

# District Councillor Report for Bramford June 25

## Plug In Suffolk

Six rentable electric vehicles have been launched across three locations in Babergh and Mid Suffolk—Sudbury, Hadleigh, and Needham Market—as part of the *Plug In Suffolk Car Club*. These cars are available for residents to book by the minute, hour, or day, offering a cost-effective and eco-friendly alternative to car ownership.

The initiative provides free membership and account credit to Suffolk residents, aiming to reduce car numbers, improve air quality, and promote electric vehicle use. The project supports Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan and will expand to more locations, including Stowmarket, Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, and others.

Funded by Suffolk public sector bodies and managed by Suffolk County Council, the scheme is delivered by *Co Wheels*, with infrastructure support from *Connected Kerb* and local district councils. An 18-month trial will assess its potential for wider county adoption. Our nearest one is probably Ann Street, Ipswich, up behind Coes.

## CIL Bids

Elmswell to Woolpit Footpath £3.09m

The money has been agreed to deliver the footpath will connect these two villages and cross the A14, after they have both had a huge amount of building in recent years. This has been done on the assumption that they will share key infrastructure. We have been trying to get the money to do this in the council since 2008 and hope this will now deliver a safe, healthy alternative to the car. Work to start next year.

Needham Market Football Club £100,000

Needham Market FC is set to build a new 285-seat stand at its stadium after receiving £100,000 from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The project includes terrace seating, accessible toilets, a lift, and an eco bike shelter.

The funding covers nearly half the project cost, with additional support from the Premier League Stadium Fund, club contributions, and a previous £10,000 capital grant. The development aims to enhance the matchday experience and support the club's growth, benefiting both fans and the local community.

## Funding Surgery

You should have an invite to the Funding Surgery at Lt Blakenham Village Hall from 10-00 to 12-30 on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July. Sarah-Jane and the team will host, with guest speakers from CAS and the lottery as well as our Cil team. There will be a questions and answers session and the opportunity to arrange a 1 to1 meeting with a member of the grants team if needed.

## Trees for life

The Tree for Life scheme is open to families in the district who welcome a newborn or adopted child during 2025, offering them a free fruit tree to plant as a lasting

symbol of the child's arrival. Families who have experienced the loss of a child during the same period can also apply for a memory tree.

The annual initiative has distributed over 2,000 trees to date, with 300 families participating last year. It not only helps mark personal milestones but also supports environmental goals by increasing tree coverage and encouraging interest in nature. Participants can choose their tree type and receive expert planting and care advice. I have two trees a James Grieve for my daughter and a Conference pear for my son from the 2020 and 2022 schemes

### **Scrutiny**

This month the Scrutiny Committee will look at the CIFCO property portfolio where £50m was invested by Babergh and Mid Suffolk in 17 Commercial properties around the UK. It was bought with a public works loan and should create an income while it slowly pays off the low interest loan. This has always been very controversial, part because to balance risk most of the property is a long way from Suffolk, but also the risk of borrowing money to invest. I will have attended this meeting the morning of our Parish Council meeting, so can report more then.

### **Grass Cutting**

Mid Suffolk has promoted their grass cutting with a video, that is quite interesting to understand the scale of what public realm does. They cut 2,421,804m<sup>2</sup> of grass every year in 197 parishes and towns includes about 6 cuts a year. Quite often with 1 mowing and 4 watching it seems.

Kind regards

Cllr James Caston