

To Chairman and Parish Councillors
Holbrook Parish Council Meeting
17 March 2025



Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution

Our leaders have joined others to cautiously welcome the concept of a new strategic authority and electoral mayor to represent Norfolk and Suffolk.

The Governments eight-week public consultation on devolution and the election of a regional Mayor started on the 17 February and will run until Sunday 13 April.

It is important that our residents and communities have their say and contribute to the process.

However, Devolution is not connected to the proposed changes for our existing council structure. The views of residents on local government re-organisation will be sought later as part of a separate process.

Our councils will also be responding to the Devolution consultation with an extraordinary meeting now scheduled for Babergh District Council on 7 April 2025 and Mid Suffolk on 10 April 2025 to enable our position to be agreed.

Local Government Reorganisation

The deadline for our initial proposals for local government reorganisation is Friday 21 March 2025. There will be further discussions over our position over coming weeks and months ahead of public debate and agreement at our Full Council Meetings in March.

There will of course also be further engagement with all stakeholders including our officers and Town and Parish Councils.

Covid-19 Day of Reflection

Sunday 9th March the UK will recognise a Covid-19 Day of Reflection marking the fifth anniversary of the pandemic.

We will be planting memorial trees in both Districts and also paying tribute to the resilience of our communities.

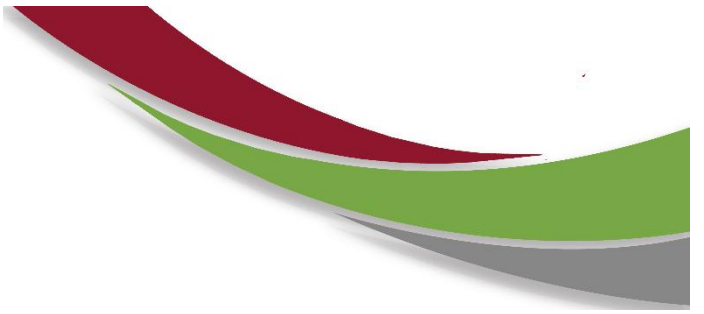
Local organisations, towns and parishes in our district are invited to use our new community toolkit in order to organise their own events and/or memorials during the year. The toolkit can be found on the Babergh website.

Tenant Engagement Day in Holbrook 25th February 2025

The Public Realm Team visited the residents of Jervis Close in Holbrook on Tuesday 25 February and were joined by Councillors John Ward and Daniel Potter. This provided an opportunity for the team who maintain our outdoor spaces to undertake any work around the public spaces and the trees or to assess any future work. However, the main objective was to speak with our residents and listen to their concerns. I was unable to join them due to diary commitments but understand the event was a great success.

New Tenants Handbook Launched

Housing Services have launched a new Tenant Handbook which provides information about tenants' rights and responsibilities as well as setting out what our responsibilities are as a landlord. There are plans to ensure that all tenants are aware of the new handbook via the My Home Bulletin as well as the information being included in the yearly rent letters. For tenants who do not have access to the internet and are not comfortable using it, Housing Services are looking at offering a range of places for them to access hard copies within our sheltered housing schemes, libraries and customer access points. The team are working with our Citizen Advice colleagues. You can find a digital copy of the handbook on the Babergh website.



New recycling regulations for businesses from March

From the 31 March 2025 the Governments “Simpler Recycling” regulations will require many businesses to separate their recyclable materials from their general waste including food waste. It will apply to all businesses, healthcare establishments and schools with more than 10 Fulltime employees. For those with less than 10 full-time employees the regulations will start on 31 March 2027.

This is linked to but separate from the re-cycling changes to household bin collections which will begin in 2026.

Businesses currently without recycling collections will need to procure them before the regulations come into force.

Babergh District Council Meeting - 26 February 2025

BDC agreed to their budget for 2025/26. See Press released sent to PCs 26 February 2025

National recognition for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils building control team

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils building control team have been named the best in the business. They were crowned winners of the prestigious Local Authority Building Control Team of the Year Award at the 2024 LABC Building Excellence Awards grand finals. Judges cited the team’s dedication to raising industry standards, its exceptional problem solving skills and customer services. Nominations for the LABC Building Excellence Awards came directly from the customers. Well, done team.

Wildlife Wise announces new grant project support

A new small grant scheme has been announced by Wildlife Wise, supporting projects that aim to prevent recreational disturbance and damage to Suffolks coast and its important wildlife and habitats. The Suffolk Coast is one of the most important places in Europe for wildlife, particularly wildfowl and wading birds that live, nest and breed in our coastal habitats through the seasons. This grant fund is all about working with interested organisations to deliver new projects that will practically make a difference to prevent disturbances across the Suffolk Coasts wildlife sites. Wildlife Wise is working in partnership with all the district councils except West Suffolk. The fund will run through 2025. It has grants of up to £5,000 available with the first round now open and will be awarded to projects supporting Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. The types of site-based projects might include implementing new signage, re-routing paths or making car parking improvements, creating new dogs off leads areas, or small areas of fencing to enable ground nesting birds to breed without disturbance and sensitive wildlife habitats to flourish without trampling whilst still preserving access to the coast. **Please access Wildlife Wise website.**



Suffolk Master Composters are looking for volunteers – do you know any green fingered enthusiasts who would consider joining the Suffolk Master Composters Volunteers?

Places are available on the free foundation training course for new volunteers and no previous experience is required.

They will receive expert training and ongoing support from Garden Organic and the Suffolk Waste Partnership enabling them to be “Compost Ambassadors”

Find details of the scheme and the next training course on the Suffolk Recycling Website or book a place by contacting the email address

And Finally

“Slow Horses” comes to Harkstead

For those who are subscribers of Apple TV and fans of “Slow Horses” they would have found the recent filming of the next series taking place in Harkstead in recent weeks. I had an opportunity to observe the teamwork and the many skills of the production team. They made me feel very welcome though I failed to recognise one of the main stars as for at least 6 times he had to cross a very large field. Nothing glamorous. The number of vans and trailers and people was obviously very different to the normal throughput of traffic, however due to the production team and Screen Suffolk keeping residents regularly informed by letter of the programme and the teams being very polite and helpful to residents, I hope that everyone felt reasonably happy with the filming. For those of you who watch Apple TV you will have to wait until 2026 for the next series and it will be interesting if you recognise the house that is used as a major prop.

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