

District Councillor Report January 2026 – Bacton ward

(Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe and Wyverstone parishes)

Devolution and local government reform – election delays	<p>The government has delayed the election for a Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk until May 2027.</p> <p>The government has also offered the option for Councils undergoing reorganisation to further delay local elections i.e. the County Council election postponed from May 2025 and currently planned for May 2026.</p> <p>There is a County Council debate on this on January 12th.</p> <p>The Green Party position is that we must have elections at the allotted time not decided by politicians when it's convenient for them.</p> <p>The consultation on local government reorganisation closes on 11th January and we are still expecting a decision from the government in March (one or three unitary councils for Suffolk).</p>
New 3G football pitch	<p>A new 3G football pitch is set to be delivered in Stowmarket after funding from the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation was secured.</p> <p>Mid Suffolk District Council, has secured 51% of the project costs from the Football Foundation, with the pitch due to open in spring 2026.</p> <p>It will be built on the grounds of the high school and made available for community use.</p> <p>The pitch will use cork infill –as part of research by the Football Foundation that is looking at the use of a variety of different pitch systems. Cork is more sustainable than the rubber crumb which is generally used.</p>
Stowmarket Innovation Gateway	<p>Construction work on a state-of-the-art skills and innovation centre at Gateway 14 in Stowmarket has reached a key milestone with the core construction now complete and the centre due to open in June this year.</p>
New Community Darts Venue	<p>A new community darts venue has opened with £125k in match funding from the Stowmarket Gateway fund. This is an accessible community darts hub, offering everything from darts equipment and accessories to coaching sessions and pay-and-play lanes.</p>
Grants and support across the district	<p>For communities towns and villages outside of Stowmarket, there are a range of grants and support available for community organisations (details available on our grants webpage) and for businesses (details on the heartofsuffolk.co.uk website)</p>
Waste education in schools	<p>In 2025 our waste team officers held sessions for over 1,700 children and staff at primary schools in Mid Suffolk, providing information and education about what happens to our waste and encouraging children to recycle.</p>

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