

STOWLANGTOFT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**MONDAY 19 JANUARY 2026 AT 7.30 PM
BADWELL ASH VILLAGE HALL, BADWELL ASH**

Present: Cllrs D'Lima (Chair), Bourne, Cuff and Suggett. A Osman (Clerk) was in attendance with County Cllr Mellen and one member of the public.

57 **Apologies for absence.** Cllrs Catchpole and Wales sent apologies which were accepted.

58 **Declarations of Interest.** Cllr Cuff declared an interest in Agenda Item 9a - Finance.

59 **Public Forum.**

Revised Bin Collections. It was observed that the recent leaflet to residents about revised bin collections due to start in June lacked a contact number. It was noted that further communications from Mid Suffolk District Council on this topic would be forthcoming.

60 **County Councillors Monthly Report.** The meeting noted County Cllr Mellen's monthly report which had been pre-circulated. County Cllr Mellen highlighted the following:

- Local Government Review. A government decision on Suffolk unitary council options was expected in March.
- Elections. The potential for County Council elections to be postponed again was noted; government clarification was expected within weeks.

HGVs. The Chair indicated an increase in HGV traffic through the village, often causing damage to the verge on narrow stretches. It was **agreed that the Clerk would forward information to Cllr Cuff on LorryWatch and how the A0188 permit system** was enforced.

County Cllr Mellen left the meeting at 7.43pm

61 **District Councillors Monthly Report.** The meeting noted the monthly reports from District Cllrs Bradbury and Richardson which had been pre-circulated.

62 **Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2025.** Cllr Cuff proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2025 be approved. Cllr Bourne seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

63 **Matters arising from the last meeting:**

No matters arising.

64 **St Georges Church.** Cllr Cuff reported that:

- A successful Carol Service had taken place.
- The new Church sign was due to be installed imminently.
- The 3rd Sat of the month working party was due to restart shortly.
- Work to install a water supply was moving forward.

65 **Finance & Administration:**

a. Finance Report. The meeting noted the pre-circulated financial report (current bank balance of £2,349.04 and the projected outturn at the end of the FY of £600 current account and £1,500 savings account), circulated before the meeting. Payments authorised:

Badwell Ash Village Hall	£40.00
Gipping Press (Newsletter)	£100.00

Cllr Suggett agreed to authorise payments.

b. Precept for FY26/27. The meeting **agreed a precept for FY26/27 of £4,250**, an increase of £400.

c. IT Assurance Update. The meeting noted the pre-circulated brief on IT assurance changes and **agreed to move to the new Clerk email and website address from 1 February 2026**.

d. Asset Write Off. The Clerk reported that the Clerk's laptop was not compatible with Windows 11 and was now out of support for Windows 10. The **meeting agreed to write off this asset** and for the Clerk to dispose of it in an environmental friendly manner.

66 **Planning matters.**

Nil

67 **Highways matters:**

No further highways issues were raised

68 **Correspondence.**

None

69 **Councillors' Forum:**

Community Fund. Cllr Cuff reported that action was in hand to transfer responsibility of the Community Fund to 3 new trustees who live in the village.

70 **Date of next meeting:**

The next meeting will be held on Monday 16 March 2026 at 7.30pm in Badwell Ash Village Hall. If any planning applications or urgent issues are identified after 19 January, these will be considered at a short meeting on 16 February at 7.30pm.

The meeting concluded at 8.01pm.

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Chair

January 2026

Parish Report

Cllr Andy Mellen, Thedwastre North

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Protecting Suffolk's Rivers

At council on Thursday 11 December, my group proposed a motion to strengthen protection for rivers in the county via the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Rivers which include the right to flow naturally, be free from pollution or contamination and the right to recover from environmental harm. Councillors in the group and those from other groups at the council spoke passionately about rivers and the harm being done to them by sewage and agricultural and highways run off. Unfortunately, the Conservative group opted to vote against the motion and it was not carried. Other motions tabled at the meeting including writing to the government to protest the recent budget announcements, a motion criticising the council's record on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the importance of local Post Offices.

Suffolk Minerals and Waste Plan

At Cabinet on Tuesday 2 December, preparation arrangements were agreed for the county's Minerals and Waste plan, which is now five years old and due for renewal. The plan looks at the county's needs and decides what planning measures need to be taken to meet them – for example, aggregates such as sand and gravel which are necessary for housebuilding. As the government has announced high targets for housing in Suffolk, the amount of these materials needed will be higher than before. As the Local Government Reorganisation process means that Suffolk County Council will likely not exist by the time the plan is due to be adopted, the decision made by Cabinet was to undertake all the prep work and gather evidence for it so that the new authority/ies who have to publish the plan will be well-placed to do so once established.

Review of SEND progress

On Thursday 4 December, the council's Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee convened to scrutinise progress on the action plan for improvement to Suffolk's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services. The action plan was developed following a poor inspection report from Ofsted and CQC in November 2023. Council officers and Cabinet members for children's services joined the meeting and acknowledged that although progress had been made to clear the backlog of EHCPs and improve the waiting times to produce them and review them annually, many families had not yet felt the benefit of improvements the council and health partners were trying to embed. The Cabinet member for Education and SEND apologised at the meeting for this. It was noted that some issues, like the shortage of speech and language therapists, were a national issue rather than specific to Suffolk. The council is also working closely with the Department for Education and in partnership with Bedford Borough Council on best practice and support with strategy. The government's Schools white paper, which is expected to include an overhaul of the SEND system nationally, is expected soon in 2026. Members of the committee included education professionals and parents of children with special educational needs who expressed their concern that the council was still not providing a good enough service to Suffolk families.

New Funding for Buses and Sustainable Travel

Suffolk has been awarded £27m of funding for bus services from the government's Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG), this can be used for routes, ticketing or improving infrastructure like bus stops and shelters. Previously known as the Bus Services Improvement Grant, communities in Suffolk will be able to suggest improvements in their area and 'bid' for funding via the Suffolk on Board website: <https://www.suffolkonboard.com/>

The council has also been awarded just over £12m from Active Travel England to promote sustainable travel in the county. This can be used to invest in footpaths, cycle lanes and other infrastructure. Examples of how this funding has been used recently include pedestrian crossings in Bridge Street and College Road by Ipswich waterfront and improved cycle routes including from Ipswich Hospital to the waterfront area, Nacton Road in Ipswich, Main Road in Martlesham, and within Woodbridge as part of the town's current active travel project. Cllr Chris Chambers, the Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy at the council, said it was important for the council to develop a network of measures to encourage people out of the car wherever possible in order to reduce congestion and pollution.

Warm Homes in Suffolk

At the end of November 2025, Suffolk County Council secured £1.38 million from the government's Warm Homes Local Grant Fund, which means Suffolk residents living in properties which are not energy efficient could be eligible for funding to make their homes warmer and reduce their energy bills. Residents and landlords are urged to apply quickly, as the funding must be allocated by the end of March 2026.

The fund aims to provide free energy saving improvements to energy inefficient homes if residents are on a low income, receive certain benefits or live in a certain postcode area. This could be wall and loft insulation, solar panels or air source heat pumps. To be eligible, Suffolk homes must be privately owned (either by you or your landlord) and have an

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D, E, F or G (you can find this out when you apply). Household income must usually be £36,000 a year or less - but if you earn more than that, you might still be eligible if either:

- you live in a certain postcode area (certain areas of Beccles, Felixstowe, Ipswich, Lowestoft and Stowmarket)
- someone in your household is getting certain benefits
- you have a severe or long-term health condition, which is adversely affected by living in a cold home

Once these conditions have been approved, an assessment of your home will identify which measures are best suited to your property. These will then be installed by trusted contactors, for free. You can find out more and apply using this link:

<https://www.warmhomessuffolk.org/>

In addition, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk council have teamed up to provide Winter Warmth Packs to help vulnerable residents stay warm and healthy at home even if they are struggling with rising living costs. Referrals are via community groups, food banks, GP surgeries or hospitals and each pack includes items such as thermal hats, gloves, blankets and gilets, tailored as necessary – for example, children’s winter coats can be included. Although the Warm Homes Healthy People programme is delivered by East Suffolk Council, it is a county-wide programme.

Helping Older Drivers Stay Safe

Suffolk’s Fire and Rescue Service are holding workshops at fire stations around the county to advise older people on how they can stay safe while driving. Nationally, one in four car drivers killed on the roads last year were aged 70 or over, and as a rural county, many residents are reliant on cars to stay independent. The sessions are planned at the following venues for 11am-1pm:

- Tuesday 13 January – Woodbridge Fire and Police Station
- Wednesday 14 January – Stradbroke Fire Station
- Tuesday 27 January – Wrentham Fire and Police Station
- Wednesday 28 January – Ixworth Fire Station
- Tuesday 10 February – Holbrook Fire Station

To book a free place, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/suffolk-fire-rescue-service-road-safety-86298781223?msockid=1b58e35a30906c973b40f56031016d19>

Social Media and Helpful Links

Follow us on:

Twitter - [Suffolk Green, Lib Dem & Independent Group \(@SuffolkGLI\) / Twitter](#)

Instagram – https://www.instagram.com/suffolkgli_group/

Facebook - [Suffolk GLI - Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent Group | Facebook](#)

Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at](#)

[Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](http://suffolkgli.wordpress.com)

Cost of Living help and advice:

[https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychan](https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6)

[nel=6](https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0) Benefits advice and support:

[https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchann](https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0)

[el=0](https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0)

Flood preparation advice: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/fire-and-rescue-safety-advice-in-the-community/what-to-do-in-a-flood>

<https://suffolkprepared.co.uk/get-prepared/risk-advice/flooding/>

Flood recovery advice and support: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

District Councillor Report January 2026

<p>Devolution and local government reform – election delays</p>	<p>The government has delayed the election for a Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk until May 2027.</p> <p>The government has also offered the option for Councils undergoing reorganisation to further delay local elections i.e. the County Council election currently planned for May 2026.</p> <p>There is a County Council vote on this on January 12th.</p> <p>The Green Party position is that we must have elections at the allotted time not decided by politicians when it's convenient for them.</p>
<p>New 3G football pitch</p>	<p>A new 3G football pitch is set to be delivered in Stowmarket after funding from the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation was secured.</p> <p>Mid Suffolk District Council, has secured 51% of the project costs from the Football Foundation, with the pitch due to open in spring 2026.</p> <p>It will be built on the grounds of the high school and made available for community use.</p> <p>The pitch will use cork infill –as part of research by the Football Foundation that is looking at the use of a variety of different pitch systems.</p>
<p>Stowmarket Innovation Gateway</p>	<p>Construction work on a state-of-the-art skills and innovation centre at Gateway 14 in Stowmarket has reached a key milestone with the core construction now complete and the centre due to open in June next year.</p>
<p>New Community Darts Venue</p>	<p>A new community darts venue has opened with £125k in matched funding. The venture which will be an accessible community darts hub, offering everything from darts equipment and accessories to coaching sessions and pay-and-play lanes.</p>
<p>Waste education in schools</p>	<p>This year sessions were held for over 1700 children and staff at primary schools in Mid Suffolk to provide education about what happens to our waste.</p>

Councillor David Bradbury
07514 951188

District Councillor Report – Harry Richardson

4th January 2026

<p>Warm Homes Suffolk</p>	<p>Warm Homes Suffolk is a collaborative initiative led by Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council, in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Babergh District Council, and West Suffolk Council. In November 2025, Suffolk County Council secured £1.38 million from the government’s Warm Homes Local Grant Fund.</p> <p>Residents and landlords are encouraged to apply soon, as the funding must be distributed by the end of March 2026. The grant provides free energy-saving upgrades—such as wall and loft insulation, solar panels, or air source heat pumps—to homes that are energy inefficient. To qualify, applicants must either have a low income, receive certain benefits, or live in specific postcode areas.</p> <p>Eligibility requirements for Suffolk homes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property must be privately owned (by the resident or their landlord). • The home must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D, E, F, or G (this can be checked during the application process). • Household income should generally be £36,000 a year or less. However, those earning more may still qualify if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They live in designated postcode areas (parts of Beccles, Felixstowe, Ipswich, Lowestoft, and Stowmarket). ○ Someone in the household receives certain benefits. ○ A household member has a severe or long-term health condition made worse by living in a cold home. <p>Once eligibility is confirmed, an assessment will determine the most suitable improvements for the property, which will then be installed free of charge by approved contractors.</p> <p>To check if you qualify or to learn more, visit https://www.warmhomessuffolk.org/ or call 03456 037 686.</p>
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<p>Gateway 14 Community Benefit Fund</p>	<p>The Gateway 14 Community Benefit Fund has been established to help local community groups deliver projects that make a real difference in their area. Each year, £30,000 will be available for the next three years.</p> <p>Organisations located within five miles of Gateway 14 can apply for grants to cover either running costs or capital expenses, with funding available for up to 100% of a project's total costs. The fund welcomes a wide range of projects, provided they support at least one of the following themes: skills and education, sustainability, environment, innovation, or sport.</p> <p>Applications are now open, and groups can request up to £5,000 for their initiatives. The fund is supported by Gateway 14 Ltd, a private company owned by Mid Suffolk District Council.</p> <p>This fund's launch follows the recent opening of the Bauder distribution centre</p>
	<p>at Gateway 14 in July, with Assan Panel, a Turkish building materials manufacturer, set to join the site soon. Construction is also progressing on the £18 million Stowmarket Innovation Gateway—a modern, three-storey, 35,000 sq ft centre owned by Mid Suffolk District Council. This facility will offer office space for fast-growing start-ups, areas for collaboration and innovation, training and meeting rooms, and a café.</p> <p>The deadline for the first round of funding applications is 1 March 2026.</p>
<p>£1.5m town centre fund</p>	<p>About a year ago, Mid Suffolk District Council launched the Stowmarket Town Centre Gateway Fund, using proceeds from its investment in Gateway 14 on the town's outskirts.</p> <p>In the first round, the fund provided £125,000 in match funding for a new community darts venue, The Bull Room, on Tavern Street, and £615,000 towards a major restoration and expansion at the John Peel Centre.</p> <p>The scheme has now reopened for new applications, creating opportunities for new businesses in the town centre. The council is working with landlords to bring under-used properties, including empty shops, back into use. This may involve purchasing properties for short-term rental or supporting refurbishments for new business ventures.</p> <p>The fund also helps potential tenants find suitable locations, making it easier for new businesses, pop-ups, and other ventures to launch their first premises. Mid Suffolk District Council is collaborating with partners such as Stowmarket Town Council, private owners, businesses, and prospective tenants to find long-term solutions.</p> <p>The council is especially interested in attracting arts and cultural activities, tourism, community events, retail, small business workspaces, leisure, food and drink, and any initiatives that bring something new to the town. All bids will be reviewed by technical and stakeholder panels before a decision is made</p>

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