

## **District Councillor's Report August 2021**

### **Welcome Back Fund**

The District Council has now written to all town and parish councils in Mid Suffolk who are eligible to apply for a share of the Welcome Back Fund. Completed request forms should be returned to us as soon as possible to ensure that communities do not miss out on this important funding opportunity. In order to distribute the funding fairly, they have offered a selection of items to help each town and parish create a welcoming and safe environment for local trade and tourism as we exit the coronavirus restrictions.

The Welcome Back Fund is also supporting a range of events in our key towns, such as a community bounce back event in Needham Market and activity trails in Eye, Needham Market and Stowmarket.

### **Innovate Local Scheme Launched For Businesses**

Start-up businesses in Babergh and Mid Suffolk are being invited to take part in “**Innovate Local**”, a pilot scheme designed to help businesses grow and reach new audiences following the impact of Covid-19. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council's Innovate Local scheme will offer businesses either use of a market stall in Hadleigh or Stowmarket or working space at an innovation hub in Sudbury or Eye.

Business owners who would like showcase their business on a market stall but worry about taking the leap can be part of the pilot Innovate Local scheme at Hadleigh and Stowmarket and receive support and guidance throughout their involvement. In addition, businesses will benefit from a free pitch at either market for a set period, mentoring and support to running a safe and successful stall, business advice and training opportunities as well as support before and after the pilot.

### **Help Suffolk Say Thanks**

We are fortunate to have an incredible volunteer network in Mid Suffolk, with many of our residents having gone the extra mile during the past 16 months. To recognise their efforts, MSDC will be distributing “Suffolk Says Thanks” badges over the coming months. If you know of anyone in your community who you think deserves a badge, please email our Communities team - [communities@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:communities@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk) - who can arrange for this to be sent out.

### **Local Council Housing Officers Recognised Nationally As ‘Community Heroes’**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' housing officers are in the running for a prestigious national award, for their work in keeping vulnerable residents off the streets during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Housing Solutions team has been shortlisted for a

national Community Heroes of the Year award by local government magazine the Municipal Journal (MJ).

The award recognises the very best of public service frontline officers who have gone above and beyond their duties during the pandemic to support their communities. The team has been acclaimed for its work supporting residents who have found themselves at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping during the crisis. This included the team's incredible response to the Government's 'Everyone In' initiative, transforming a derelict property in Sudbury in just five working days to provide urgent accommodation to those at risk.

### **Developing A 'Joined-Up' Strategy For Parking In Our Districts**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk cabinets have approved work to the formulate a parking strategy for both districts. The joint strategy will look at all elements of parking – including everything from on-street and off-street parking, through to the economic, environmental and community impacts – to ensure that shoppers, tourists, visitors, residents, workers and commuters have access to sufficient, good quality, safe, welcoming parking opportunities. The parking strategy, due to be approved by September 2022, will look at our districts' needs over the next five to ten years – including aspects such as housing growth, business and tourism, as well as environmental and wellbeing factors.

The development of the strategy will, involve consultation with all town and parish councils, residents and businesses, as well as other local authorities, plus a range of organisations including disability forums, emergency services and hospitals, transport operators, voluntary and community groups, Chambers of Commerce and local town vision groups. Look out for further information over coming weeks.

### **2021 Annual Canvass Now Underway**

The annual canvass process is now underway and MSDC is asking residents to check that their details on the electoral register are up to date to ensure they do not lose their right to vote. MSDC will contact residents across the district by email or letter and where possible residents will be encouraged to respond online at [www.registersecurely.com](http://www.registersecurely.com).

### **Local Energy Showcase Will Champion Green Businesses**

Businesses and community organisations are being urged to tackle climate change by joining Suffolk's first ever showcase event celebrating sustainability and green energy. The Local Energy Showcase, organised by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, will promote how different types of energy can be used by communities and businesses help reduce their impact on the environment, lower costs and contribute to the fight against climate change. The Local Energy Showcase, marks the Councils' recognition of a climate emergency and their commitment to the Suffolk-wide aim to become carbon neutral by 2030, aims to inform and update visitors on the latest in green energy. Featuring keynote speeches from specialists in

the field, workshops, as well as the chance to participate in a Q&A session with a panel of experts.

During day one, businesses will find out what local energy solutions are available to them, how technology can be used to boost the benefits of green energy and how, local energy is a growing sector with the potential of bringing more skilled jobs to the region.

On day two, local groups and parishes will learn how solutions such as solar energy and ground source heat pumps can power whole communities, reducing costs and supporting local ambitions of cleaner and greener places to live, work and visit.

Regards

*Rick*

**Rick Meyer**

[richard.meyer@midsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:richard.meyer@midsuffolk.gov.uk)

Tel: 07771703668