

To Chairman and Councillors
Holbrook Parish Council
From Councillor Mary McLaren - Stour Ward
21 July 2025



Last chance to complete the BDC LGR Survey

Our Local Government Re-organisation survey asking for views on the future of vital local government services runs until 25 July. We are keen for as many people as possible to have their say so please share it with your networks and communities. Any further significant developments will go before the Full Council, and we will of course keep you fully informed.

Thousands of Listed Building Owners could benefit from innovative planning change

Our districts have thousands of listed properties, but these often suffer from poor energy performance due to factors such as poorly fitting windows and single glazing.

This leads to higher bills and is costly for the environment with Historic England saying that retrofitting historic buildings will be fundamental to achieving net zero. Both of our councils working closely with HE will be among the first councils to introduce measures to make sensitive improvements quicker and easier. This would mean Grade II listed buildings could have secondary glazing installed on historic windows without needing consent from the council – if certain conditions are complied with.

It would also apply to double glazing installed on windows already approved and introduced after the property was listed or which are already installed with a modern extension. Changes to windows in listed buildings is a sensitive issue and the council would be interested to hear from residents who own Grade II (not Grade I or Grade II*) properties who have views on this offer.

Closing Date for comment is 16 July. Access www.babergh.gov.uk/Ilbco

Council will share the celebrations for artist John Constable's 250th anniversary (1776-1837)

Constable who was born in East Bergholt is one of Britain's most influential painters and much of his artwork captured stunning Babergh landscapes. The celebrations known as Constable 250 will feature three major exhibitions led by Colchester and Ipswich Museums showcasing some of his most significant artworks on loan from some of the nation's prestigious art galleries.

Constable: A cast of Characters (28 March to 14 June 2026) – Introducing those who inspired and supported the artist with personal memorabilia.

Constable: Walking the Landscape (11 June to 4 October 2026) Constable's connection with Suffolk.

Constable to Contemporary: (24 October 2026 to 28 February 2027) a dynamic exhibition exploring modern responses to Constable's legacy.


Also taking place as part of the celebrations will be a series of community events and learning programmes aimed at sparking a connection between art and the natural world for audiences across the county.

Rental electric cars arrive in Babergh

Two cars with a range of over 200 miles have been placed at each of the following locations

- Girling Street, car park in Sudbury,
- Maiden Way, car park in Hadleigh.

With the average vehicle parked 96% of the time, the Plug In Suffolk Car Club gives residents the opportunity to simply book a car for the minutes, hours or day that they need, cutting out the expense of car ownership



Suffolk are receiving free membership to the car club as well as credit to their account so they can start using the cars straight away.

Suffolk residents can visit the Co Wheels website to join the car club and book vehicles using promo code Suffolk 15 to get free membership and £15 credit on their account.

Once a member. Booking can also be made via the Co Wheels app or over the phone.

The charge points are provided by Connected Kerb with Babergh District Council managing the charge points located in their car parks.

Babergh Cross Party Councillors have unanimously condemned Government criticism of local planning authorities and attempts to rob them of their democratic powers.

Babergh District Council voted unanimously at June's Babergh District Council Meeting to write to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and our MP - James Cartlidge.

The letter is to state their concerns over Government Plans to modernise planning committees as part of their current Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

This is to remove perceived obstacles to development and house building increasing the number of decisions being made by officers rather than committees – despite that only a fraction of planning applications are heard by committees.

In Babergh last year 8.6% of applications went to committee with the rest being decided by officers – the vast majority were granted whether decided by officers or committee.

As part of the motion councillors, recognised the hard work and excellent performance of Babergh's Planning Department and Committee with comparatively few decisions overturned at appeal.

However, the motion raised concerns over the Governments removal of funding to support the creation of Neighbourhood Plans. "Neighbourhood Plans are an essential part of our work with communities"

Trek, Treat Repeat – Beautiful Walks and foodie gems

Both councils have developed a "Grazing Walks" guide highlighting perfect places to enjoy a picturesque walk followed by a treat at a local pub, café or independent shop.

With more than 20 locations highlighted, its aim is to encourage more people to explore our unspoilt countryside, be active and support local business.

Details of each location, maps of the walks available and places to eat are available on the Heart of Suffolk website. The website collates suggested walking routes from several different organisations and groups with many of them suitable for cyclists.

Access heartofsuffolk.co.uk/grazing-walks Definitely worth a look

Public Switched Telephone Network

Landlines are switching to Digital which could stop telecare alarms working. All landline providers need to know which of their customers use telecare so they can keep them safe.

The switchover is already happening so you need to act now. Be alert to any neighbours or residents or anyone who uses a telecare alarm and make sure they contact their land line provider for support.

Visit the **digital phone switchover** website for more information.



Community Fun Days July 2025

Community Fun Days are returning to the district at the end of July providing families with a series of free days packed full of activities. Events are taking place between 10am & 2pm

- Sudbury Belle Vue Park - Monday 21 July 2025
- Hadleigh Pool and Leisure Centre - Friday 25 July 2025

Each event is free to attend and has activities for all ages - people just need to turn up on the day. However, children who receive tested free school meals can pre-book some activities and order a free lunch by visiting the Abbeycroft website – our partners for this year's fun days.

New System to improve repairs process

Our tenants will soon see changes to how we handle their requests for repairs with the rollout of our new job management system, **Totalmobile – Connect** from **1 July 2025**

The system is designed to deliver a better experience for tenants while making life easier for our teams when dealing with repair reporting and appointments.

It will ultimately be used for all day-to-day management and reporting of repairs, maintenance and compliance (damp and mould) jobs across our housing stock.

The new system will

- Increase our first time fix rates.
- Allow appointments to be made at first point of contact.
- Provide tenants with real time notifications (SMS/email) when appointments are made
- Give tenants reminders (SMS/email) of appointments and notifications when operatives are on their way.
- Offer an improved mechanism for tenants to provide feedback about the service they receive.
- Increase efficiency and improve customer experience

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