

Mid Suffolk District Councillor Report for Bacton Ward - July 2026

(Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe and Wyverstone)

Help with heating oil costs	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils and working with Citizens Advice to reach residents who may be missing out on help with heating oil costs. In March, the Government confirmed more than £50 million in funding for low-income households who use heating oil, recognising the recent sharp increases in fuel prices. Residents receiving a letter from the councils' Cost of Living team can verify its legitimacy by calling Customer Services on 0300 1234 000. Residents can also access support via their local Citizen's Advice or through the County Council's Crisis and Resilience Fund (which replaced the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme on 1 April 2026): https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/suffolk-local-welfare-assistance-scheme The campaign builds on the work by the councils' Cost of Living team, which helps residents understand what help is available and assists with applications. Over the past year, the team has contacted more than 650 households about benefits or support they may have been missing out on. This work has generated almost £100,000 in additional income for local households.
Healthy Start scheme	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are working alongside Suffolk County Council to raise awareness of the national Healthy Start Scheme. Healthy Start provides vital financial support to pregnant women and to families with young children, to help them access healthy food, milk and vitamins. Residents can find out more, here: https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/ Over 1,000 eligible families in Suffolk are not claiming this support, with an estimated £1 million over four years currently going unclaimed.
Armed Forces Day celebrations	Stowmarket hosted Suffolk's 2026 Armed Forces Day celebration on June 27th, organised by Mid Suffolk District Council in partnership with Stowmarket Town Council. The well-attended event brought together service personnel, veterans, families and the wider community to recognise the contribution of the armed forces community.
Suffolk Wine Trail launched	Mid Suffolk District Council, together with Babergh and West Suffolk Councils, has created a new Suffolk Wine Trail, hosted on the Visit Suffolk website, to help boost wine tourism and the new generation of vineyards in Suffolk. The launch of the Suffolk Wine Trail coincided with English Wine Week (20th June – 28th June), a celebration of British viticulture.
Major business moves to Gateway 14	June saw the opening of Assan Panel UK's new £45 million manufacturing facility at Gateway 14 in Mid Suffolk. The project will create 105 skilled jobs. Assan Panel makes insulated panelling to improve the energy efficiency of large-scale buildings.
EcoPower consultation to open in June	The statutory consultation period for the EcoPower solar project has now opened, running from June 22nd to August 16th. The project is a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP), with significant land parcels in both Occold, Eye and other nearby parishes. Residents are encouraged to share their views with EcoPower.

	Mid Suffolk District Council continues to offer monthly, online sessions where parish councillors and residents' groups can get advice from the council's in-house NSIP expert.
Locality Award opens	The District Council's Locality Award grant - for smaller, community projects – is open for 2026/27. Further details and an application form can be found here: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/locality-awards Applications are welcome – please get in touch with Andy for further information.

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Mid Suffolk District Council: phone 0300 123 4000, or drop in to see Council staff or Citizen's Advice at Eye Library, every Friday 9.30-12pm, or Ipswich Street in Stowmarket Mon-Fri – no appointment is needed.