

Parish Report – September 2023

Councillor Nicky Willshere

Email: Nicky.Willshere@Midsuffolk.gov.uk

Rattlesden Ward

Mobile: 07793610542

Joint Local Plan Update

The joint Local Plan achieved a major milestone in the production of our districts' Joint Local Plan (JLP) – our blueprint for the future development of Babergh and Mid Suffolk up to 2037.

It sets out a vision for the districts, including policies to address social, economic and environmental issues, resulting in a framework to guide future planning decisions. It is a massive undertaking, designed to help shape our districts in terms of providing sufficient housing, employment and inward investment, protecting our environment and heritage, and ensuring we have the infrastructure in place for healthy communities and thriving towns.

Crucially, the process also requires consultation with our local communities, with our JLP incorporating feedback and thousands of responses over several years of development.

Before a Local Plan can be adopted it goes through an independent, rigorous and lengthy examination process by the Planning Inspectorate. This week the Planning Inspectors published their report confirming that – subject to some modifications – our JLP can be considered sound and capable of adoption.

This means greater certainty and clarity for communities, businesses, and developers – with our JLP now expected to go to Babergh and Mid Suffolk's Full Council meetings in November for formal adoption.

This process has not been without its challenges and, although Local Plans rarely go through without some modification, ours saw a fundamental change back in 2021 when we agreed with the Inspectors that we should progress the JLP in two parts, with housing allocations addressed in Part 2.

The Part 1 plan sets out policies that support the delivery of housing, including affordable and supported and special needs housing, safeguarding employment and community use, policies that enhance and protect the environment, and development standards on environmental performance, design and sustainability.

Within their report, the Inspectors have recognised that this part of our plan contains appropriate policies to help mitigate and adapt to climate change in accordance with national policy, and allocates more employment land than necessary, providing enough flexibility for us to respond to changes in market conditions.

The Inspectors are also satisfied that we have sufficiently met our housing need for the districts while we now continue to work on Part 2 – helping us to restrict any unsuitable speculative development in the meantime.

You can find all the documentation involved in the JLP process on our website, together with a copy of the Planning Inspectorate report at www.babergh.gov.uk/jointlocalplan or www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/jointlocalplan.

Community roadshow events next month.

In October, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils will be staging a Community Climate Action Roadshow.

It will give residents the chance to speak to local groups and organisations about climate action tips, initiatives, and opportunities in their area.

The roadshow features a series of drop-in style events across the districts.

These will primarily be on Saturdays throughout October. However, the drop-in at Stowmarket will form part of Stowmarket Town Council's *Go Green Go Wild* event, taking place during the October half term.

They aim to connect residents interested in lowering their carbon footprint and supporting their local area, with organisations that can help them.

It supports the councils' and the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership's net zero ambitions by helping and encouraging communities and individuals to live more sustainably.

Locations in Mid Suffolk include:

Eye	Saturday 7 October	10am-1pm	Eye Town Hall
Bramford	Saturday 21 October	9am-12pm	Bramford Village Hall
Stowmarket	Tuesday 24 October	10:30am-2:30pm	Milton House and Stowmarket Scout Centre (part of Go Green Go Wild)

Stallholders will include a mix of organisations who provide a range of support and activities, such as:

- repair cafés
- isolation and community support groups
- wildlife conservation
- active travel and cycling – with the chance to try out a smoothie bike
- litter picking
- energy saving advice
- carbon reduction advice and schemes
- waste reduction
- and more!

A full list of stallholders will soon be available on the councils' website at www.babergh.gov.uk or www.midsuffolk.gov.uk

Help to tackle loneliness for older residents

The councils are once again lending their support to the Silver Sunday campaign, designed to help tackle the issue of social isolation, particularly for older residents in rural communities.

Silver Sunday first took place in London in 2012, but is now recognised nationally, with hundreds of events now taking place across the country – including five in Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Local events will see students from Thomas Gainsborough School join members of the Sporting Memories group for games at the Kingfisher Leisure Centre, plus a rock n roll themed party hosted by the Ansell Memories Café at the Ansell Centre in Hadleigh.

Young people from Eye Local Opportunities group will be joining residents at Hertismere Place Care Home for an intergenerational sing-along and stories, with a similar event at Finborough Court Care Home for local schoolchildren later in the month.

The final event of the month is being hosted by Needham Market Football Club and involves Needham Market Sporting Memories group and Stowmarket and District Dementia Community Group, with mixed age matches featuring grandparents and younger family members.

Finborough – Intergenerational sing-along session with local school children invited. Tuesday, 17 October, 2pm to 3pm at Finborough Court Care Home.

Needham Market – Mixed-age sporting events with games and refreshments provided. Sunday, 29 October, 10am to 12pm at Needham Market Football Club.
