



## Annual Parish Report for 2021/ '22

### Mid Suffolk District Council

#### Redgrave Parish Council

**Looking back on the Past Year**– Mid Suffolk (and Babergh) have played a leading part in supporting businesses and residents as pandemic restrictions have lifted and more normal living resumed. Meetings have gradually returned to more frequent in person rather than virtual, however home working and virtual working are likely to remain an important part of the way we communicate. The Council has maintained its offices at Endeavour House in Ipswich, but has reduced its office space.

**Financial Support** – The local council has played a major role in administering the wide range of Government Covid support grants announced over the past year, as well as some of our own discretionary grants. During the past year Mid Suffolk distributed £42m to over 2,000 district-based businesses. We continue to support businesses with recovery from the pandemic and have developed an Economic Recovery Plan to help businesses return to more normal working: [Economic recovery plan launched to support businesses in the districts » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

**Economy** – Gateway 14 received planning approval in 2021, and is included within the Felixstowe/ Harwich area as one of 8 nationally designated freeports. The successful Virtual High Street pilot in Sudbury has been expanded to include Eye, Stowmarket and Needham Market.

**Climate and Biodiversity Actions** – During the past year Mid Suffolk and Babergh implemented most of the climate and biodiversity action plans approved by cabinet in the previous year. For example:

- Solar panels were installed on roofs at Stowmarket and Stradbroke leisure centres and solar car ports and a ground source heat pump at the Stowmarket centre;
- The first district annual climate change report was published in March 2022, along with a greenhouse gas inventory;
- The waste fleet switched from diesel to hydrotreated vegetable oil which reduces CO2 emissions by about 90% and other pollutants as well
- An Energy Showcase was held at Worsted Park, Ipswich to exchange information and ideas about low-energy technology and projects such as community heating
- Suffolk Wildlife Trust completed its assessment of local wildlife sites and corridors
- A Tree Canopy Survey was completed which will inform our future biodiversity strategy
- A 3-acre site near Stowmarket was acquired as part of a wildlife corridor on the River Rat
- Trees for Life (263) were given out to new parents;
- Over 2,600 hedge saplings were handed out to parishes and community groups;
- A Design Guide for council housing was prepared to improve building energy efficiency;
- Continued installing solar panels on council housing, over 3,000 are now installed as well as 7 ground source heat pumps;

- A visitor centre and café at Needham Market Lakes has been constructed and is due to open in time for the summer.

**Wellbeing** - Mid Suffolk issued a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 2021 which focusses on population physical and mental health; we are working with Clinical Commissioning Groups and schools to promote physical activities for all ages; the district sponsored outdoor fitness and cookery days and outdoor fitness sessions in public parks. With other districts, we actively engage with the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board on matters of public health.

**New Joint Local Plan** - The Draft Joint Local Plan underwent examination by the Planning Inspector in autumn 2021, the outcome is that it is being paused and effectively split into a Part 1 document containing most strategic policies, and a Part 2 document containing Policy SP04 – Housing Spatial Distribution and Policy LP30 – Designated Open Spaces. The timetable for completing Parts 1 and 2 will be set out in a Local Development Scheme to be issued shortly. The Plan and supporting documents are available to view on the council's website at [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/jointlocalplan](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/jointlocalplan)

**Housing Land Supply** - The Councils have now completed the production of the latest 5-year land supply statements for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts. The most recent calculated figures as of February 2022 are 9.54 years for Mid Suffolk and 6.86 for Babergh.

**Sustainable Travel** – Mid Suffolk has consulted and is reviewing possible routes to be improved or instated as part of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, projects put forward by parishes and communities may obtain funding through the DfT if they qualify. The district is working with the County Council to improve rural transport options and at the possibility of sponsoring local community bus services on routes where there is sufficient demand.

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

*Cllr Jessica Fleming: [Jessica.fleming@midsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Jessica.fleming@midsuffolk.gov.uk)*

*Tel: 07714-597980 Twitter: @jesstfleming*