

# Babergh District Councillor's Report

## April 2024

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### **Babergh and Mid Suffolk named UK Council of the Year at prestigious awards ceremony**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have taken the top honour at a prestigious local government awards ceremony.

### **Upcoming elections and referendums**

The next election within our district is for the Police and Crime Commissioner on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, and deadlines to register to vote, apply for a postal vote and get appropriate voter ID are fast approaching. More details about this election, including relevant links and information about all deadlines can be found [on the council's website](#).

### **£3.8m pledged for energy efficient council homes**

Work to make council homes warmer and bring down energy bills for tenants across Babergh and Mid Suffolk received a £1.6m boost in government funding during March. The funding is to be added to the £2.25m already committed by the councils to install energy saving measures in social housing, taking the total investment pledged for retrofitting and decarbonising to £3.85m across both districts.

### **Councils pledge further help to prevent homelessness**

More than 1,500 households at risk of homelessness have been helped to keep a roof over their heads by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils since 2019, with both councils pledging further support as part of their joint homelessness reduction and rough sleeping strategy.

### **Grid reinforcement can't come at any environmental cost**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have formally objected to National Grid's plans for more electricity pylons between Bramford and Twinstead – saying the impact on the countryside is too great.

### **Cash injection for local community projects**

More than £510,000 is set to be reinvested into Babergh and Mid Suffolk communities thanks to funding collected from developers.

### **Fun for families over the Easter holidays**

There is a wide range of activities on offer for children during the Easter holidays in Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

## Cancer conman caught as part of councils' crackdown

A former tenant who pretended to have cancer to try to con his way up the council housing list is amongst the fraud and corruption tackled recently by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, according to an annual report.

## Parking charge proposals include reductions for residents, workers and longer visits

Details of proposed short term parking charges in Babergh went before Overview and Scrutiny last month ahead of consideration by cabinet in April.

## Changing Places facilities added across Babergh and Mid Suffolk

Works to create fully accessible toilet facilities are underway across Babergh and Mid Suffolk to improve facilities for those with additional needs.

## New Suffolk campaign urges drivers to switch their engines off

A new campaign urging Suffolk's drivers to switch off their engines when parked is running across the district.

## Transport East launches Rural Mobility Strategy hub report

[Read the Rural Mobility Strategy hub report](#) which analyses the challenges and opportunities our rural communities face on the topic of transport. You can also [read Transport East's media release](#) for more information about its launch.

## Tree for Life - onto 2024

Trees for our popular Tree for Life scheme for 2023 have gone to their new homes and little owners following a collection event for families earlier in March.

As part of the event, we asked families to describe the scheme in one word - you can hear what they had to say via our reel on [Babergh's Facebook](#) - do give them a like and share.

Know of an expecting parent who lives in our districts - either through birth or adoption? [Encourage them to apply in 2024](#)

Know a resident who's had their Tree for Life a while? We're always looking for follow up photos from families as their tree grows. [Find out more](#)

## Congratulations to our Greenest County Award winners

Schools, businesses and volunteers were celebrated at Suffolk County Council's Creating The Greenest County 2024 Awards this week - including these winners from Babergh and Mid Suffolk:

- David Appleton from Wortham - voted the county's green hero for his work saving the Native Black Poplar, with a focus on the Dedham Vale National Landscape

- Hadleigh Environmental Action Team (HEAT) - winning the community category for helping people, businesses and organisations in Hadleigh to tackle climate change
- Muntons plc of Stowmarket - winning the business category for its commitment to carbon reduction and continuous engagement with their suppliers and staff in the process
- and Orchard Barn Environmental Education Centre CIC of Ringshall - winning the waste reduction and recycling category for their natural and traditional building courses, sourcing sustainable materials from the local landscape

[Find out more about all the winners](#)

## Funding surgeries continue across our districts

On Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> April, council officers from our Communities and CIL teams will be holding their second funding surgery of the year.

Taking place at Red Gables in Stowmarket from 10am to 1pm, officers will be joining forces with Community Action Suffolk and the National Lottery to help spread the word about how council funding can be used in the district.

The surgery will target local VCFSE (voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise) groups, helping them to understand how community projects can receive financial support and how to secure it.

It follows the first session which took place at Hadleigh Town Hall on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

The session is free to attend, but attendees will need to book their space by [emailing the grants team](#).

## And finally...

Babergh, along with most county and district councils, was 50 years old on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Created by the Local Government Act 1972, the new councils came into being in 1974. Some, of course, have since undergone further reorganisation with the abolition of the short-live metropolitan county councils and the on-going formation of unitary councils. It will be interesting to see what the future brings for us. The previous local government structure lasted 80 years so change is probably inevitable at some point.

## Meetings

Cabinet, Council and Planning Committee meetings can be watched, either live or catch-up, on our [YouTube Channel](#).

For agendas and minutes, please visit the [Democratic Services homepage](#).

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