

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 21st MAY 2026, AT 6:00PM IN MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Cllr L Read, Cllr A Cross, Cllr L Farley, Cllr Paterson
Clerk – J Challis, DC Cllr Warboys
6 members of the public

Apologies: None.

1 To elect a Chair of the Parish Council 2026/27

Cllr Cross nominated Cllr Read, which was seconded by Cllr Paterson. No further nominations. Cllr Read indicated he was willing to continue as Chair. Approved unanimously with 1 abstention (Cllr Read). Cllr Read signed a declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2 Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting. No apologies.

3 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items

None.

4 To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items

None.

5 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd of April 2026 are a true and correct record

The draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23rd of April 2026 were approved unanimously.

6 Reports from County Councillor and District Councillor

Newly elected Cllr Bains's sent his apologies in advance of the meeting, and shared an Annual report prepared by Jessica Fleming, previous County Councillor for Hartismere division, which can be found as an addendum.

Cllr Warboys's May District Council report, and Annual District Council report can be found as an addendums at the end of the minutes.

7 Public Participation Session (10 minutes set aside)

None.

8 Chair's Report

- The Chair of Thrandeston PC has asked whether Mellis PC would like to collaborate and share information in relation to the numerous energy projects, and Essex & Suffolk Reservoir Scheme, affecting both parishes. Councillors agreed.

- Cllr Read reported on Suffolk Preservation Society's online Neighbourhood Planning workshop, held on the 16th of May. This will be a future agenda for further consideration, but Cllr Read highlighted notable points, including that if a NP is in place, CIL contributions increase from 15% to 20%, and that there are requirements to have an extensive understanding of the specific policies the NP is based on, e.g. local and national planning policies.

9 Clerk/RFO's Report

- Email received from the Chair of Thrandeston Parish Council, as already reported by Cllr Read.
- Mellis PCC and the Mellisians have both emailed their thanks to the Parish Council for the funding donations approved at the previous meeting.
- Dawn Wnukoski has shared the Community Emergency Plan Guidance document and template, which have been forwarded to councillors.

10 Members' consent to receive summons electronically

All councillors gave their verbal consent to receive summons electronically.

11 LGA Code of Conduct

It was unanimously agreed to readopt the LGA Code of Conduct.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish

12 Environmental issues, including:

- **NSIP and large-scale energy project updates** – see reports from Cllr Warboys and Cllr Bains, (addendums at the end of the minutes).
- **Biodiversity Action Plan** – plan of works being worked on.
- **Mellis Common** – being discussed as part of the plan of works above.
- **Mellis Garden**– Cllr Farley reported that the garden is now being used frequently by parents before and after school drop off times which is good to see. The fruit trees are doing really well with lots of plums and cherries. The Mellis Open Garden event is being held on the 12th and 13th of June which will hopefully be an opportunity for more people to visit the garden.
- **Reinstating wellhead** – no further updates at present.

6:27pm a member of the public arrived.

13 Donation request received from the Messenger

A donation request has been received from the Messenger, for a contribution towards the printing and publishing costs. A request has also been sent to the other parishes covered by the publication, however after discussing, it was agreed unanimously that whilst councillors are positively minded to approve a donation, they would like further details in relation to the number of publications currently circulated to each parish.

During the discussion, the member of the public just arrived, commended Cllr Farley for the articles she has written for the recent publications of the Messenger.

ACTION – Clerk as above

14 To consider nominees for the Suffolk Community Awards

Deferred to the next meeting, (closing date for nominees is the 12th of July).

15 Traffic and highway concerns including VAS installation update

Suffolk Highways will be installing the posts for the VAS device at the four approved sites. Trying to arrange a site visit with the new Highways Officer.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

16 Updated quotation for works to Memorial Hall car park

Cllr Cross has been unable to obtain a comparable quotation; however, the agreed contractor has advised there will be a 15% increase of £1,845.00, due to the increase in material costs. After discussing Cllr Paterson proposed approval of the 15% increase of £1,845.00. Seconded by Cllr Cross and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to advise contractor.

17 Planning

To consider:

- **DC/26/01709** - Application under S73 for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/23/01494 dated 26/06/2023 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Construction and operation of Synchronous Condensers with ancillary infrastructure, and associated works including access and landscaping. - For non-compliance with and removal of Condition 12 (Use and Re-instatement of Temporary Access Track) To allow for the retention of the access as per submitted plans/documents. Land Between A140 And Leys Lane, Yaxley, Eye.
- **DC/26/01708** - Full Planning Application - Permanent retention of the access road between the A140 and Leys Lane, Yaxley, Eye. Land Between A140 And Leys Lane, Yaxley, Eye.

After discussing, it was agreed unanimously to object to applications DC/26/01709 and DC/26/01708.

ACTION – Clerk to update planning portal as above.

To receive an Update on:

- **DC/26/01413** - The Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015: Application pursuant to requirement 16(2) to amend working hours to include Saturday - Sunday (07:00 - 19:00) from 01st May 2026 to 30th April 2027 (Weekend extended hours). National Grid Yaxley 400kV Substation, Leys Lane, Yaxley, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8DX – **GRANTED.**
- **DC/26/00301** - Householder Application - Conversion of existing garaging and single storey rear extension to provide ground floor accessible bedroom and bathroom, with associated works. Mallard House, The Common, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8EE – **GRANTED.**
- **DC/25/02824** Regener8 Power Red House Farm - Planning Application - Construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System, together with related infrastructure, access, drainage, landscaping and other associated works. Land West Of A140, Red House Farm, Yaxley, IP23 8BH – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- **DC/25/03257** Regener8 Power Stone Cottages - Planning Application - Construction of ground mounted solar panel arrays and associated infrastructure which will have the ability to export 49.9MW (AC) electricity. Construction of new vehicular access. (EIA Development). Land At Stone Cottages, Bury Road, Botesdale, IP22 1QH – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- **DC/22/00416** - Application for Outline Planning Permission (All matters reserved) - Erection of petrol and electric charging facility with associated shop; roadside restaurant with drive through facility; E(g) (formerly B1) and B8 starter units; HGV lorry parking facility for rest area and drivers' facilities as a phased development. Land Adjacent North Roundabout A140, Ipswich Road, Brome Part in The Parish of Thrandeston, IP23 8AW – **AWAITING DECISION.**

6:45pm a member of the public arrived.

18 To approve Accounting & AGAR statements 2025/26

Deferred to next meeting.

19 To approve CIL expenditure report 2025/26

Deferred to next meeting.

20 Finance

i) A list of payments and receipts, expenditure against the budget, and bank reconciliation to 25th March was sent to councillors. Barclays bank account balance as of 24th April 2026 - **£29,487.79.**

ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:

4	Memorial Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan May I hire	£20.00
1	Memorial Hall	May PC meeting & Parish meeting	£30.00
3	J. Challis	Admin May	£588.60
4	J. Challis	Mileage April PC meeting	£12.33
3	J. Challis	Expenses – copy paper/minute book/bi-ros	£13.25
4	C. Beecroft	Grass cutting	£72.00

Cllr Cross proposed approval of all payments above, seconded by Cllr Paterson, and approved unanimously.

ACTION - Cllr Read and Cllr Cross to pay agreed payments above via online banking (dual authorisation).

6:50pm 3 members of the public arrived.

21 The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Thursday the 25th of June, at 6:00pm in Mellis Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 6:53pm.

County Councillor Report



port for Parish Councils, May 2026

Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division. Tel. 07714-597980 Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – Over the past year officers and leaders have worked on the details of a unitary structure along with partner Norfolk County Council. Suffolk County Council made its initial proposal for a single unitary Suffolk in September (refer to: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/2025-03-21-suffolkcc-lgr-interim-plan-final.pdf>.)

However in March the Government approved three unitaries in both Norfolk and Suffolk. SCC has concerns that three sub-tier councils would result in (1) higher costs for local tax payers; (2) service differentials and inconsistency especially for social care, education, highways and flood management; (3) fragmentation of councils would which would weaken the County unit rendering it easier for a Mayoral authority to exert regional powers over local service delivery.

Clarity is lacking about the division of authority between the regional mayor and unitaries in areas such as transport, planning, economy and environment/ net zero as well as funding for the regional mayoral office. It is also unclear how civic appointments and related activities would be affected. These are carried out based on the County unit and include the Lieutenancy, local and national service awards, the Citizenship Service, and management of visits by Royalty or Foreign Dignitaries. Further steps in the LGR process include making a Structural Change Order for agreement later this year which would in effect dissolve the County (and other Councils) in 2026; unitary elections are scheduled for May 2027, and Mayoral elections in 2028 along with new councils.

New 'combined' election boundaries in Suffolk for the three proposed unitary authorities are shown at: [Proposed unitary authorities 2026: Maps - House of Commons Library](#)

- Western Suffolk Council (West Suffolk, 21 parishes from Mid Suffolk, and Babergh (less 31 parishes)). Population: 269,000.
- Central and Eastern Suffolk Council (Mid Suffolk (less 29 parishes), and East Suffolk (less 25 parishes)). Population: 261,000.
- Ipswich and South Suffolk Council (Ipswich, 31 parishes from Babergh, 8 from Mid Suffolk, and 25 from East Suffolk). Population: 257,000.

In Norfolk, three unitary authorities are also proposed:

- West Norfolk Council (Breckland, King's Lynn and West Norfolk, and 9 parishes from South Norfolk). Population: 310,000.
- Greater Norwich Council (Norwich, 19 parishes from Broadland, and 16 parishes from South Norfolk). Population: 290,000.
- East Norfolk Council (Broadland (less 19 parishes), Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk, and South Norfolk (less 25 parishes)). Population: 341,000.

Investment in Special Educational Needs - The Council has recently secured £1.4m of Department for Education funding (to be match-funded) to build additional Ofsted approved accommodation for children with complex needs in Saxmundham. SCC and Unity Schools Partnership will open a new SEND school in Saxmundham for 126 students with severe learning difficulties.

Also a new specialist school on Glastonbury Road in Bury will provide 90 places for students aged 14 to 19-years with special educational needs and disabilities. This will be run by Eastern Education Group and funded by the Department for Education. The new school will become a centre of excellence and hub for SEND guidance, offering expertise to mainstream schools.

Retirement of Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk Lady Clare Countess of Euston - Lady Clare retired on April 15th after 12 years in this role. She is succeeded by Mark Pendlington. The Lord Lieutenant plays a civic or ceremonial role in the County as the representative of the reigning monarch at important events such as citizenship, religious services and the national honours and awards.

“Simpler” (Better) Recycling – Commencing in June 2026 government mandated changes come into effect regarding collection and disposal of household and business wastes. Currently District and Borough councils collect waste (black bins), co-mingled/ mixed recyclable materials (except glass), and garden waste from households across Suffolk using a wheeled bin service. The materials are then delivered, to a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Blakenham, a Composting Facility such as Material Change in Creeting, or for disposal to the Energy from Waste Facility (EFW) as appropriate.

As of this June households will use five bins instead of two (or three including garden waste); glass would be mixed with other items and food/ kitchen waste separated.

Figure 4. Twin Stream Collection System Summary

- 2 recycling bins:
 - containers (glass, plastic, cans/tins, cartons)
 - fibres (paper and card)
- Recycling and residual collection frequency as per WCA decisions
- Food waste collected weekly
- Garden Waste – charged subscription scheme with fortnightly collection



Collection schedules will change with household waste/ black bins emptied once every three weeks:

Collection Calendar	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Residual			
Recycling			
Food			

Babergh, East Suffolk and
Mid Suffolk residents

SCC is the disposal authority and responsible for the wastes that are collected, both District and County councils act cooperatively through the Suffolk Waste Partnership to process and find the best end uses available for the County's non-hazardous waste streams. The changes bring substantial costs such as modifying the MRF to take glass, contracting for a new food waste processing facility in Suffolk (Bio Capital in Southwold is likely), and finding new markets. Local glass collection will continue for a trial period alongside kerbside collection in Mid Suffolk.

NSIP Planning Update - the UK government has established an in-house unit at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to discharge Development Consent Order (DCO) requirements, which is currently the responsibility of local authorities. This is intended to reduce delays to energy schemes but will remove some powers from local authorities. The new approach will apply to all electricity network and energy projects including nuclear. SCC is concerned that this will put communities at risk of being subject to ill-considered projects which do not take into account local factors and reduce democratic input. Refer to: [Building our nuclear nation: government response to the Nuclear Regulatory Review 2025 \(accessible webpage\)](#) - GOV.UK

National Grid Pylon Scheme –The DCO Application is undergoing Examination by the Planning Inspectorate which will continue through 10th August. SCC gave testimony along with other interested parties in February. Transcripts are available on the PINS website : [Norwich to Tilbury - Project information](#). Contact the project team if you wish to participate or comment further, or to request a site meeting: email NorwichToTilbury@planninginspectorate.gov.uk.

SCC opposes overgrounding the pylons and would like to see the 2030 target for delivery scrapped, this has been put forward as the main reason for NG's preference for overgrounding.

EcoPower Solar - The Scoping Report is now complete, and the main DCO application is scheduled for later in 2026. The scoping decision excluded several relevant subject areas such as socio-economics, cultural heritage and ground conditions which is of great concern to the Council. Eco-Power's consultants are currently commencing site survey work and may approach landowners to sign Licence Agreements for land entry. Please get in touch with the Ecopower project team directly if any concerns arise - contact@ecopowersuffolk.com or Jared Boyle on jared@economytech.com or phone the applicant on 0800 0129 164.

Please get in touch with your County Councillor if you have questions or comments: Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk
Tel: 07714-597980 (until 21st May). Twitter: @jesstfleming

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT - May 2026

Devolution and local government reform	New website - jointly created by Suffolk's county, district and borough councils - providing simple and clear information and updates about Local Government Reorganisation in Suffolk. The <i>Future Suffolk</i> website will go live Friday 15 May at www.suffolk-lgrhub.gov.uk It has been developed in-house by the councils' communications teams, and will evolve as plans progress, but it already includes: • explainers about LGR • a timeline of the LGR process and key milestones • maps showing the new council boundaries • details about the 2027 shadow authority elections. The site also includes an interactive map showing provisional ward names and boundaries, as well as details of councillor numbers. These have been shaped, in line with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's guidance, by cross party groups of councillors with support from our democratic services and elections teams. Elections to the new 'shadow' unitary authorities will take place in May 2027. The unitary councils will take over formal responsibilities on 'vesting day' in May 2028. Until then, the existing County and District Councils will continue to deliver services as normal. This transition period is to enable detailed work on reorganisation to take place. • Elections to the new unitaries – expected May 2027 • Mayoral elections – expected May 2028
Council funding for neighbourhood plans	Mid Suffolk District Council has introduced new funding to support Parish Councils to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans and Reviews. A Neighbourhood Plan is written by the local community to help ensure that the right types of development are built in the right place. As government funding has been withdrawn Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have agreed alternative funding for our area, with grants of up to £20,000 to support groups to prepare Neighbourhood Plans.
Clarification Joint Local Plan	The new Joint Local Plan is proceeding in response to significant changes in national planning policy (December 2024) and updated Government housing requirements. The most recent Call for Sites exercise, held from 20th October 2025 to 9th January 2026, was an essential early evidence-gathering stage. This followed an earlier Call for Residential Sites exercise undertaken between 5th January and 2nd February 2024.

	What is being published and why - The Councils are publishing a map of all sites submitted during these Call for Sites exercises. This will be published on Friday 27th February and can be accessed here from Friday https://www.babergh.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/call-for-sites and https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/call-for-sites - This is not a list of preferred development locations. - Publication promotes transparency and ensures communities have early visibility of what has been suggested. Key Messages No planning status is granted by submission. Sites do not benefit from any presumption of development. - Submissions will now be assessed against planning policy, constraints, evidence and deliverability criteria. - Residential sites previously submitted in 2024 are still included in the assessment process. - Assessment outputs will be published through the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in Spring 2026. Officer assessment does not determine allocations — that occurs at the draft plan stage, which will be subject to full public consultation.
Changes to waste collection and recycling start in June	The Better Recycling scheme is starting in June. This will see the collection of food waste and additional items for recycling, with more frequent collections overall. Until the start of the new scheme in June, residents should continue to use their existing bins as normal. Information packs are being sent out with further details, and information can also be found here: www.suffolkrecycles.org.uk and on social media @suffolkrecycles
Solar for Business	Over 250 solar panels were installed last month to the rooftops of sister companies Wrightfield and Wrightform at Mid Suffolk Business Park in Eye, as part of a new council scheme – offering businesses the opportunity to reduce carbon emissions and save 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. In its first month of operation, the installation has already generated 15,000kWh of renewable electricity and is on track to not only save the firms more than £10,000 in electricity bills in its first year, but also save up to 25 tonnes of CO2 emissions. Solar for Business has been running successfully in West Suffolk for more than nine years, but has only recently been extended, with Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils joining forces with West Suffolk Council to allow even more businesses to benefit.
NSIP's	The Inspectors for Norwich to Tilbury have already visited the Waveney valley on the unaccompanied site visits, there are no MSDC visits on the accompanied site visits on 27th May. We have already made submissions to the examination

	about impacts on the Waveney Valley and preferences for undergrounding, both in writing and verbally at the recent hearings. The Inspectors have asked for some more viewpoint assessment in this area but it focusses on the setting of a listed church in South Norfolk rather than the valley landscape as a whole. We are still pursuing compensation for the Waveney Valley impacts. I asked the following at the last meeting: “The amount of infrastructure needed to connect the different solar installations is in my opinion disproportionate to the benefits of the scheme? Is there any guidance on how much the impact of connection of a Solar Farm to the Grid can be tolerated?” From Bron: “Regarding EcoPower – there’s no specific guidance as such, it’s each case on its merits as with other planning decisions. But, we can raise this concern at the upcoming statutory consultation which will go to joint cabinet briefing for member review and amendments sometime in June or July. We have also already raised concerns about the cumulative impacts around the substation and will be pursuing this point further. I have copied Cllr. Dan Pratt into this email as he is taking over the lead on the EcoPower project with my support so, between, us we can make sure we are representing the concerns of communities effectively.” Statutory Consultation starts 22nd June for 8 weeks. Bron Curtis Principal Planning officer (NSIP’s) is continuing to run the expanded Norwich to Tilbury regular drop in session that includes all NSIPs including Ecopower Suffolk. The sessions will be held via Teams using the existing meeting invite and is open to anyone with queries about any NSIP. The next session is at 11.00. 11th June Link to join: Norwich to Tilbury NSIP: Babergh and Mid Suffolk drop in surgery Meeting-Join Microsoft Teams
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Rowland Warboys MSDC Cllr. Gislingham Ward
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DISTRICT COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

Local Government Re-organisation	This year the County Council and the District and Borough Council submitted business cases for their different proposal for unitary authorities. The government has decided that the District and Borough Councils' proposal is the best fit for Suffolk and there will be 3 unitary authorities in Suffolk. (Complimented by three in Norfolk) While detailed boundaries are still being finalised, the three unitary councils, West Suffolk, Central & East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich are planned to be in place from April 2028. Elections for the new shadow authorities are due in May 2027. Following this there will be a transition period until vesting day on April 1st 2028 when the new unitary authorities will take over. The transition period is to enable detailed work for reorganisation to take place, and services will be delivered as usual throughout the process. Mayoral elections for the combined authority of Norfolk and Suffolk will be held in May 2028.
Planning and Housing	This year MSDC introduced funding of up to £20,000 to support Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans/Reviews which seek to allocate sites for housing development that make an agreed contribution to meeting the district-wide housing needs. The neighbourhood plan has statutory weight and status in the planning process – and are used to help guide and decide planning applications in conjunction with the Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan. The council held a briefing session for parishes following the government requirement to increase the number of dwellings in Mid Suffolk. The increase is from the previous 535 dwellings per year up to 734. As a result Mid Suffolk has embarked on a new Joint Local plan to keep policies up to date, this has involved a “call for sites” to help identify any land that may be required for future development as our plans progress. https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/babergh/w/call-for-sites No planning status is granted by including a site on this list. Rather, sites will now be assessed against planning policy, constraints, evidence and deliverability criteria. Further assessment will be published through the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in Spring 2026. It is important to note that we are carrying out this work to ensure any future development is plan lead and not developer lead.
Budget	The District Council's share of Council Tax is to be raised by 2.99%. For context, for a Band D property annual charge attributable to Mid Suffolk is £180.26, an increase of £5.23 per year or 10p per week. The previous years rise was 0% (Of the overall Council Tax, about 8% goes to Mid Suffolk District Council.)

	This rise is unavoidable as the government has now linked future grant monies to the assumption that the share of council tax has risen, so if we had not taken a small increase this year we would be facing a “cliff edge” of funding in the near future. In addition to the day-to-day provision of council services and activities, the 2026/27 budget includes funding for a wide range of programmes, including: • Implementation of the new food waste collection scheme • Enhancements to our current waste depot in readiness for this, plus further support for recycling education • Cost of living support • Council Tax Support scheme • Grants programmes for towns and rural communities outside of Stowmarket • Investment in leisure centre maintenance • Stowmarket sports facilities delivered through the SHELF Project, plus support for wider Stowmarket regeneration • Support for the Cosy Homes insulation scheme which has been expanded to help residents obtain solar panels • Grant funding for nature recovery and community biodiversity groups • Support for new footpaths and cycle ways • Completing the build of the Stowmarket Innovation Gateway • Expansion of the area’s temporary accommodation (which avoids homeless residents being put into bed and breakfast accommodation and saves on costs going to private providers.)
A14 and litter	Work has started on a clear up of the A14. Two trucks of rubbish were cleared from the side of the A14 between junctions 49 and 50 for Tot Hill and Stowmarket during planned overnight road closures. We are grateful to volunteers who have been picking litter and all the community and parish litter picks organised but we continue to urge people to only do this where it is safe and not on fast roads.
Recycling and waste	This year has seen the district council working on the Better Recycling scheme which is starting in June. This will see the collection of food waste and additional items for recycling, with more frequent collections overall. Every home across Mid Suffolk will be receiving a new blue-lidded bin and a smaller food-waste bin and food waste caddy. Information packs are being sent out with more detail. The blue-lidded bin will be for glass bottles, jars, tetra pak, plastic bags, cans and plastic bottles. Paper and card will go in the existing green-lidded bin. www.suffolkrecycles.org.uk
Nature Recovery	Following our successful launch event at The Mix in Stowmarket, Mid Suffolk District Council announced the new £525,000 Catchment and Landscape Nature Recovery Grant. This fund supports

	ambitious, collaborative projects (£50k–£200k) focused on river restoration and habitat connectivity. Our Community Nature Recovery Grant was launched in January, offering up to £50,000 for grassroots biodiversity projects. We have currently had many enquires and 7 applications – the outcomes of which will be announced following the pre-election period. There will be two more application windows for 2026. These funds are part of a landmark £1.8 million commitment to our new Biodiversity Action Plan (2025–2030). 2025/2026 Achievements: • Meadow management - we reached a milestone of 114,341m² of managed meadows, a 38% increase in the area of council-owned land under meadow management in 2024. • Nearly 400 residents applied for our 'Tree for Life' scheme to mark for babies born or adopted in 2025/26 • Secured an eight-acre riverside habitat in Stowmarket for permanent conservation and public access • Two Assistant Ecologists are now in post to support our planning team with the delivery and monitoring of Biodiversity Net Gain Mid Suffolk District Council was also a partner and collaborator in the production of the Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). This groundbreaking work which was launched in November 2025. It is a blueprint for nature recovery across Suffolk and provides evidence-based maps that indicate where resources should be focused. Organisations such as environmental groups, schools and town and parish councils can apply. One application can be made per project, per year. Funding opportunities and support - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk Mid Suffolk District Council has purchased almost eight acres of land in the heart of Stowmarket to preserve it as a future riverside haven for nature and wildlife for future generations. The land, between Takers Lane and the River Rat, adjoins the council's existing open space at Pikes Meadow – unlocking potential for a new riverside walk, connecting Combs Ford and Gipping Way. Mid Suffolk District Council has also secured a 62-acre site at Thordon and will now work with the local community to protect and enhance the area. The pastureland is just north of the village and contains meadows rich in flora and fauna. It also is an important flood plain for the River Dovelt was previously owned by the Kerrison Trust, a charity supporting young people, but recently put up for sale. Mid Suffolk has just completed the site's purchase - recognising the potential to enhance
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	the land, increase its biodiversity value and improve flood resilience in the area. This plan could include habitat improvements – such as enhancing wet grassland and grazing marshes, pond habitats, low-land meadows and pastures, and deciduous woodland. There will be no change to public access arrangements while this plan is developed, with existing permissive paths being preserved. The council’s investments are a further step to enhance biodiversity and nature – protecting and strengthening the district’s wildlife and habitat diversity – and providing public green space, as well as safeguarding the land from future development.
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Mid Suffolk District Council information is available via www.midsuffolk.gov.uk or by phone **0300 123 400**

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