

Monthly Report July'25 - Sproughton & Pinewood Ward

GENERAL UPDATES

The district wide monthly update can be found here - Download [Babergh's town and parish briefing notes](#)

Dave Busby 1950-2025

Sad to announce that one of our Lib Dem district councillors died peacefully on Sunday, July 27, after a long illness. Dave was very well-known in the area having been first elected in 2003 to represent the ward of Copdock and Washbrook, he was a diligent councillor and re-elected several times serving 20yrs in the role. Throughout his tenure Dave held several key positions, including Deputy Leader of Babergh District Council, Cabinet Member for Assets & Investments, and Cabinet Member for Planning. He also served on the Joint Constitution Working Group and represented Babergh on the Local Government Association Assembly. Even after receiving a cancer diagnosis in 2023 he continued to serve with remarkable resilience, never wavering in his commitment to public service.

Other councillors have described him as a "conviction politician —principled, fair, and deeply respected across party lines. He was not afraid to ask awkward questions which would result in some interesting conversations at times.

Outside of politics, David was known for his love of gardening, local history, and community events. He was often seen chatting with residents at village fêtes or tending to his garden with the same care he gave to his public duties.

He is survived by his family, to whom we extend our heartfelt condolences.

Brockley Wood Quarry Hearing: This hearing had been postponed due to the designation of a Conservation Area in Bentley that intersected with the quarry site shortly before the assigned hearing date. The postponement enabled proper assessment of the impact of the new conservation area on the planning application. Despite the parish council & their KC making a good case against the quarry and associated crushing plant the application was approved with some constraints on the crushing side of things.

Devolution & Local Government Reorganisation: The team working on LGR have now put forward a three unitary option feeling that option still offers savings but also sufficient levels of local representation (approx. 60 councillors per unitary) which came out as a high priority. Under the single unitary option it would be anywhere between 90 & 140 councillors so much less representation of residents. The full council voted to agree on the principle of three unitaries in July's meeting meaning that this option will be fleshed out in full ready for presentation to the council in September to enable the proposal to be submitted to the government by the deadline, assuming Babergh votes in favour of it. I also arranged a meeting for the 16 or so parish councils on the left hand side of Ipswich to hear about current thinking behind the three unitaries and more details about how that would pan out, hoping to address some the concerns I have been picking up on around the number of councillors, wards inclusion of parishes within a particular unitary, housing requirements, level of council tax amongst others.

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Suffolk Association of Local Councils: I attended the 75th anniversary celebration of SALC. SALC are there to help local parish & town councils operate more effectively, provide advice, training and help resolve issues. They also represent us at a national level via the National Association of Local Councils and other bodies on particular issues. The meeting heard from the CEO of Suffolk Wildlife Trust as well as watched the new film on the work of SALC and featured a number of parish councils and well known faces (not me). I also managed to catch up with Terry Waite who is one of the presidents of SALC - I had met him before - he is a very impressive individual and happens to be really nice too.

'Trek, Treat, Repeat': This is one initiative my stomach really likes the sound of - Babergh and Mid Suffolk have launched a new initiative called *Grazing Walks*, designed to promote scenic countryside walks paired with visits to local pubs, cafés, and shops. Featuring over 20 picturesque locations—including Thornham Magna, Thwaite, Kersey, and Boxford—the guide encourages residents and visitors to explore the area, stay active, and support independent businesses. The walks are mapped out on the [Heart of Suffolk website](#), with routes suitable for both walkers and cyclists. The project is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and aims to boost wellbeing, tourism, and the local economy.

PORTFOLIO

Sustainable Travel: We have decided to place the second Eezybike installation in Lavenham. Given it's a tourist attraction we expect a good take-up. Hiring numbers in Sudbury are good - it seems that a number of people are hiring the bikes and going to a convenient pub. Others are using it to try out an electric bike and to improve their fitness. I have begun to look at the River Gipping Path from Stowmarket to Ipswich with a view to identifying gaps that need to be improved to hopefully end up with a contiguous path - something that would be brilliant in terms of access, exercise, well-being etc.

Biodiversity: The Biodiversity Action Group met at the end of June to start to determine an action Plan. We had a half day workshop to forward what we felt was important. Richard Parmee (BMSDC Biodiversity Officer) is now translating our thoughts into a coherent strategy. I am keen to ensure that we get as much land as possible protected so am on the hunt for areas that could be designated as a nature reserve.

Sproughton Nature Reserve: We are still waiting for Ipswich lawyers to sign the agreement. I have asked my opposite number in Ipswich Borough Council to chase this and am crossing my fingers that this is resolved soon. We also have another nature reserve being designated at the moment in Capel St Mary.

Suffolk Youth Climate Conference: I was invited to this by Suffolk One and pleased to attend. This was held on 2nd July with 250 students and 35 teachers in attendance. Well attended by schools across both districts along. Stour Valley were one of the winners with Debenham and Hadleigh High School as runners up in the Schools' Biodiversity Competition. During the plenary, students ranked taking action to increase biodiversity at their schools as

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the number one priority. See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m002fdm6/look-east-lunchtime-news-02072025>

School Green Skills Summit: The arrangements are now final. We have 10 schools attending so fully booked. It is being held on 10Oct25 at the Royal Hospital School near Ipswich.

THE WARD ITSELF

Parking at Suffolk One: I have been round Pinewood with the Highways rep to look at road markings, dodgy parking and to talk to residents who were out and about their experiences. I am compiling all the information that Melanie Hall & I gathered into a paper which should be available for review soon by interested residents before being sent to Highways as an official request for design & costings.

Traffic Solutions 4 Sproughton: The final version of the traffic paper has been delivered to impacted residents. Please reply indicating which solution you favour. This will then go to Highways, again for design & costings (I seem to be spending a chunk of time on traffic!)

Marks & Spencer - Copdock: The planning application is now in and available for comment. If you are interested please take a look and comment.

If you ever have an issue to raise with me please use the contact details below. I look forward to hearing from you.

Helen Davies

Councillor Helen Davies: District Councillor for Sproughton & Pinewood

Mobile: 07514 951190

E-mail: Helen.Davies@babergh.gov.uk

Twitter: @HelenDSproughtn