**Parish Report – April 2025**

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**Local government reform and devolution**

There have been 3 options submitted to government for the shape of Suffolk under the Local Government Review

* Option 1 One single Unitary of the entire county
* Option 2 Two Unitary East and West
* Option 3 Three Unitary East, West and Orwell (Greater Ipswich area)

Feedback on the interim plans is expected by end of April; greater detail will then be worked on with the final submission due in September 2025. The Minister will consider the final submission before deciding on how to proceed.to re-submitted by the end of August 2025.

I am sure that we can collectively agree to support our officers as they deliver the council’s services during this extended period of uncertainty and then transition.

**Current planning consultations**

**Statement of Community Involvement Consultation - Monday 17 March 2025 to Monday 12 May 2025 (8 weeks)**

When will these changes come into effect?

We will wait for the consultation to close and then carefully examine what people have told us. Any possible changes should be adopted by early Summer 2025.

Survey Link: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/bmsdcSCI/>

QR Code (Scan with your mobile phone camera):


 Should you need to discuss any part of this consultation please contact:

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**New Customer Access point in Eye**

From Friday 28 March, we are providing a new joint customer access point service with Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice from Eye Library

This pop-up customer access point will be available at the library once a week, offering face-to-face support for residents.

Staff will be on hand to help residents, alongside Citizens Advice, between 9:15am and 12:30pm every Friday.

They will be able to support with uploading and submitting documents, completing online applications, reporting issues or requesting repairs, setting up direct debits, making online payments and more.

**Warm, safe homes for council tenants given £2.9m boost**

The funding is to be added to the £8m already committed by the councils to install energy saving measures in social housing, taking the total investment pledged for retrofitting and decarbonising to almost £14m across both districts over the next 4 years.

This work not only helps lower income households by delivering warm and energy efficient homes but also lifts tenants out of fuel poverty by helping to save money on energy bills.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has announced that Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have received a provisional allocation of £2,959,214 as part of the latest round of awards from the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund.

Work is already underway to tackle 100 council properties with the lowest EPC (energy performance certificate) ratings by adding a range of improvements, including cavity and loft insultation, new windows, PV panels and air source heat pumps. This week’s announcement means plans can now be made for the next 150 homes, helping the councils to meet their aim of ensuring all properties achieve a good state of energy efficiency by 2027.

Mid Suffolk District Council’s Cosy Homes initiative offers a free retrofit assessment of properties and up to £5,000 in funding to cover the installation of any recommended measures and remedial work. The scheme is open to households in Mid Suffolk with an income of less than £80,000 and less than £40,000 in savings.

Meanwhile, Warm Homes Suffolk also offers grants for energy efficiency measures to private households and landlords with a gross income under £36,000. Find out more information on the councils’ websites.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk, working closely with Historic England, will also be the first councils in the country to introduce an ambitious package of measures to make sensitive energy efficiency improvements to listed buildings quicker and easier.

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/w/councils-first-in-country-to-clear-the-way-for-listed-building-energy-upgrades>