

To Chairman and Councillors Holbrook Parish Council
From Councillor Mary McLaren- Stour Ward
19 August 2024

Babergh District Council

Following the absence of any Council Committee Activity during the election period there has been a flurry of activity in terms of delayed committee meetings with hundreds of pages in each Agenda pack which need to be read, absorbed and provide the reader with the basis for intelligent questioning in a public meeting. This is of course the ultimate test of any councillor – have you done your homework and is your question relevant to the subject and understood by the public online and in the room. As most of my committees are in relation to Audit and Standards, Overview and Scrutiny, Health Scrutiny and asking questions at Cabinet Meetings as Scrutiny Chairman asking the right questions are important and recognising that no question is a stupid question.

Council Meeting 23 July 2024

- I presented the Annual BDC Overview & Scrutiny report 23-24 which I am happy to send to any councillor who may be interested.
- CIFCO report
- Solar & Low Carbon Energy Position Statement adopted.
- Appointment of a Chief Operating Officer which will include the Monitoring Officer Role. Tom Barker known to many as the Director of Planning has been appointed to this new post. Jan Robinson again known to Parish Councils as the current Monitoring Officer will be leaving Babergh in September to take up a new post in Norwich. We have all been grateful for her guidance and wise advice.

Babergh Cabinet Meeting 2 August 2024

A designated Cabinet meeting to discuss the proposal of Parking Charges in Sudbury, Hadleigh and Lavenham. Obviously, this meeting attracted an attendance of District Councillors whose residents were affected by this proposal and some lively questions were raised. The Cabinet voted to implement the charges, and the practical implications of this change will be put in place with public notification of the dates of commencement.

The State of the District Report 2024

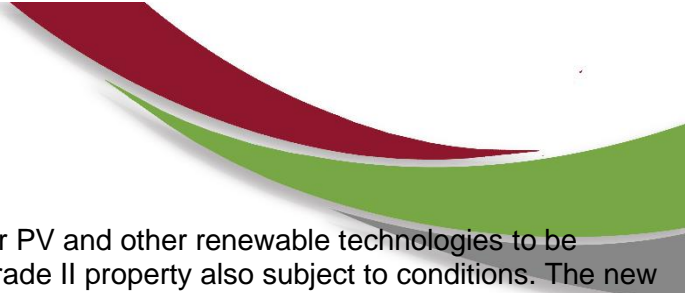
This report is the second annual State of the District Report to be published. It draws on a range of open-source data and the Councils own resident survey. The report provides an overview of data that highlights many of the strengths within the district alongside some of the key challenges that the Council and Partners are keen to address. It can be accessed from the BDC Website and has some interesting facts that will be of interest to Parish Councils.

Babergh & Mid Suffolk Councils are the first in the country to clear the way for listed building energy upgrades.

Both districts have thousands of listed properties but many suffer from poor energy performance often due to poorly fitting windows and single glazing. This leads to higher bills for owners and is costly for the environment. Owners who currently want to upgrade must apply for Listed Building Consent. Both councils are working with Historic England to be the first to make sensitive improvements quicker and easier. The first change is a Local Listed Building Consent Order allowing Grade II listed property owners to upgrade or replace windows without having to make individual applications. But these will be subject to conditions.



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The second is a Local Development Order allowing solar PV and other renewable technologies to be installed on unlisted buildings within the curtilage of a Grade II property also subject to conditions. The new measures have been approved by both councils. Details of the orders will now be drawn up in dialogue with Historic England and subject to further consultation before being adopted.

These conditions will be reviewed annually, and the Council will ensure detailed guidance will be available for householders as well as consultations offering advice.

Additional Funding to allow vulnerable residents to stay at home

Babergh and Mid Suffolk have agreed this week to increase grants to carry out home adaptations for some of their most vulnerable residents. The increased level of support with grants available from £1K to £15K will allow more residents to allow more residents to carry out the home adaptations needed to help them remain at home and in some cases speed up hospital discharges.

Independent Living Service Grants and all other support - Contact the Customer Service Point or Housing Department via the Website or Tele 0300 1234000

Working in Partnership to encourage young people and families to enjoy activities and food has reached a 100,000 people in participation and 100,000 meals milestone

Abbeycroft Leisure who works in partnership with Babergh District Council at Sudbury and Hadleigh Leisure Centres celebrated the above milestone. Well done to them for enabling and empowering young people and their families to enjoy sports and games and where there is financial need, provide food and encouragement to learn how to cook.

Monday 5 August, we welcomed Babergh DC Communities Team to Holbrook Village Green to provide four hours of fun and activity for families. Abbeycroft Leisure brought the Climbing Stack, Axe Throwing and Archery. There was face painting, play blocks, magic, re-cycling help, Sudbury Citizens Advice, advice on health and benefits, Combat Coffee, Little voices, help for all sorts of problems that families may face in regard to Health and Wellbeing.

I was present most of the time and was pleased to welcome John Ward - Deputy Leader of BDC and introduce him to residents, families and all the Stall Holders.

I have still to catch up with the Communities team as to the statistics from the event. This was the first time that Holbrook had been chosen for the HAF summer programme and we say a big Thank You for all that was provided by the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF)

Mary McLaren

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6 August 2024



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