

District Councillor's Report: Harry Richardson

Mid Suffolk District Council did not meet in April and so I have included below a summary of the main updates from the last month:

Playing our part to support Ukrainian refugees

Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have pledged their full backing for the Ukrainian people, with the offer of help for refugees arriving in the districts and support for the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Both councils are represented on Suffolk's Ukraine Task Group alongside representatives from the county's other local authorities, three Clinical Commissioning Groups, Health Outreach, Suffolk police, Suffolk Refugee Support, Anglia Care Trust and Community Action Suffolk.

The Task Group exists to ensure that refugees' arrival into Suffolk goes as smoothly as possible – considering how best to meet refugees' health and wellbeing needs, what assistance can be provided with school admissions, and how we can offer support to help with integration and ESOL (English for speakers of other languages), particularly if there are lots of people arriving in dispersed, rural locations.

If you have questions about what we are doing in across the districts and the county to support Ukrainian Refugees. Information on how you can help is available on the Suffolk Council website.

If you are interested in offering accommodation, you can find out more about the scheme and how to register at Home For Ukraine. The government have issued a Ukraine welcome pack that includes information you may find useful.

Information is also available on the Reset website which help you to register and match refugees from Ukraine with sponsors across the UK.

The Councils or Suffolk County Council will be in touch to confirm how to claim grants when more information is available.

Ground-breaking ceremony marks start of construction at Gateway 14

Construction is officially underway at Gateway 14 – the multi-million-pound business, innovation and logistics development in Stowmarket.

The 'ground-breaking' ceremony saw Mid Suffolk District Council leader Cllr Suzie Morley put the first spade in the ground on the site, which is set to create hundreds of jobs for the district, boost the local economy and attract investment into the region.

The development, by Gateway 14 Ltd (wholly owned by Mid Suffolk District Council) and development manager, Jaynic, will provide a new base for manufacturing, logistics and R&D businesses as well as providing innovation space for smaller and start-up businesses.

Located close to junction 50 of the A14 near Stowmarket, the 2.45m sq ft site, the landmark development is designed to a high specification with sustainability at the centre with features such as EV charging, LED lighting, solar PV, smart energy systems and rainwater harvesting. The development will meet a minimum BREEAM rating of Very Good and excellent wherever possible.

Accessibility through and around the development is a key feature with significant walking and cycling routes being integrated along with access to public transport links and local amenities.

Biodiversity on the site is also a priority, with high-quality landscaping, green corridors and nesting boxes all being introduced across the site to support not only the wildlife and ecology but also to create a vibrant, attraction and healthy working environment for employees.

Councils join forces with GPs to keep residents fit

Mid Suffolk and Babergh have expanded their GP referral schemes to include tailored support for residents to improve their health and wellbeing. In partnership with local health partners and the councils' leisure providers – Abbeycroft Leisure and Everyone Active – both councils are continuing to grow the number of GP referral programmes at their leisure centres.

Through the programmes, doctors refer patients with common medical conditions such as obesity, hypertension, or type 2 diabetes, to the councils' local gyms for a programme of tailored exercise over a set period. Once on the road to recovery, patients are then encouraged to continue their rehabilitation and improved health through a longer-term membership.

A programme is available at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre in Stowmarket, with one also soon to launch at Stradbroke Pool and Fitness Centre, ensuring support for residents across the two districts. As a result, hundreds of Babergh and Mid Suffolk patients have now been supported via the schemes since their inception.

The schemes form part of councils' commitment to supporting residents with their health, wellbeing, and recovery post-Covid, as set out in our wellbeing strategy.

I hope that this report has been useful but if a member of the Parish Council wishes to discuss any of the above further then please do not hesitate to contact me via the email address below.

With kind regards,



Cllr Harry Richardson JP

Mid Suffolk District Councillor for Thurston Ward

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