

**Mid Suffolk District Councillors' Annual Report (2022/23)
For the Ringshall Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 23rd May 2023**

Climate Change and Biodiversity

- Mid Suffolk and Babergh became the first rural authorities to commission a full tree canopy survey as part of the Biodiversity Action Plan
- The solar carport at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre is now producing electricity for the leisure centre in Stowmarket.
- The Duck and Teapot Café at Needham Lake opened in Spring 2022 and is a great asset to the popular visitor attraction.
- Mid Suffolk's tree planting scheme has funded and supplied trees for the Community Woodland in Great Bricett.
- The Councillors Locality Award helped funding towards a new wildlife pond in Great Bricett and plant a glade in Battsford recreation ground.
- The 'Tree for Life' project continues annually to plant a tree for every new child in the district.
- MSDC secured a 2.5 acre plot of riparian margin land on the Rattlesden River in Combs Ford. The site will be safeguarded and allowed to regenerate naturally.
- Following the adoption of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan the community path between Woolpit and Elmswell has been identified as a pilot project.

Housing

- MSDC and Babergh Councils launched Central Suffolk Lettings to increase access to good housing across the districts.
- The Council continues to help households with Disabled Facilities grants and as well as enabling homeless people to access suitable housing.

Planning

- There is currently a technical consultation period about the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local plan part 1, following the recommendations of the inspector. MSDC currently has over 10 years housing land supply.
- No MSDC planning decision have been overturned at appeal during the past 2 years.
- Locally, an appeal was made against the planning decision which refused an application to site 69 mobile homes on Great Bricett Business Park. The appeal was dismissed for the following reasons: (i) the proposed development did not make adequate provision for affordable housing, and (ii) the location of the proposed development did not enable access to services by a range of transport modes.

Cost of Living

- The Council adopted a 5-point action plan in May 2022 to ensure that residents get the help that they are entitled.
- Over 34,000 households were helped using the Government's Council Tax Energy Rebate, and several 'Warm Space' projects were supported.
- Several one-off grants were awarded to community organisations to keep buildings open without passing on increased energy costs to users.
- Barking Village Hall received over £1,300 from the MSDC Winter Warmth Fund.

Economy

- The virtual high street continues to help retail businesses in Needham Market, Stowmarket and Eye. The council also put on Careeriosity fairs for school pupils in the district.
- Gateway 14 development is well underway. A large part of the site is now being constructed for The Range logistics hub, which hopes to bring in over 1,600 jobs to the district. The whole site should benefit from good walking and cycling connections and green corridors.

- The Innovation Awards project rewarded some local small businesses including Natural Building Systems Ltd based in Palgrave, Modeca Architects and Virtually There Studios, both based in Stowmarket,

Communities

- Ringshall Parish Council was awarded £20,500 towards a new play area in the grounds of the village hall.
- I was pleased to be able to allocate all of the locality budget to community groups across the villages for the following projects:
 - Installation of an Induction Hearing Loop system in Ringshall Village Hall
 - Updating the audio visual equipment at Offton and Willisham Village Hall
 - Creation of patio area at the Battisford Punchbowl community pub
 - Extension of toilets and refurbishment of showers adding a disabled toilet and baby change at Battisford and District Cricket Club
 - A wellbeing garden at Ringshall Primary School
 - Two wheelchair accessible picnic benches at Battisford recreation ground.

Following the election of new councillors in May 2023 there will be another round of Locality Funding announced.

Mid Suffolk District Council information is available via www.midsuffolk.gov.uk or by phone **0300 123 4000**

The end of term report can be found here: <https://bmsdchosting.net/End-of-Term-Report/Mid-Suffolk-District-Council-2019-2022/>

We would like to thank the Parish Council for all their work done throughout the year.

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