

District Council Report

Listed Building Window improvements

Babergh and Mid Suffolk have one of the highest numbers of listed properties in the country. Unfortunately, owners of these historic properties often find it difficult to heat them due to their poor energy performance. Very often the single glazed windows are a significant factor in this, and it leads to higher bills for owners and is costly for the environment. Historic England says retrofitting historic buildings will be fundamental to achieving net zero.

Previously owners had to apply to the councils for Listed Building Consent to make upgrades. This could be time consuming and was not always successful.

The Councils, working closely with Historic England, have now introduced a new Local Listed Building Consent Order – the first rural councils in the country to achieve this. Local Listed Building Consent Orders allow local planning authorities to make a pro-active and blanket grant of consent for listed buildings within a defined area.

It makes sensitive improvements quicker and easier:

- Secondary glazing on historic windows - Grade II listed buildings can now have secondary glazing installed on historic windows without needing consent from the council, subject to certain conditions.
- Replacement of windows in Grade II listed buildings with double glazing, or energy saving glass – Where original windows have already been replaced after receiving listed building consent, they can be replaced again, subject to conditions.
- Replacement of an existing window in a modern extension to a listed building - Windows in Grade II listed buildings can be replaced, or have secondary glazing installed, if they have previously received listed building consent, subject to conditions.

District Wide Governance Review

At the last Babergh Full council meeting it was agreed that a community governance review will be undertaken to look at the following aspects of governance arrangements for existing parishes:

- to consider the names and styles of any existing parish council
- to consider the number of councillors to be elected to any existing parish council; and
- to consider any grouping arrangements.

The review, which has been requested by a number of parishes in the district, will not automatically mean there will be changes but it will examine whether there is a case for change. The CGR Working Group is not seeking a particular solution at this stage. It wishes to test views and assess what solutions are the right ones to pursue with each individual parish.

As a parish council you should have received a request for submissions back in May, if you wanted to submit one. No submissions were required if you are happy with the status quo.

Council Call For Sites

In preparation for the Joint Local Plan review the council has begun a 'Call for Sites'. The Call for Sites, which began on the 20th October runs until 5pm on 9 January 2026.

This invites submissions of land to be put forward for consideration to be included in Local Plans - for uses such as housing, employment, sports and leisure and community purpose although no site put forward will automatically see development take place.

Each suggested site will be considered by planning teams before it is decided whether it goes forward as a proposed Local Plan site allocation. Decisions about preferred allocations will be based on a range of evidence and assessment, as well as through public engagement.

Corks Lane

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny and I - I'm vice chair, have initiated an investigation in to the Corks Lane development. Initially we have instigated a full review of everything that has happened from 2017 until now. We will then take this before the Overview and Scrutiny committee to ascertain which areas are of greatest concern. The plan is then to seek independent advise on these areas.