

District Councillor Report: Cllr Andy Mellen, October '25

Bacton ward (Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe & Wyverstone parishes)

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| Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation | <p>The legal framework is now in place so that the election of a mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk can happen on 7th May next year.</p> <p>For council reorganisation, in Suffolk the options are one unitary for the whole of Suffolk (as proposed by the County Council) and three unitary Councils (as proposed by the Districts and Boroughs).</p> <p>Full business cases for both options were submitted at the end of September, with the government making a final decision.</p> <p>The voters of Suffolk don't get a vote in the process – but there will be a consultation run by the government, expected between November - January.</p> <p>Please see the websites below:</p> <p>https://onesuffolkcouncil.co.uk</p> <p>https://threecouncilsforsuffolk.org</p> |
| Supplementary vote | <p>A motion was passed requesting the election for the Norfolk & Suffolk Mayor in May 2026 to be held using the Supplementary Vote system (as opposed to First Past the Post). This system ensures that the winner receives a wide range of support for the electorate.</p> <p>More information can be found here: Council says mayor must belong to us all - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk</p> |
| CIL awards | <p>Mid Suffolk District Council has agreed funding of £4.8m to create hundreds of new places at Stowmarket High School.</p> <p>The school currently has capacity for 900 students aged 11-16, but Suffolk County Council, which is responsible for education provision, estimates an additional 300 places are required in the next four years.</p> <p>The CIL award was one of a number agreed, along with funds for a new play area in Thorndon and replacing play equipment in Coddenham.</p> |
| Land for biodiversity | <p>Mid Suffolk District Council has secured a 62-acre site at Thorndon and will now work with the local community to protect and enhance the area.</p> <p>The pastureland is just north of the village and contains meadows and an area of fen rich in flora and fauna. It was previously owned by the Kerrison Trust, a charity supporting young people, but recently put up for sale. Mid Suffolk has just completed the site's purchase - recognising the potential to enhance the land, increase its biodiversity value and improve flood resilience in the area.</p> |
| Objection to pylon project as | <p>Mid Suffolk District Council has objected to the “considerable and potentially devastating impacts” of National Grid’s Norwich to Tilbury project, with pylons</p> |

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| application submitted | proposed to cut through communities and countryside, including some of the districts' most sensitive landscapes. |
| Housing for asylum seekers | SERCO have been contracted by the government to purchase / lease properties in the East of England to house asylum seekers. Neither SCC or MSDC are the decision makers. The District Cllr will be contacted if there are any properties due to be assigned in their ward. The numbers in Mid Suffolk are very low. |
| 32,000 solar panels as part of Solar Together Suffolk Project | The Solar Together Suffolk scheme is now open for free 2025 registrations. The group-buying programme enables Suffolk residents to buy solar panels and battery storage, helping to save money on their energy bills and cut carbon emissions. More information can be found on Mid Suffolk District Council's website: 32,000 solar panels and counting for Solar Together Suffolk project - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk |
| Reintroduction of Living Well in Winter grant | Funding from Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils has been granted for a third consecutive year of the Living Well in Winter grant, with grants of up to £2,000 being able to be applied for. More information can be found here: Grant returns to tackle winter loneliness - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk |
| Mid Suffolk Magazine | The latest version of the Mid Suffolk Magazine is being posted out to all properties in Mid Suffolk – please let me know if you do not receive one. |

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