

District Cllr Report Battsiford and Ringshall Ward

Barking, Battsiford, Great Bricett, Offton, Ringshall, Willisham

September 2023

Pride in your place campaign

The Pride in Place campaign was launched last month with the aim to clean-up neighbourhoods, build community pride and tackle the doorstep issues that voters say matter to them. Under the scheme, parishes with a population over 1,500 are eligible to apply for up to £400.

New Business grants

Businesses in both council areas are set to benefit from a new round of funding thanks to the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). Mid Suffolk District Council was allocated £821,658 over the next two years. Grants are available between £5,000 - £10,000 per application and will fund a maximum of 50% of total project costs. Eligible projects include net-zero developments, agriculture and farm diversification, visitor economy business expansion as well as SME investment and diversification or investment in community facilities in our rural areas.

Trees, Hedgerows and Wildflowers Scheme

This scheme is open for applications that both help wildlife and have public access. Applications can be for individual trees, tree planting schemes, small community woods, hedgerows, community or scattered orchards and wildflower meadows. MSDC tree canopy cover across the district is currently well below the national average. We want to help get 30% of our land managed for wildlife by 2030 (30 by 30 national initiative). We are doing what we can on the council's land, but need help on other land to be really successful. This can include parish land, school grounds, recreation grounds, land open to the public regularly, millennium greens and community spaces.

Cost of Living support

The following support was provided for residents in Babergh and Mid Suffolk who were struggling with the cost of living during 2022/23. One-hundred thousand pounds was awarded to tenants through the household support fund, £150,000 to households struggling with the cost of their rent through Discretionary Housing Payments and a reduction in council tax for low-income households. During last winter, a total of £110,995 was provided to 62 organisations through Winter Warmth grants. Over 588 homelessness applications were received in Mid Suffolk. Additionally, Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice received a 30% uplift in funding.

Solar Farms

The appeal against MSDC planning decision for a Solar Farm at Burstall was successful as well as the appeal for costs. There are currently several other applications for similarly large-scale solar farms in the district and this appeal decision will be a material consideration.

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