

District Councillor Report: Andy Mellen, June 2026

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

Better recycling	<p>The new improved recycling regime started on 1st June 2026 for the whole of Suffolk. The changes are described here:</p> <p>https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/future-changes-to-bin-collections</p> <p>There will inevitably be some teething problems and delays while the new arrangements bed in. Please let me know if you still don't have your new bins and if there are missed collections.</p>
Construction of £18m Stowmarket Innovation Gateway complete	<p>Construction of the £18 million, state-of-the-art skills and innovation centre in Stowmarket has been completed – and is ready to open this summer. The Stowmarket Innovation Gateway, on the council's business park at Gateway 14, will offer a range of office spaces for high growth start-ups, collaboration and innovation areas, meeting rooms and high-quality training spaces.</p> <p>The project, led by Mid Suffolk District Council, was made possible thanks to a Freeport East agreement to provide £16.66m for its construction, with the remaining costs provided by the council.</p>
Suffolk's Armed Forces Day celebrations	<p>Stowmarket will play host to Suffolk's 2026 Armed Forces Day celebrations, with military fanfare and a full day of family fun to recognise and celebrate the contribution of the armed forces community.</p> <p>The free event, organised by Mid Suffolk District Council in partnership with Stowmarket Town Council, will take place at the Recreation Ground on Saturday 27 June and brings together service personnel, veterans, families and the wider community for a day of both fun and reflection.</p>
CIL allocation for local communities	<p>Developers building homes within the districts are charged a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which the councils then reinvest in infrastructure, with 15% coming to towns and parish councils (or 25% if they have a completed Neighbourhood Development Plan).</p> <p>In this latest round of funding, 29 town and parish councils in Mid Suffolk will receive a share of a total of £553k.</p> <p>The town and parish councils can decide how to spend this money to best support the development of their local area and meet the needs of the community.</p>
Mid Suffolk Youth Council	<p>Launched last year by Mid Suffolk District Council, the Youth Council is designed to give young people a chance to have their voice heard and get an introduction to local politics.</p> <p>The initiative was driven by research showing the disconnect between young people and politics, with almost three quarters of those asked agreed that politics should be taught more in schools or colleges.</p>

	<p>Debenham High School was the first to elect members to the Youth Council with Stowupland High School following closely behind with three of their students also having been elected. Claydon High School, Finborough School, Hartismere School and Thurston Community College all in varying stages of appointing students.</p> <p>Each school can elect three students aged between 11 and 19 to serve a two-year term.</p>
<p>Businesses set for energy savings under new scheme</p>	<p>A pair of businesses in Eye are the first to see energy savings thanks to a new council partnership. Sister firms Wrightfield and Wrightform, based at Mid Suffolk Business Park in Eye had 250 solar panels installed last month as part of the Solar for Business scheme. The cost of the panels is covered by the Council, and the business receives electricity at a lower rate. The panels are on track to save £10,000 in electricity bills during the first year as well as saving 25 tonnes of CO2.</p>
<p>Riverside land purchased to save it from development</p>	<p>A riverside site will be protected from development and enhanced as a wildlife haven after Mid Suffolk District Council purchased the land and teamed up with the River Waveney Trust.</p> <p>The land is by the River Waveney in Palgrave, and is mostly covered in trees and scrub, alongside some more open areas.</p> <p>It was put up for sale and marketed for its development potential – but Mid Suffolk stepped in to buy it, protecting it for the local community.</p> <p>Mid Suffolk has now agreed a plan with the River Waveney Trust (RWT), which will take over the management and restoration of the site.</p> <p>It will form part of the RWT's 'River Access for All' project, reconnecting Waveney Valley communities to their rich waterside heritage.</p>
<p>Mid Suffolk Council Funding for Citizens Advice</p>	<p>Citizens Advice services in Babergh and Mid Suffolk have received significant financial backing as part of the latest round of community funding from the district councils.</p> <p>Through the councils' Community Development Fund, Sudbury & South Suffolk Citizens Advice has been awarded £103,000, while Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice has received £129,265.</p> <p>These local Citizens Advice branches are recognised as key strategic partners of the councils and, by receiving these crucial funds, they can continue to provide residents with free and essential guidance on everything from housing and debt to benefits and wellbeing support.</p>
<p>Food Museum award</p>	<p>The Food Museum's exhibition featuring "all the things that you will love, and love to hate" when it comes to school dinners has won a national award.</p>

	<p>The museum was named Best Temporary or Touring Exhibition of the Year at the Museum and Heritage Awards in London on Thursday during a celebration of museums, galleries and cultural and heritage visitor attractions.</p> <p>MSDC has provided significant amounts of funding to help develop the museum as it is the main visitor attraction in the district.</p>
Takeaway fined for storing food in buckets	<p>The Mandarin, a Chinese takeaway on Stowmarket Road in Old Newton, has been fined more than £7,500 for a long list of food hygiene failures.</p>

Cllr Andy Mellen

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