

# District Councillor Report: Bacton ward

(Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe & Wyverstone)  
Cllr Andy Mellen - February 2026

<p><b>Devolution and local government reform – election cancellation</b></p>	<p>The government has announced its intention to cancel the County Council elections planned for May 2026, and we can assume there will never be any further County Council elections, with the decision on reorganisation expected to be announced next month.</p> <p>So we have ended up in a position where the biggest change in local government in a generation will be implemented with no public vote and with all elections over the period cancelled.</p>
<p><b>Support for Ipswich’s bid for City of Culture 2029.</b></p>	<p>Mid Suffolk Councillors unanimously agreed to support Ipswich’s bid to become the City of Culture in 2029. The status is a competition run by the Government’s Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) every four years, with a £10 million prize.</p> <p>The government’s Department for Culture, Media and Sport will longlist up to eight bids, awarding each a grant of £60,000 to support them with developing and strengthening their full application over a three-to-four-month period from February until May/June 2026.</p>
<p><b>Community Nature Recovery Grants</b></p>	<p>The new Community Nature recovery grants were launched earlier this month. Community groups are able to apply for grants up to £50,000 for projects such as expanding wildlife corridors, tree planting, creating wildflower meadow and other environmental initiatives to safeguard natural spaces for future generations. More details of the grants can be found on the website <a href="https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/boosting-biodiversity-by-funding-nature-in-your-neighbourhood">https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/boosting-biodiversity-by-funding-nature-in-your-neighbourhood</a></p>
<p><b>Better Recycling update.</b></p>	<p>A leaflet explaining the changes to waste collection has been delivered to all homes in Mid Suffolk. More items such as tetra-pak, plastic bags and film will be able to be recycled and there will be a weekly food waste collection too. Residents will begin to receive their new bins over the coming months ready for the new collections to start in June 2026.</p>
<p><b>Locality Funding</b></p>	<p>I was delighted to have been able to award all the funds in my councillor locality budget for 2025/26. The following projects have been supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscaping the patio area in North Close, Bacton</li> <li>• Helping with digital access costs for Westhorpe parish council</li> <li>• Contribution to making the Cotton bus shelter into a community exchange</li> <li>• Flashing speed sign for Finningham</li> <li>• New chairs for Wyverstone village hall</li> <li>• Support for facilities for Bacton football club</li> <li>• Improvements to Bacton bowls clubhouse</li> </ul> <p>2026-27 locality funding budget will be launched in the spring.</p>

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