

Monthly Report Apr'25 - Sproughton & Pinewood Ward

GENERAL UPDATES

The district wide monthly update can be found here - [Download Babergh's town and parish briefing notes](#)

Devolution: Babergh council approved the response to the Combined Norfolk & Suffolk Mayoral Authority consultation which has now been submitted. We are waiting on a response from the government on our interim plan which was submitted in March. Hopefully that will be positive to our suggestions of investigating our 2 and 3 unitary authority options. I attended a presentation at Novotel in Ipswich which was hosted by two representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). The presentation was to explain devolution & local government reorganisation to councillors & public in Norfolk & Suffolk. Unfortunately, it wasn't very well attended and the majority of those attending were councillors. The answers to a number of questions were along the lines of 'we don't know yet' especially around funding which is critical to success - funding info comes in June - I hope the funding for devolution is sufficient to employ the size of the team that the mayor will need and to enable the mayor to oversee the services they will be in charge of.

Planning: We have had two planning committee meetings this month - numbers of applications are picking up in comparison to last year. One for Assington Autos, predictably enough in Assington, wanting to extend the time for complying with previous planning conditions and the other for 300-ish homes on the HMS Ganges site in Shotley. This was an old Navy training establishment but has been abandoned for decades - the kind of site that the government wants us to develop. The developer is providing affordable homes, there will be some provision for those requiring a lot of care, the original training ground remains as a green space along with restoration of some of the listed buildings. All this plus a sea view!

The Brockley Wood quarry application was supposed to be heard (again) having been deferred previously due to insufficient time to review a significant document that had landed 24hrs before. However, the meeting has been deferred by SCC for a second time as the new Bentley Conservation Area was approved the day before the meeting. This means that the application needs to be re-evaluated bearing in mind this new designation.

Another Nature Reserve??: Capel St Mary are now looking at designating an area as a nature reserve - the legal agreement is being worked on. This could be the start of a trend. I keep asking councillors that I bump into if there is anywhere in their ward that might work as a nature reserve.....

Community Infrastructure Levy: I know that a number of CiL bids are being worked on at the moment aiming to be ready for the 31May25 deadline. But if you cannot get your bid in by that time all is not lost. Currently the second round is Oct'25 but the CiL process is likely to change so that bids can be submitted at anytime so not much time will be lost.

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PORTFOLIO

Sustainable Travel: The Eezybike installation at Kingfisher Leisure Centre in Sudbury has been completed. I'm off to do some publicity next week on this. People can hire an electric bike at a reduced rate for half a day or a full day. This gives people a chance to see if they are suitable for them or to hire them if one member of their cycling group needs a bit of help to keep up with more able members of their group. I also visited Shotley Gate last week to look at a possible site for a second Eezybike installation.

Solar 4 Business: Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have teamed up with West Suffolk Council to offer companies access to the successful Solar for Business initiative. Businesses can now reduce their carbon emissions and save money on energy bills by signing up to have solar panels provided and installed on their premises, for free. Electricity generated by the panels is then sold to the business at a rate lower than their current tariff, helping to slash energy bills and improve their bottom line. Solar for Business has been running successfully in West Suffolk for nine years - helping more than a hundred companies to save a total of around £700,000 and 2,000 tonnes in harmful CO2 emissions per year. The initiative is now being extended, with businesses across Babergh and Mid Suffolk also able to sign up to the scheme.

THE WARD ITSELF

Parking at Suffolk One: There will be a meeting on 20th May @ 18:00 in Pinewood Community Hall for residents to discuss the parking issues. I have photographed all the areas impacted by student parking and note that the areas least impacted by parking have parking restrictions - this is probably the way to go provided it can be enforced.

Traffic Solutions 4 Sproughton: The paper has been completed and is now with the parish council for review. A paper contained the recommended solutions to be put forward for funding will be circulated to interested/affected parishioners.

Locality Budget: The new financial year means I have a new locality budget of £2,000. I already have one submission.

If you ever have an issue to raise with me please use the contact details below. I look forward to hearing from you.

Helen Davies

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