



Annual Parish Report for 2022/ '23

Mid Suffolk District Council

Rickinghall Ward (Rickinghall, Botesdale, Redgrave and Hinderclay)

Looking back on the Past Year – There have been unusual challenges to the District Council in 2022/23 mainly due to inflation, cost of living, and housing pressures as more people seek assistance. This administration has maintained financial stability through careful investment and confident leadership and has been able to control costs and maintain services thus avoid raising council tax this year. Mid Suffolk & Babergh received a 'silver' in the prestigious iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards earlier this month in the 'Green Public Services' category for our tree canopy survey and tree planting initiative.

Chairman's Charity and Civic Service - Civic dignitaries and church officials from across Suffolk joined Mid Suffolk Chairman James Caston for a special service at St Mary's the Virgin Church in Bramford in February. Subsequently the Chairman held a dinner at the officers' mess at Wattisham Flying Station for his sponsored charity the Stowmarket ASD Saturday Clubs. [More information](#)

Council Tax -Mid Suffolk has decided to freeze council tax freeze for the coming financial year and has ring-fenced £2m for household energy-saving measures for those most in need, despite rising costs and increased demands on services. [More information](#)

Ukrainian Refugee Support - Both Mid Suffolk and Babergh are represented on Suffolk's Ukraine Task Group alongside representatives from the County Council, other local authorities, and partners such as the Health Service. The council conducts inspections of sponsor properties where residents have been matched by the Home Office to a Ukraine family or individual. Sponsor homes are still needed, if interested refer to [Homes for Ukraine: record your interest - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Gateway 14, Stowmarket – The Gateway 14 Ltd development is owned by Mid Suffolk District Council and development partner, Jaynic, and is intended to provide a new base for manufacturing and logistics. It was officially opened in January and the site is under development. The first tenant is The Range, a garden and leisure distributor.

Heritage and Culture Strategy – An outline culture, heritage and visitor economy strategy for Babergh and Mid Suffolk was approved by both cabinets in March for further consultation and action. The District supports a wide number of arts and cultural organisations within its boundaries Refer to [Arts and Culture » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

Grants and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – The District has a number of different grant funding schemes available for communities, and also collects CIL from new developments for community infrastructure (for e.g. school places, waste and health services, cycle and footpaths)

either direct to parishes or through a general fund to which applications may be made x2/ year. Projects funded over the past two years can be seen on [CIL Collection & Spending » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#) Refer also to: [Grants and Funding » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

Climate and Biodiversity – over the past year the District has continued to implement the actions agreed under its climate change and biodiversity action plans, it has completed its tree canopy survey, and has established a 3-acre site on the River Rat near Stowmarket as a wildlife refuge. The switch from diesel to waste vegetable oil in refuse lorries is reducing pollution and enhancing engine life; please refer to the Annual Report for details of the ongoing work - <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Environment/Climate-change-and-biodiversity-annual-report-Mid-Suffolk.pdf>

Nationally Significant Infrastructure and Planning - The district planning team has been challenged with multiple controversial applications for solar farms on agricultural land and nationally significant projects including the possibility of National Grid's Anglia Green pylon project. We are working with our partners at the County Council and neighboring districts as we seek to respond consistently and in the interests of residents.

New Joint Local Plan (JLP) – Following examination by Planning Inspectors in 2021 the Draft JLP was paused in response to reconsider policies relating to the Housing Spatial Distribution and Designated Open Spaces. Over the past year the Councils have addressed these comments which are currently open for public consultation ending on 3rd May 2023. Please refer to Main Modifications and Policies Map Changes: [Joint Local Plan - Modification Consultation » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

Housing Land Supply – A Five-Year Housing Land Supply position statement has been prepared on behalf of Mid Suffolk District Council for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2027. According to this document and based on an assessment of Local Housing Need the Council currently has a 10.88-year supply of unbuilt houses: [Annual Monitoring Report and Housing Land Supply Position Statement » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

Sustainable Travel and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) – Following consultation Mid Suffolk has developed a list of potential new or improved walking and cycling routes and assigned preliminary priority weighted scores to them. The district is working with the County Council to provide estimated costs to implement a short list of higher scoring schemes. For a list of schemes and scores refer to: [Sustainable travel » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

If you have questions about this report or need help of any kind please do not hesitate to contact me by email or telephone.

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