

## District Councillor Report – Harry Richardson

June 2026

<p><b>Local government reorganisation</b></p>	<p>The future of local government reorganisation in Suffolk is now uncertain given the new administration at the County Council have decided to launch a Judicial Review into the government’s support for the three-unitary-authority model. The precise implications for now are unknown.</p> <p>In the meantime, a new website has been launched to outline what the new unitary authorities will look like, and this can be found here: <a href="#">Home - Future Suffolk</a></p>
<p><b>Local Plan</b></p>	<p>At the May full council meeting, members agreed to continue with a full review of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan rather than pursue a separate Part 2 plan. This reflects changes to national planning policy and means work will now continue on the evidence base, including assessment of sites submitted through the recent Call for Sites process, before a draft plan is brought forward for consultation.</p>
<p><b>Refuse changes</b></p>	<p>Residents will shortly see significant changes to waste and recycling collections. From 1 June 2026, Mid Suffolk households will move to a new service including weekly food waste collections, a separate collection for paper and card, expanded recycling for items such as glass, cartons and plastic wrapping, and a three-weekly refuse collection. I know some households have concerns about the change in refuse frequency, particularly larger families and those with specific needs, so I would encourage anyone affected to look out for the council information pack and make contact if they need extra support or bin capacity.</p>
<p><b>Youth Council</b></p>	<p>The new Mid Suffolk Youth Council is beginning to take shape, which is a very positive development for young people across the district. The initiative was approved with cross-party support and is intended to give young residents a stronger voice in local decision-making. Schools are now starting to appoint representatives, with some already having elected their first youth councillors. Thurston Community College is among the schools involved in the process, and I hope this will create a meaningful route for local young people to raise issues that matter to them and influence council discussions.</p>
<p><b>Biodiversity purchases</b></p>	<p>Mid Suffolk continues to increase its investment in biodiversity and nature recovery. The latest publicly reported land purchase is a riverside site at Palgrave, protected from development and now set to be enhanced as a wildlife haven in partnership with the River Waveney Trust. The council has said the project will improve biodiversity, support nature recovery and potentially help with natural flood management, while also creating better community access to the river.</p>
<p><b>Thurston Community College</b></p>	<p>Thurston Community College remains part of the School Rebuilding Programme, with proposals for a new school building and sports centre alongside refurbishment of existing facilities. However, the planning application is still yet to be determined, so no final decision has been made.</p>



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