

Monthly Report Nov '24 - Sproughton & Pinewood Ward

GENERAL UPDATES

The district wide monthly update can be found here - [Download Babergh's town and parish briefing notes](#)

Babergh Planning Committee: There has been a lot in the press recently about the slowdown in processing planning applications. This isn't solely down to planning departments. There has been a real drop-off in the number of medium/large applications being submitted and consequently a big reduction in the number of planning committees. I have had 2 planning committee meetings in the past 5 months. However, officer approvals have continued in that time for the smaller applications (conservatory, loft extension etc).

Brockley Wood: I do a little bit of work with Bentley PC as the councillor for that ward is unwell. They have had an application for a quarry and crushing plant which has been approved once by SCC, rejected at Judicial Review but is now coming back to SCC in the New Year. Bentley are continuing to fight this one. We will see what happens in the New Year.

Budget: Work is continuing on the budget for the next financial year. Councils have been told by the government that the funding for the next financial year will match that of the current year but is based on the assumption that councils will increase council tax by the maximum permitted without needing a referendum. Babergh approach to funding services is to head for full cost recovery - apparently Babergh has been subsidising the cost of many services up until now. We legally are required to have a balanced budget, we must fund statutory services so something has to give. I've sat in several meetings where we have looked to see if some things are duplicated, if some projects can be put back, vacancies are not being filled. Its difficult to do this - everyone is trying to make the best decision they can based on a series of 'not great' options. Official budget is due in front of cabinet in December.

PORTFOLIO

Greenhouse Gas Report: This report is now being produced an annual basis - I'm presenting it at Cabinet in December. Babergh's emissions are decreasing. Most of the emissions are from the two leisure centres at Hadleigh and Sudbury followed by our social housing. Work has been done on installing PV panels at the leisure centres + EV charge points. Daily business processes have been revamped so, for example, heating the swimming pool is done when electricity production is at its highest. Work is underway to bring up the EPC rating for our social housing - this was funded by the government but only for a limited number of homes. We've been applying for more funding recently. I hadn't realised that some of Babergh waste fleet runs on HVOs (vegetable oil). Got asked in the recent Overview & Scrutiny Committee by my fellow ward councillor how much it had all cost - I'm waiting on numbers from finance. A lot of the climate change stuff is mandatory, so we have no choice but to do it - shame the government won't cough up the money to do it as well!!

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Climate Change Briefing: I get a monthly climate change briefing from the Climate Change Team along with my opposite number in Mid-Suffolk. A lot of the focus is on bringing our social housing up to scratch, reducing emissions in our leisure centres, installation of EV charge points, school education programmes such as the recent Green Skills for School Summit and identifying more sustainable travel options for people. And last but not least Community Energy Schemes. There is a new community energy scheme in Bildeston and the Climate Change Team visited Sudbury recently to see if there was interest there in a new group that could investigate possible schemes e.g. PV panels.

Ezy-Bike Pods

Sudbury Town Council have agreed to the installation of an electric 'bike for hire' pod at Kingfisher Leisure Centre. Anglie Water turned down the offer to install a pod at Alton Water so we are rethinking that one.

THE WARD ITSELF

CiL Briefing Session: Babergh have been holding several CiL briefing sessions recently to remind people of how to apply for CiL. Parishes can apply for either CiL &/or S106 monies which are raised from developers. Its not always entirely clear what the money can be spent therefore it is always worth contacting Babergh to find out if your request can be supported. The webpages have been updated recently and are now more informative [Community Infrastructure Levy - Babergh District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk](https://www.babergh.gov.uk)

Sproughton Local Nature Reserve: This project stalled for a couple of years but is now being worked on again. Babergh & Ipswich Borough Council need to define the legal agreement and then work with Natural England to complete the designation. I am trying to get timescales out of Babergh so we know when this is likely to take effect.

Parking at Suffolk One: I have submitted the BSIP bid for additional stops at Suffolk One to coincide with lesson times & end of the college day. Results are due early next year. Given it's the first bid I have written I am hoping it will go through as it doesn't cost that much compared to other bids. However, given that bids from earlier funding rounds have been retained and the complete list will be re-prioritised it is difficult to gauge the likelihood of success. [Bus Service Improvement Plan - Suffolkonboard](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk) I've also asked Suffolk One to host a meeting with residents on the parking issues. I am still planning on canvassing residents close to the school regarding parking restrictions but feel this is going to be a difficult one to get agreement on.

Traffic A14 Diversion via Sproughton: Not surprisingly an accident occurred on the High Street. An oversized load clipped one of the houses that is very close to the road. All of us in Sproughton have been saying that this is an accident waiting to happen. The parish council is in regular contact with Highways (Suffolk &/or England) to work through issues - Cllr Charlie Barber is doing a sterling job on leading this one. We are STILL (long story) trying to get a straight answer on alternative diversion routes (we believe this is possible).

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Church Lane Flooding: The source of the flooding has now been confirmed and the landowner/tenant farmer has now agreed to meet with one of the residents to see what can be done - hopefully its as simple as building up the bank. That doesn't solve the entire problem as the drain in the middle of the road is blocked and needs jetting by Suffolk County Council, which given past experience means it will probably get done Summer 2026!!

Taylor Wimpey Phase 2 Design Codes: The parish council & myself had a follow-up meeting with Taylor Wimpey to go through the consultation response they have had so far. I still have lingering doubts as to whether the comments will be taken into account - the updated version of the design codes document is due before Christmas - Christmas Day reading - yeah!! WE are expecting their next planning application next Spring.

CASEWORK:

Work continues.....roads & transport seem to take a chunk of time I can't go into details as residents info is confidential but the stats are below:-

| OPEN | BDC | | | SCC | |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Category | Both | Spr | Pine | Spr | Pine |
| CiL | 1 | | | | |
| Climate Change | | | | | |
| Environmental Health | | | 2 | | |
| Flooding | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Grants | | | | | |
| Health Care | | | | | |
| Housing | | 1 | 1 | | |
| Lighting | | | | | |
| Planning | | 1 | | | |
| Policy | | | | | |
| Public Realm | | | 2 | 1 | |
| Public Nuisance | | | | | |
| Roads | | | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Transport | | | | | |
| TOTALS | 1 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 4 |

| CLOSED | BDC | | | SCC | |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Category | Both | Spr | Pine | Spr | Pine |
| CiL | | | | | |
| Climate Change | | | | | |
| Environmental Health | | 1 | | | |
| Flooding | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Grants | | 2 | 1 | | |
| Health Care | | 1 | | | |
| Housing | | 1 | 1 | | |
| Lighting | | | | | |
| Planning | | | | | |
| Policy | 1 | | | | |
| Public Realm | | 1 | | | |
| Public Nuisance | | 1 | | | |
| Roads | | | | 2 | |
| Transport | | | | | |
| TOTALS | 1 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

If you ever have an issue to raise with me please use the contact details below. I look forward to hearing from you.

Helen Davies

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