

### **Locality award.**

A small award was made to Stowmarket Model Railway Club on the basis they also extend their meets into the ward. Baylham Village Hall have also received a contribution towards their renovations and Creeting ST Mary monies for additional chairs in the village hall. An award has also been made to the Scouts to assist in the purchase of another shipping container at Crowley Park for storage initially during the rebuild of the scout hut on the Camping Land. Needham Market Entertainment Company have also had a small award to assist with their flood damage recovery project. I still have 11% of the annual locality award budget remaining to the financial year end in April next year. The deadline to submit applications is the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2025 is the last date for processing those payments. Please remember locality awards can not be used to fund monies already spent.

### **Parking**

Unfortunately my current work load at Needham Market Town Council has not allowed me to consult the business's in the High Street as planned and it remains on my to do list.

### **Waste Collections**

Councillors at Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have endorsed plans which will see improved recycling introduced from 2026, alongside already agreed plans for weekly food waste collections starting at the same time.

The changes will ensure the councils can meet new government legislation.

Glass and cartons such as Tetra Pak – which currently have to be taken to Suffolk's recycling centres and bottle banks - will be included. Plastic film would be incorporated from 2027.

This additional recycling, combined with new weekly food waste collections, would have a significant impact on recycling rates, allowing over 58% of the waste that residents currently have to put in their black rubbish bin to be recycled instead.

A separate bin, box or bag will be provided for paper and cardboard.

This separation, known in the waste industry as 'twin-stream collections', would ensure this isn't affected by other items in the bin, improving its recycling value and quality.

Unusable or expired items that residents will also be able to put in their food waste bin, include:

- leftovers
- meat, fish, and bones
- tea bags and coffee grounds
- bread, pasta and rice
- eggshells and dairy products
- fruit and veg peelings

This reduced amount of general rubbish, in particular food items which are most likely to cause bins to smell, means the councils will move to more cost-effective three-weekly rubbish bin collections from 2026.

However, the councils' waste team will be sympathetic to those with exceptional needs on a case-by-case basis, such as those with larger families, with medical needs or without available space for the new bins.

### **Community Rail Partnership (CRP)**

Mid Suffolk District Council is supporting the formation of Greater Anglia's new Community Rail Partnership for the Ipswich to Cambridge rail route.

The aim of the Community Rail Partnership (CRP) is to help develop and promote rail services along this key regional rail corridor, helping to align the evolution of services in line with local needs.

There are already a number of successful CRPs across the Greater Anglia network which have all helped raise the profile of rail services and supported improvements to stations, trains, and timetables, as well as build stronger links with local communities.

The new Ipswich to Cambridge CRP will look to replicate that positive impact, focusing on the communities served by trains along the line (Ipswich, Needham Market, Stowmarket, Elmswell, Thurston, Bury St Edmunds, Kennett, Newmarket, Dullingham and Cambridge).

Mid Suffolk District Council will provide funding for the CRP alongside Greater Anglia, Suffolk County Council, the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority, West Suffolk Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Ipswich Borough Council and Cambridge City Council.

### **Trees and Wild Flowers Scheme**

Since 2021, MSDC have been providing free trees, hedging and wildflower seed to applicants across the district, where doing so will deliver benefits both to biodiversity and the public. This has led to the planting of hundreds of trees, thousands of metres of hedges and thousands of square metres of wildflower meadows. All this helps us to meet our aims for increasing tree cover and supporting wildlife across the district. The scheme is continuing and we are able to take applications at any time of year, though of course, delivery of plants and materials to successful applicants will be dictated by the appropriate time of year for planting.

Details on the scheme, the application form and guidance notes can be found here:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/trees-and-wildflowers-scheme>

If you, or any community groups, schools, etc. in your town or parish, is considering a planting scheme to benefit wildlife, ideally on land that is publicly accessible, now is a great time to submit an application to allow planting to take place over the next few months.

Schemes we have supported in the past include:

Woodlands, Street trees, Hedgrows, Community orchards, Trees in parks and open spaces and wildflower meadow creation and enrichment.

We are particularly keen to support schemes that help connect up existing habitat or benefit wildlife in our towns and villages, in more urban settings.

We are happy to work with you or any applicant to provide advice on what might be the best approach for the site. If you are interested in applying and want to find out more, please get in touch, [biodiversity@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:biodiversity@babberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk) or simply submit an application.