

# District Councillor Report for Bramford April 25

## **Mid Suffolk Culture Fund**

Mid Suffolk District Council has allocated £100,505 through its new Mid Suffolk Culture Fund to support local cultural projects. Nine organisations received funding for initiatives like preserving East Anglian traditions, supporting dance-based dementia sessions, and engaging children in theatre and arts.

Key recipients include:

Longstanding partnerships with the John Peel Centre and The Food Museum were also bolstered, while core funding was granted to groups like the Association of Suffolk Local Museums and Suffolk Artlink. These initiatives aim to maintain Mid Suffolk's cultural vibrancy, benefiting both residents and visitors.

## **Free Leisure Centre Membership for Parkinson Sufferers**

Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre and Stradbroke Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre are offering free memberships to individuals living with Parkinson's and up to three carers, as part of an initiative co-designed with Parkinson's UK. Now in its fourth year, the program provides access to gym, swim, group exercise, and online Synergy Dance classes.

Physical activity has been highlighted as crucial for managing Parkinson's symptoms and improving well-being. Examples of success include John Hunter, who, following a Parkinson's diagnosis and knee replacement, regained strength, confidence, and stability through supported gym sessions and exercise groups.

Everyone Active, the leisure centre operator, partners with Parkinson's UK and Mid Suffolk District Council, aiming to create inclusive environments for the Parkinson's community. Leaders in the initiative emphasized its importance in enhancing independence, quality of life, and providing social support for those living with the condition.

## **Housing Targets**

The Government has significantly increased annual housing targets as part of its ambition for 1.5 million new homes during this parliament. Babergh's target rose by 86% (from 416 to 775 homes annually) and Mid Suffolk's by 37% (from 535 to 734 homes annually). In response, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are reviewing their Joint Local Plan to ensure local control over housing development is maintained.

The councils are collaborating with town and parish councils, advising them on housing requirements and encouraging Neighbourhood Plans, which empower

communities to shape their future and hold statutory weight in planning processes. Meetings were held with local leaders to share information and support. I am part of a work group looking at the issue of meeting these targets while aiming for sustainable, high-quality, affordable homes. Informal engagement for the Joint Local Plan review is scheduled to begin this summer.

| <b>Parish (ONS labelled)</b> | <b>Indicative requirement over 20-year period</b> | <b>Identified residual dwellings (on commenced sites)</b> | <b><i>Permitted residual dwellings (on not started sites)<sup>2</sup></i></b> | <b>Indicative requirement minus permitted dwellings</b> |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Bedfield                     | <b>50</b>   | 9   | 10  | 31  |
| Bedingfield                  | <b>50</b>   | 3   | -   | 47  |
| Beyton                       | <b>100</b>  | 13  | 16  | 71  |
| Botesdale                    | <b>150</b>  | 80  | 5   | 65  |
| Braiseworth                  | <b>10</b>   | -   | -   | 10  |
| Bramford                     | <b>400</b>  | 283   | 13  | 104   |
| Brome and Oaklev             | <b>70</b>   | -   | -   | 70  |

Bramford is one of the highest requirement parishes but is eased by the fact that we have delivered housing. We have a need of 117 to consider and I think it is time for us to think about where is the least damaging place to build them as if the market turns around developers will be crawling all over us. 100 houses is a huge amount, and we need to think very carefully about how it will work, if this will be imposed on us.

Kind regards

Cllr James Caston