

Gislingham Ward
Mellis, Gislingham, Thornham Parva, Thornham Magna, Wortham & Burgate, Wickham Skeith.
District Councillor Report

April 2026

<p>Devolution and local government reform</p>	<p>In March the government announced its decision to form three new unitary authorities in Suffolk (covering West Suffolk, Central and East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich). Detailed boundaries are still being finalised. Further details can be found here: https://threecouncilsforsuffolk.org/</p> <p>Elections to the new ‘shadow’ unitary authorities will take place in May 2027. The unitary councils will take over formal responsibilities on ‘vesting day’ in May 2028. Until then, the existing County and District Councils will continue to deliver services as normal. This transition period is to enable detailed work on reorganisation to take place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Council elections – May 7th 2026 • Elections to the new unitaries – expected May 2027 • Mayoral elections – expected May 2028
<p>Council funding for neighbourhood plans</p>	<p>Mid Suffolk District Council has introduced new funding to support Parish Councils to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans and Reviews. A Neighbourhood Plan is written by the local community to help ensure that the right types of development are built in the right place.</p> <p>Until last year, groups developing a Neighbourhood Plan were able to apply for government grants of £10,000 to help cover the costs of technical support (funds were distributed via an organisation called Locality.) This grant scheme was withdrawn in June 2025. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have agreed alternative funding for our area, with grants of up to £20,000 to support groups to prepare Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>The government has increased targets for house-building across the country, as part of its ambition for 1.5 million new homes in this parliament. In Mid Suffolk the housebuilding requirement has risen from 535 to 748 new homes a year (up 40%).</p>
<p>Changes to waste collection and recycling start in June</p>	<p>The Better Recycling scheme is starting in June. This will see the collection of food waste and additional items for recycling, with more frequent collections overall.</p> <p>The new bins are now arriving throughout the district: every home across Mid Suffolk will be receiving a new blue-lidded bin and a smaller food-waste bin and food waste caddy. Until the start of the new scheme in June, residents should continue to use their existing bins as normal.</p> <p>Information packs will be sent out with further details, and information can also be found here: www.suffolkrecycles.org.uk and on social media @suffolkrecycles</p>

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Boost to arts funding	<p>The Mid Suffolk Culture Fund was first awarded in 2025 to support community organisations that contribute to the rich culture of the district and help provide opportunities for people to engage with the arts. The fund ran again this year and 10 organisations have received a share of just under £120,000, with projects covering a wide range of areas and all age groups. This includes funding for Orchestras Live, which will use a grant of more than £8,000 to facilitate an intergenerational orchestral project in Eye and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Information on other grants available from the District Council can be found here: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/community-funding</p>
NSIP's	<p>Bron Curtis Pricipal Planning officer (NSIP's) is continuing to run the expanded Norwich to Tilbury regular drop in session that includes all NSIPs including Ecopower Suffolk. The sessions will be held via Teams using the existing meeting invite and is open to anyone with queries about any NSIP. The next session is at 11.00. 14th May Link to join: Norwich to Tilbury NSIP: Babergh and Mid Suffolk drop in surgery Meeting-Join Microsoft Teams</p>

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