



## Mid Suffolk District Council

### Report for The Stonhams Ward – September 2016

#### **Better, simpler and effective website launched for local residents**

**Residents of Mid Suffolk and Babergh are asked for feedback on new digital development.**

**Two local authorities based in the heart of Suffolk are asking local residents for feedback as they roll out a brand new website as part of their work to deliver better, simpler and more effective services to the public.**

Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils have begun the roll out of their new website as part of transforming services for local residents. They are seeking views from local people who can access the new site as it develops over the next three months.

**“87% of the UKs adult population have used the internet in the last three months.”** said Councillor Nick Gowrley, Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council who with Leader of Babergh District Council Jennie Jenkins recently pushed the ‘live’ button on the new site. **“These figures show us that people are using the internet more of the time. It is therefore important that we provide access to our services via our website in the most effective way possible.”**

The new website is part of the Public Access Strategy that both councils voted overwhelmingly for and which will see a radical change to the way they serve local people.

**“A large number of residents will already be conducting much of their household business online.”**said Councillor Jennie Jenkins, Leader of Babergh District Council. **“People like to do their banking, pay bills and shop online. For so many it is the easiest way and we want to ensure we have the most modern and up to date digital services that our residents can access too.”**

National research has shown that the cost to local authorities of its residents accessing its services on line compared to via the telephone can save as much as £2.68 per enquiry. While those residents needing face to face support will continue to receive it, the new website will mean more people can contact the Council’s 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils have also ensured the new site takes into account the challenging low broadband speeds that some parts of the county experience. The site has a low bandwidth and will have a limited amount of images and functions that would normally require faster bandwidth.

**“We are encouraged that in just a relatively short amount of time we have started the important process of evolving two websites into one clearer simpler site.”** Councillor Nick Gowrley continued. **“There has been a 70% increase in the use of mobile devices over recent years so we have also ensured the new site will be fully accessible from smart phones and tablets.”**

**“Our work on improving public access is all about providing a better service for residents that is simpler for staff to deliver and is cost effective for taxpayers.”** said Councillor Jennie Jenkins. **“Our new website is fundamental to that and this is why we want to hear from people using the site so we can ensure it is the best it can be.”**

The new website can be viewed by visiting [www.babergh.gov.uk](http://www.babergh.gov.uk) or [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk) and following the link on the home page to the new site. Once on the new site users can send feedback using the feedback button at the top of the home page.



## Boundary Commission hosting Public Hearings

The Boundary Commission for England are currently conducting a review of all constituency boundaries in England. The Commission will be holding Public hearings to listen to your views. To find out the date and times of the meetings click [here](#). To find out more about the commission or to have your say on the proposed changes click [here](#).

## Winter Preparedness Workshop

On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> of November from 6pm -9pm, Community Emergency Planning will be holding a winter preparedness workshop in the Dove Room at Mid Suffolk District Council's Needham Office. To book a place at the workshop please contact [emergency.planning@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:emergency.planning@suffolk.gov.uk) To read their most recent newsletter click [here](#) or to see what courses they are running click [here](#)

## Get your Recycling Right

A campaign is being launched today by the Suffolk Waste Partnership to highlight the importance of people getting their recycling right.

This campaign sees a leaflet being sent out to every household in Suffolk to highlight what can and can't go in your recycling bin, which aims to serve as a reminder – and a new video is also available online to further highlight the issues.

In Suffolk more than half of our household waste is recycled, but contamination levels have been rising as people increasingly put unsuitable items in their kerbside recycling bins. These items are potentially dangerous, can have a negative impact on the environment and ultimately cost the taxpayer extra money to clean up.

All recyclable waste collected from Suffolk households is taken to the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Great Blakenham, where it is sorted and baled before being sent on for recycling. This facility is designed to only accept and process certain materials. If the wrong items are delivered they have to be removed, sometimes by hand.

To ensure the correct items are put into their recycling bins, residents across the county are being asked to remember the following points to combat contamination:

- Textiles and clothes can no longer go in the recycling bin, either bagged or loose. Instead people are asked to donate their clothing to charity shops, or to take it to their nearest recycling banks.
- Anything smaller than 4cm, such as loose bottle tops or shredded paper, won't get recycled they fall through the sorting process. However, bottle tops can be recycled by simply washing and squashing plastic bottles and putting the tops back on.
- Aluminium foil needs to be rolled into a tennis ball size before being placed in the recycling bin.
- Food waste, glass, electrical items, and batteries are just some of the common contaminants found. These items can't go in your recycling bin at home but they can be recycled elsewhere. Information on where they can be recycled are in the leaflet and online.
- Some people are even putting used nappies in their recycling bins. These must always go in the rubbish bin.

Cllr Clive Arthey, chairman of the Suffolk Waste Partnership, said: "While it is great that we are recycling more than half of our household waste here in Suffolk, this campaign will hopefully help us improve the quality of Suffolk's recyclable material and save taxpayers money.



“For example, 1,500 nappies are picked by hand from people’s recycling every day. This is a horrible job and spoils the other recyclables, costing both time and money to sort out. If you follow the advice in the leaflet and on our website and only put the correct items in your recycling bin, we can improve the quality of recyclables going to the MRF and will be able to recycle even more.

“Textiles and items of clothing are no longer being accepted in the recycling bins and we would ask people to take unwanted textiles to a charity shop, a recycling bank or their nearest Recycling Centre.”

More information can be found on the [Suffolk Recycling website](#).