working with external advisers. A single team that is resourceful, resilient, innovative and proactively looking to extend its skills to support the new ways that councils need to work in the future will be able to support changing council services better than small teams.

In a joint statement the Leaders of Babergh, Forest Heath, Mid Suffolk and St Edmundsbury councils said: "We are delighted to announce that we have agreed a memorandum of understanding which will move us forward immediately to build this exciting new service.

"All four councils have ambitious strategic plans that focus on providing good, resilient and sustainable services for our local communities. We all face similar challenges around the decline in traditional Government funding and how we bridge that gap through developing new ways of working.

"A strong, skilled legal service that proactively seeks out new knowledge and different ways of working is an essential lynchpin not only for our day-to-day services but also for the income-generating projects that enable us to continue delivering the services which our communities value. This change will ensure we have a legal team that is

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large enough to be proactive, flexible and able to develop wider in-house expertise. It will be fit for a future where we know the challenges to our work with the communities we serve will increase further in the coming years.”

The new service will be based at the West Suffolk councils’ offices in Bury St Edmunds and Mildenhall, with the use of modern video and conferencing facilities reducing the need to travel for meetings.

Project Launched to Help Pupils with Career Choices

A launch event for an exciting new project which aims to help prepare and enthuse students who are thinking about their career choices was held at 2.30pm in The Mansion Room, Wherstead Park, Ipswich, on Monday 26 September 2016.

The project is called Navigator and is the result of joint working by Connect Education and Business (ConnectEB) together with both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. The aim of the project is to help young people understand the labour market and to understand their own skills and qualities that will help them to access a career, enabling them to make smart and well informed decisions about all the many different employment opportunities on offer. This will be done using a new approach to employer-led work in schools: innovatively the impact of this work will be measured from both the students, the schools and the employers perspective over the whole period. For the first time we will have data that evidences the benefit and impact of these experiences on young people and their choices.

A number of business and organisations such as EDF, Ipswich building society and Beacon East have signed up to the Navigator Project, as have 10, out of a total of 11 high schools from across both districts.

In addition to hearing a number of keynote speeches from those behind this innovative project - students, parents and teachers from all 10 schools attending the launch event will be able to speak to representatives from a range of businesses who will be showcasing the work they do and the opportunities for employment which they have on offer.

Following on from the event, activities will take place in these schools over the next 2 years. They will be delivered by these and other local and national businesses. The young people involved will benefit from guidance and feedback from people in business, the schools will be supported to help their students access these opportunities and parents will have better information that helps them to understand the value and benefit to their young person.

Cllr Simon Barrett, Babergh District Council’s Portfolio Holder for Business Growth and Increased Productivity said, “We know the transition from school to work can be a challenging time for young people and their parents which is why we want to do as much as we can to support them through this pivotal point in their lives. The Navigator Project is a fantastic new scheme that will ensure students, teachers, parents and

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potential employers all come together with the shared aim of helping to develop our future workforce.”

Cllr Gerard Brewster, Mid Suffolk District Council’s Portfolio Holder for Business Growth and Increased Productivity said, “Sustained economic prosperity relies on a vibrant business climate and to secure this we must do everything we can to build skills and opportunities for local young people, this project will help to create those opportunities both for our young people and for our employers who are keen to develop and grow their businesses”

Angela Smith, Chief Executive of Connect Education and Business said, “We are thrilled at Connect to be working with the District Councils for Mid Suffolk & Babergh to offer this new approach to supporting schools. We want to bring the best innovative activities to their pupils from a selection of local business lead activities to national projects that have not visited Suffolk schools before. We want to be able to measure the impact on pupils over a period of time and our exciting new All Together system will enable us to track progress and choices made by all the pupils involved over the next 2 years. Our new website will also bring opportunities for parents and guardians to get involved, gain knowledge and offer valuable feedback to help us shape our programme. At Connect we believe that brilliant things can happen when we work together and that is exactly what this programme is about – bringing all the advice and guidance points for a young person together to help them shape their own future.”

Business Glass Collection Service Takes Off



Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils’ new kerbside Business Glass Collection Service has begun collecting glass from businesses across the districts.

From June this year, the councils have offered businesses a service that collects waste glass for recycling rather than allowing it to join general waste that is disposed of at the Energy-from-Waste plant at Great Blakenham. New specialist collection vehicles are operating across the districts, offering the service to any business that presently disposes of a large amount of glass with its general waste.

Dedicated two-wheel bins, with 240 litre capacity, are provided to businesses to make the kerbside collection as easy and efficient as possible. This specialist service ensures that more glass is recycled and that more businesses can dispose of their waste in a green manner while keeping their costs low.

Although the service is aimed primarily at high glass use businesses in the hospitality sector, such as pubs, food serving enterprises and wedding venues, it is available to any business that disposes of large amounts of glass. The service can be purchased independently of the established Business & Trade waste collection service. Existing Business & Trade clients can add glass collection to their subscription. Businesses interested in subscribing can find details online at:

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<http://www.babergh.gov.uk/waste-services/trade-waste/trade-waste-and-recycling/>

Or:

<http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/waste-services/trade-waste/trade-waste-and-recycling/>

The service is also available for one-off events that have to dispose of a large quantity of bottles and jars.

By offering a dedicated Business Glass Collection Service the councils aim to reduce waste costs for local businesses. It will help their economic growth and profitability while also increasing recycling across the districts.

Cllr David Burn, Mid Suffolk District Council's Portfolio Holder for Environment, said: "Glass recycling is important but we understand that some businesses don't have easy access to suitable facilities. This new service provides businesses with the opportunity of ensuring their glass is disposed of responsibly and at the same time enables them to play an important part in helping to protect the environment."

This new service is a service available only to businesses. Residents can dispose of household glass at any of the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) or bottle banks across the districts. Find your nearest HWRC on the Recycle Now website:

www.recyclenow.com/local-recycling

Mid Suffolk District

Chairman Presents Charity Donation

Cllr Elizabeth Gibson-Harries, Chairman of Mid Suffolk District Council presented a cheque for £1,195 to Home-Start Mid Suffolk at their Annual General Meeting which was held at Morton Hall Community Centre, Bury St Edmunds on Monday 26 September 2016.

Home-Start Mid Suffolk is one of Cllr Gibson-Harries chosen charities and the money has been raised through various fundraising activities since May this year, including a charity auction which took place at the Mid Suffolk Light Railway in July.

Cllr Gibson-Harries, Chairman of Mid Suffolk District Council said, "I am delighted to be able to help Home-Start in this way - they are an incredible local charity who do vital work to support parents and young families in this area. I am deeply grateful to the generosity of others who have supported my fundraising activities so far and I know this money will make a real difference to those that rely on this service."

Carol Read, Chair of Trustees for Home-Start Mid Suffolk said, 'Home-Start Mid Suffolk have been supporting parents and their families for 33 years now and through the support of the Big Lottery fund Reaching Communities have also been able to expand their work into West Suffolk helping to build better brighter futures for children.'

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“Home-Start helps families to achieve their goals by providing the support of a trained volunteer, enabling the parent to become happier, healthier and to gain more confidence. We are very grateful for the donation from Elizabeth Gibson-Harries’ fundraising that will help us to work with families and will bring the Home-Start service to the attention of others.”

SnOasis Application Update

You will all be aware of the long running Planning Application for a ski centre and mixed-use sports/holiday resort at Great Blakenham, in Mid Suffolk: the project we all know as SnOasis.

This is a very long running application, having first been submitted to the Mid Suffolk District Council in 2004 and finally being granted outline planning permission by the Secretary of State in 2008. Despite the long silence on this development, the application has remained live ever since, waiting for the applicant, Onslow Suffolk Ltd, to address the ‘Reserved Matters’ (i.e. those more detailed matters related to the outline application that were reserved for determination at a later date. It is the principle of development that has been approved at present).

Back in 2011, Mid Suffolk District Council’s Committee extended the life of the outline planning permission, thereby prolonging the deadline for Onslow Suffolk Ltd to address the Reserved Matters by 31 October 2016. With this date fast approaching Mid Suffolk has now been informed that the applicant fully intends to submit their Reserved Matters and work is ongoing by them to meet that deadline.

It’s important to be clear that this is not part of any new planning application or any revised proposal: this is a normal continuation of the planning process started back in 2004 and is within the normal rights of an applicant to meet the requirements of the extant outline planning permission. As the Local Planning Authority Mid Suffolk will be dealing with this in a neutral manner and in accordance with planning law. There is considerable public interest in this scheme and we want to make sure we keep everyone involved updated.

Mid Suffolk District Council have already contacted Parishes in the immediate area of the proposed development, and will be keeping them up to date on what is happening and what their and Mid Suffolk’s role is in the process. There will also be regular updates to all Towns and Parishes in this newsletter. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Council buys Middle School site for Redevelopment

Mid Suffolk District Council has bought the redundant Middle School and community buildings in School Street, Needham Market, from Suffolk County Council and will now be looking at plans to redevelop the site.

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The Middle School closed in July 2015, following the outcome of the Schools Organisation Review which standardised schooling across Suffolk from 3 to 2 tier.

The purchase of this site also includes community buildings which are home to a library run by Suffolk Libraries and an internet café run by members of the local community. Mid Suffolk will now work closely with these groups on continuing to provide much valued local facilities.

Proposals for a housing scheme are being drawn up and these will be subject to a public consultation through the usual planning processes.

Cllr Nick Gowrley, Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council and Portfolio Holder for Assets and Investment said, "Earlier this year we unveiled our Joint Strategic Plan in which we outlined our vision for investing in our communities by bringing redundant sites back into use - and the acquisition of the Middle School and land is an important first step as we start to see that vision taking shape. Work on redeveloping this area will now gather momentum over the coming months as we press ahead with plans for the provision of new homes and community facilities and we look forward to sharing these early next year and working with key stakeholders to bring these to fruition."

Cllr Richard Smith, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Finance and Property said: "This is great news and my thanks to all the officers involved. Part of our aspirations for the site were to provide a new library and facilities for the community as well as provision of new homes. Mid Suffolk were able to provide a whole site solution delivering these aims. The playing fields have been retained by Suffolk County Council for community use. I look forward to hearing about the development of Mid Suffolk District Council's plans for this fantastic site."

Babergh District

District's First Neighbourhood Plans Adopted

Babergh District Council has agreed to make (adopt) both the Lavenham and the East Bergholt Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) at the District Council's meeting on 20 September 2016.

With the adoption of these plans, both of which set out a vision for how each village will developed in the future, Lavenham and East Bergholt become the first parishes in either Babergh or Mid Suffolk Districts to have an adopted NDP.

Work on the Lavenham NDP started in 2013 when the Parish Council submitted an application to define the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area. After passing through several preparation stages, the plan underwent an independent examination earlier this year and then a Neighbourhood Referendum on 8 September. Over 90% of those who cast a ballot voted in favour of the district council using the Neighbourhood Plan to help in determining future planning applications in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

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Work on the East Bergholt NDP started in January 2014 and, following a similar preparation process, it also went to a Referendum on 8 September. Just under 95% of voters supported the recommendation that the district council use the Plan to help determine future planning applications.

Simon Barrett, Portfolio Holder for Business Growth and Increased Productivity at Babergh District Council said: “Both Lavenham and East Bergholt have put in a huge amount of work in and it’s great to see how enthusiastic and engaged each Parish Council and their communities have become in this process. They are the first Parishes in our District to have adopted Neighbourhood Plans and I hope their success will inspire others to get involved in shaping and growing their communities.”

First Brick Laid as Council Builds New Homes

A brick-laying ceremony took place at 2pm on Tuesday 13 September 2016, in Meadow Close, Lavenham to mark the start of 12 new flats being built by Babergh District Council. This is part of a joint project by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council to build 65 new homes – 27 in Babergh across two sites and 38 in Mid Suffolk across six sites.



The Leader of Babergh District Council, Cllr Jennie Jenkins and Babergh’s Portfolio Holder for Housing Delivery, Cllr Alan Ferguson, together with David Mittel from Brooks and Wood – East Anglian based design and build firm, joined the Chairman, Cllr Peter Burgoyne as he laid the first brick to mark the start of this project.

Twelve one-bedroom flats will be built on the site to meet a clearly identified need for smaller rented affordable homes. They will be let through the Council’s Choice Based Lettings System on an Affordable Rent Tenancy and people over 50 years of age will be prioritised, again in recognition of the locally identified need.

The Lavenham project is part of a wider initiative announced last year to build 27 new homes in Babergh and 38 new homes in Mid Suffolk – the first new council homes in either district for

30 years. The scheme is being delivered with development partner, Havebury Housing Partnership. The homes are being constructed by Brooks and Wood, a building and Civil Engineering Company from East Anglia, and are due for completion in January 2017.

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Cllr Peter Burgoyne, Chairman of Babergh District Council said, “I am delighted that work is now underway to build our first new council homes in nearly 30 years. These will be high quality, modern and energy efficient properties to meet the needs of those on our housing register who are unable to afford to rent in this area on the open market. This project is a great step forward in our plans to provide more housing in our rural areas and it’s something we can all be proud of.”

Cllr Alan Ferguson, Babergh District Council’s Portfolio Holder for Housing Delivery said, “We know that places like Lavenham cannot grow and prosper if people can’t afford to live there, which is why projects such as this are so important. It means that we are able to ensure that providing homes for local people with a real housing need can now become a reality. “

Stuart Boardley, Director for Brooks and Wood, said “Brooks and Wood are delighted to be working alongside Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to address the affordable housing shortage in the area. The design of the dwellings is a very attractive concept and we are sure that once these have been built, this will be a development that we can all be very proud of for many years to come”

School Caterers Receive Top Healthy Eating Award

Chartwells Independent, the contract caterers for the Royal Hospital School in Holbrook have been presented with a prestigious award in recognition of the wide variety of healthier food choices it offers to pupils and staff.

The award was presented at 3pm on Tuesday 13 September, in the dining hall which was recently renovated along with the kitchens and supporting catering facilities.

Chartwells Independent is the latest Suffolk business to receive a gold Eat Out, Eat Well accolade from Babergh District Council for the food available to the 750 pupils and 350 members of staff at the co-educational boarding and day school for 11 to 18 year olds.

It comes after environmental health officers visited on the 3 August 2016 to carry out rigorous assessments looking in detail at the choices people are offered, ways in which food is cooked and how healthier options are promoted.

Cllr Frank Lawrenson, Babergh District Council’s Portfolio Holder for Environment, said “It was a real pleasure to present Royal Hospital School with a Gold ‘Eat Out, Eat Well’ award as schools are the perfect place to make sure children are eating freshly produced and nutritious food on a daily basis – particularly as we now know that diet can directly affect a student’s academic performance. Very well



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done to all those involved, this is a tremendous achievement and will hopefully ensure these children go on to make healthier and more informed choices in later life.”

The Eat Out Eat Well scheme was launched in January 2016 by local environmental health teams and Suffolk County Council’s public health team. The award is free of charge and open to over 5,000 food businesses across Suffolk. It rewards businesses for their commitment to providing healthier food options for their customers, helping people to make healthier choices.

Debbie Bellamy, Catering and Hospitality Manager, and Matt Wilby, Head Chef, said ‘We are immensely proud to receive this award which further enforces our 27 year commitment to the Royal Hospital School supporting young people and the wider school community to make healthier food choices’.

Peter Church, Director of Finance and Operations at the Royal Hospital School, added “We are delighted this Gold Award has recognised the value we place on providing wholesome food of the very highest standard for our pupils and staff. We have worked closely with our catering partners, Chartwells, over the last few years to enhance the standard of our catering supported by a £1m investment in our magnificent dining hall. We support ethical buying, and we use locally grown, environmentally sustainable food wherever possible. We always use fresh food, with our menus linked to seasonal produce.”

Newsletter ideas

What topics would you like to see covered in future editions of the Town and Parish Council newsletter? Please let us know by emailing duncan.merren@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk