

To Chairman and Councillors
Holbrook Parish Council
From Councillor Mary McLaren - Stour Ward
17 November 2025



Students debate Climate Issues at council's second COP-style event

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' second Schools Green Skills Summit saw 84 year 8 and 9 students from across 10 schools representing 16 nations in early October.

Schools from our area that took part, were the Royal Hospital School (Host school) and Holbrook Academy. The event was designed to engage young people from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds about climate change and its effects.

The council's hope was to open-up opportunities for local action and sustainable career choices for the next generation, coinciding with this year's Green Careers Week (3-8 November 2025)

Students were also encouraged to think about local action they and their schools can take to help tackle climate change and get towards net zero.

As well as the COP style debate, the event also included a Q&A session with local leaders and organisations, and a mini green skills career fair.

The event was fully sponsored by 12 organisations and the Q&A Panel included John Ward – Leader of BDC Council and Andy Mellen - Leader of Mid Suffolk Council.

One student participant quote "Its really cool to have that experience where you are not treated as children, and in fact are treated as if you are in charge of this really big thing"

A groundbreaking step forward - Councils make listed building energy upgrades easier.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk have one of the highest numbers of listed properties in the country, but these historic properties often suffer from poor energy performance due to factors such as poorly fitted windows and single glazing. This leads to higher bills for owners and is costly for the environment. Historic England says retrofitting historic buildings will be fundamental to achieving net zero.

In the past owners had to apply to the councils for Listed Building Consent to make upgrades.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils working closely with Historic England have just introduced a new **Local Listed Building Consent Order** - the first rural council in the country to achieve this.

It makes sensitive improvements quicker and easier: -

- **Secondary glazing on historic windows** – Grade II listed buildings can now have secondary glazing installed on historic windows without needing consent from the council subject to certain conditions.
- **Replacement of Windows in Grade II listed buildings** – Where original windows have already been replaced after receiving listed building consent, they can be replaced again subject to conditions
- **Replacement of an existing window in a modern extension to a listed building** – Windows in Grade II listed buildings can be replaced or have secondary glazing installed, if they have previously received listed building consent, subject to conditions.

The proposals would only apply to Grade II listed buildings however not Grade I and Grade II*

The councils have produced guidance for homeowners, which is now available on their website

www.babergh.gov.uk/llbco



Councils ask communities to identify potential development sites

Residents, developers, landowners, business and other organisations are being invited to submit locations which could be considered for planned future development.

Four of the five local councils in Suffolk will shortly start preparation of their new local plans.

The new Local Plans will set out a strategy identifying sites for development and set policies against which applications for planning permission are determined, alongside national planning policies and Neighbourhood Plans.

These will provide a blueprint for the future of each area - ensuring residents and communities have sufficient housing, employment and inward investment and heritage is protected and the right infrastructure is in place.

The Call for Sites was launched on 20th October 2025 and runs until 5pm on the 9 January 2026.

This invites submissions of land to be put forward for consideration to be included in the Local Plans – for uses such as housing, employment, sports and leisure and community purposes.

These are not planning applications and no site put forward will automatically see development take place.

The process involves a form to be completed by anyone wishing to submit sites. The form can be completed online, by email or by post.

Each suggested site will be considered by planning teams before it is decided whether it goes forward as a proposed Local Plan site allocation. Decisions about preferred allocations will be based on a range of evidence and assessment as well as public engagement.

The council has no choice but to review the Joint Local Plan after the government almost doubled its housing requirements for Babergh District Council. The scale of the challenge is huge, so we want to work with local communities and neighbouring councils wherever possible.

This subject was raised with the Director of Planning and the Head of Strategic Planning at the November Shotley Parish Council Alliance meeting (3 Nov) at which I was also present.

Developer Cash to support communities in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

The latest round of Neighbourhood CIL funding is with us again and in Babergh 20 Towns and Parishes will be receiving a portion of £129k.

District CIL funding can be applied for throughout the year. Enquiries and the CIL Enquiry Form can be obtained from the Babergh District Website.

Anglian Water flood guidance

Anglian Water has created a leaflet to help people protect their homes from winter flooding. The information provided is due to the long hot summer we have had this year. See attached to this report.

Further flooding information can be found on the BDC Website

Sustainable Communities Food Fund

Babergh District Council is promoting the above fund to provide grants to small-scale food initiatives such as community pantries, fridges and food pop-ups

Between £250 and £5,000 is available and can be used for anything from the purchase of equipment and revenue costs to delivering training and workshops. Apply to the Grants Team at Babergh District Council for more information,

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4 November 2025