

District Council Report January 2026

Car Parking Charges

Cabinet last week agreed an increase of in parking charges across the district. The increase which is proposed to be 20% in Hadleigh and Sudbury also initially included Sunday and Bank Holiday Charging. However, after a protracted debate it was agreed that Sunday's and Bank Holidays should remain free.

The proposed charges will be –

Short Stay

Tariff	Existing	Proposed
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.20
Up to 2 hours	£1.50	£1.80
Up to 3 hours	£2.00	£2.40
Up to 4 hours	£2.50	£3.00

Long Stay

Tariff	Existing	Proposed
Up to 2 hours	£1.00	£1.20
Up to 3 hours	£1.50	£1.80
Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£2.40
All Day	£2.50	£3.00

Season Ticket changes

Season Ticket type	Current fee	2026/27 Proposed fee	Fee Increase	Average Discount
1 Month	£25.00	£30.00	20%	48%
3 Months	£70.00	£84.00	20%	51%
12 Months	£250.00	£300.00	20%	57%

An independent report was commissioned by the council to review the effects of the car park charges implemented last year. The report, completed by the University of Suffolk, identified that while car park usage had declined, footfall and dwell time had remained fairly consistent, while spend had increased.

With the data showing that charges have had little to no effect on visiting numbers the cabinet have agreed to raise charges to ensure that full costs are recovered in the ongoing battle to shore up the council's financial position.

Locality Funding

I have been pleased to be able to help out a number of groups across my parishes with some funding from my locality budget. So far I have helped Chelsworth Village Hall buy a new cooker; Kersey Table Tennis club invest in some new tables; Whatfield buy a cabinet for their defibrillator; Semer parish council with some money towards bridge repairs and hopefully the Roundabout magazine.

Funding/Grants

There are a number of grants available that may be useful to the village.

Via Babergh -

Community Development Grants, which can be applied for towards revenue, capital or pre-project costs and activities are available to up to 100% of total project costs to a maximum grant of £10,000, for projects or activities taking place in 2026/27. Successful applicants will be required to deliver their project within 12 months of an offer being accepted. Community Development Grants are currently open for applications until 18 January 2026, with one application window per financial year.

The Sustainable Communities Food Fund has been established to support small scale, community led, food initiatives such as community pantries, fridges and food pop-ups. Between £250 and £5,000 can be applied for, towards capital costs such as the purchase of equipment, or revenue costs such as workshops and delivering activities to clients or volunteers. Funding will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, with applications being accepted until **31 March 2026**, though the Fund may close for applications prior to that point should funding be fully allocated.

Via Rural Services Network –

Small grants for village halls – Defra and ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural Areas)

Grants up to £5,000 are available to help make modest improvements to rural community buildings in England such as boiler replacements, insulation, toilet upgrades and new kitchens.

Awards can be made to cover 20% of eligible project costs, up to a maximum amount of £5,000. The balance of funding for the works proposed must be in place or at least confirmed within 6 weeks of making an application to the small grants fund.

Project expenditure must take place before 31 March 2026.

[Village halls small grants fund - ACRE](#)