

District Council Newsletter

Green Party take over Leadership.

Green Party Councillor, Deborah Saw, who represents the North Cosford Ward, has started her tenure as Leader of the Council. Under the original coalition agreement, drawn up last year, the Green Party as the largest group are to lead the Council in years two and four. Deborah, who has been a deputy leader during year one, takes over with a number of ambitions.

Continuing to improve Babergh's council housing for tenants remains an urgent priority. Babergh have invested c£1m already to clear a repairs backlog, with new systems planned and improved communication with tenants pledged.

The council also wants to encourage more community-led housing and stimulate the formation of Community Land Trusts.

More parishes will be supported to complete Neighbourhood Plans or People and Place Plans to help shape future development, with a renewed emphasis on good design in residential and commercial buildings.

Deborah also outlined further action to combat climate change, including a desire to explore how communities can create local renewable energy plans.

Work will also continue to remove red tape around making listed buildings more energy efficient will continue, while Babergh also hopes to become the first council to allow property owners to put solar panels on outbuildings without planning permission.

Cabinet restructure

The Council have restructured and renamed the cabinet portfolios to bring them in line with the Councils action plan. Renaming the portfolios also brings them in line with Mid Suffolk to prevent confusion for the officers. In addition to this Councillor Busby, who was leader of the council last year, has taken a step backwards due to his ongoing health issues and Cllr Helen Davies (Pinewood & Sproughton) has taken on an official role.

47 new electric charge points in council car parks thanks to £300k grant

An additional forty-seven new electric vehicle (EV) charge points are now available in Babergh and Mid Suffolk councils' car parks, to help more people transition to EV cars and reduce emissions.

The 22kW fast charge points can charge two cars at the same time, resulting in ninety-four new EV parking bays spread across a number of council car parks in the districts.

Funded by a £300k grant from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), their aim is to help more people transition to EV cars over the coming years – in turn helping to cut carbon emissions and reduce air pollution.

However, although this is good, residents have commented that these chargers are always empty. While we do need the infrastructure first to encourage people to transfer to electric I, and other members of our group, understand people's frustrations and we have asked the council if there some spaces can be freed up for normal cars e.g. placing a hood over the charger, until the demand increases.

Aldham to Hadleigh Road

As you may be aware work on the road between Aldham and Red Hill, which has been closed since last November, was due to begin this month. Unfortunately, ecologists have identified birds nesting in the hedge close to where the work was due to take place. As it is illegal to disturb birds during the nesting season work has now likely to be postponed until September. SCC have asked for an exemption but are not expecting to get one.

Half term activities for kids.

A healthy selection of half term activities was again on offer for children across Babergh as the district councils help to support families during the school break.

From arts and crafts to soccer schools, dance classes to adventure days, there was something on offer for every child to enjoy. There were even activities for the whole family to get involved with, such as family swim sessions or cooking classes.