

Mid Suffolk District Councillor Report for Bacton Ward - Sept 2026

(Bacton, Cotton, Finningham, Westhorpe and Wyverstone)

Mid Suffolk finalists in political purpose awards	Mid Suffolk District Council has been nominated for a national award for our work on nature recovery. Mid Suffolk has committed £1.8 million over the last few years, investing in land for community access and nature, including land in Stowmarket, Thorndon, and Palgrave whilst also expanding its tree planting and meadow management programme.
New wind Turbines proposed near Eye and in Ipswich	A change in the planning rules on onshore wind has prompted some new applications coming forward: A new wind turbine is being proposed just off the A140 on the Oaksmere business park near Eye, there is also a proposal for a large turbine on the banks of the River Orwell at Cliff Quay near the Orwell bridge, (the media have suggested that if built the turbine in Ipswich would be the largest structure in Suffolk at 150m tall, this is of course not true as since 1959 the largest structure in Suffolk is Mendlesham Mast at 304m tall).
Major sports boost with new 3G football pitch and athletics track in Stowmarket.	A new 3G pitch and mini-athletics track has been completed in Stowmarket, The project was funded by the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation with contributions from Mid Suffolk District Council, as well as S106 developer funds. The pitch uses a sustainable cork infill instead of the usual rubber crumb, and forms part of a research project run by the Football Foundation that is looking at the use of a variety of different pitch systems. These sports projects are aimed to help address health inequalities and improve quality of life. The project was finished on budget and ahead of schedule.
Affordable Homes prioritized for local communities	Residents with a connection to local villages will now get priority for new affordable housing before housing is offered to the wider district in Mid Suffolk's Allocation Policies. It will still be balanced according to those urgent, critical or in serious need. Veterans, care leavers under 25 and those fleeing domestic abuse remain a high priority.
Changes to planning rules	The Government announced changes to the National Planning Policy framework, which came into effect immediately when it was published in late August. There are also further changes to planning coming at the end of October. Among the changes are restriction on councillors 'calling-in' planning applications to a planning committee, thus removing a key area for communities to have a voice. The government have also announced that they will require a spatial plan for the region linked to the upcoming mayoral authorities. The biggest change for us could be the tightening of housing targets, and the circumstances of invoking the tilted balance in favour of sustainable development will in future have to demonstrate that any harm will be "substantial" if any application is to be refused. Mid Suffolk will be running some sessions to help explain the changes to town and parish councils.
Local government reorganisation	Whilst preparations for this are continuing apace, the new Reform administration at Suffolk County Council have launched a judicial review of the decision which we are expecting will get into court during the autumn. For everyone's sake, we hope that there will soon be clarity about what is happening.

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Mid Suffolk District Council: phone 0300 123 4000, or drop in to see Council staff or Citizen's Advice at Eye Library, every Friday 9.30-12pm, or Ipswich Street in Stowmarket Mon-Fri – no appointment is needed.