

# District Councillor Report: Elmswell Parish Council

December 2023

Joint Local Plan adopted	Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils formally adopted the new Joint Local Plan Part 1, which is the blueprint for future development until 2037. There are a number of updated and new policies relating to housing, economic development, environment and infrastructure. The Councils also agreed the Local Development Framework which is a schedule for the production of several supplementary planning documents as well as the Part 2 of the Joint Local Plan, which will include the strategic site allocations and settlement hierarchy. Details can be found at <a href="https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/joint-local-plan">https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/joint-local-plan</a> .
Cosy Homes initiative	MSDC has put aside £2M to be used to improve the Energy Performance Certificates of homes across the district. Homeowners are able to apply for funding for loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and draught proofing. Applicants must currently have an EPC rating below C, be in Council Tax bands A-D, have a household income below £60k and savings under £16k. Details can be found here <a href="https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/mid-suffolk-cosy-homes">https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/mid-suffolk-cosy-homes</a> .
Planning position statement for renewable energy developments	MSDC has adopted a position statement outlining what developers need to do to make their proposals more acceptable. In order to balance the benefits of sustainable energy projects such as Solar Farms against local objection, developers are asked to take the concerns of local residents into consideration, and to make every effort to mitigate against those concerns.
Official opening of Gateway 14	The new large warehouse at Gateway 14 has been completed and handed over to The Range, for their main distribution warehouse. It is a high specification building, with a number of sustainability features. Gateway 14 is part of Freeport East, which provides businesses with a range of benefits including tax relief.
Energy saving improvements in listed buildings	There is currently a consultation about applications for energy saving improvements in listed buildings across the district. The councils are considering the relaxation of the current requirement to apply for listed building consent. This would hopefully reduce the bureaucracy and time it takes for owners of listed buildings to make improvements to their properties. The consultation runs until 29 <sup>th</sup> December and can be accessed from the website <a href="https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MUEQAA/">https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MUEQAA/</a> .
Call for land to support nature recovery	Last week was National Tree Week and MSDC are now working with The Woodland Trust. There is a call for land which could be planted or improved for nature. Of particular interest is land of low agricultural value, which is near or close to existing natural habitats, or can help provide green corridors to link them up. MSDC currently has low tree cover so the Council is already actively planting more trees and changing the way that public open spaces are to be managed.
Locality Award	A reminder that this year's locality awards are still open for applications. Any group or organisation can apply for amounts of £250 or more. Please contact one of us for an application form.
Councillor drop-in sessions	Jen and Sarah hold monthly drop-in sessions, alternating between Woolpit Teacups and Wesley Café in Elmswell. The next few sessions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 10-12 at Wesley Café</li><li>• Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 10-12 Teacups Café.</li></ul>

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