

DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE 2017 PARISH ANNUAL MEETINGS IN THE CLAYDON & BARHAM WARD

Mid Suffolk District Council each year produces an Annual Report to showcase the work it has done and its notable achievements and results. As the time from the Council's year-end to May 4th covers the period known as "Purdah", prior to the County Council elections, the decision was initially taken to remove any reference to Councillors in the Annual Report document and focus instead on officers. However, with Councillors being at the heart of local authority governance there has now been a rethink and the Annual Report is being revised for issuance after 4th May. We would encourage all parish councillors and parishioners to look out for this report in due course.

We are pleased however to report back to our parish councils on the "Top 10 Achievements" in 2016/17. There are:-

1. **New Council Homes** – We are building 65 new council homes across the two districts, with 14 already in the hands of their new occupants. This includes new homes in Great Blakenham. Right To Buy receipts have also been recycled back into use by the purchase of houses on the open market.
2. **Funding for Community-led-Housing** - £430,000 of Department of Communities & Local Government grant was secured to promote community led housing and to kick start the delivery of new affordable homes.
3. **Green Energy Income** – Income generated this year from the solar PV panels installed on council house stock is up by almost 70% on last year. £460,000 of revenue was received by the council in addition to the free electricity enjoyed by the tenants.
4. **Recycling Improvements** – 20 tonnes of glass a month has been collected and recycled. We have seen a 6.5% increase in our business waste service customer base.
5. **Opportunities For Business** – Enterprise Parks in Stowmarket and Sproughton have been established. It is anticipated that once complete they could attract up to 293 new businesses and 2,400 new jobs.
6. **Reduction in Empty Homes** – 97 empty homes have been brought back into use, generating £130,000 of income to the local economy this year.
7. **Reduction in Avoidable Evictions** – a Financial Inclusion Project has taken over 150 referrals and helped tenants claim £33,106 more in benefits to which they were entitled. It averted 13 evictions.
8. **Empowering Communities** – We've helped communities to bring forward neighbourhood plans across the districts. The first 3 have now been adopted – Lavenham, East Bergholt and Mendlesham. A further 14 communities have started the formal process.
9. **Annual Electoral Canvass** – 97% of those surveyed indicated that they feel well informed about electoral matters.

10. **Community Grants** – The Councils provided over £725,000 in grants to community groups. There was £492,184 in revenue funding and £233,526 in capital funding. That capital funding represents 12% of over £2million total project costs.

YOUR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS in the Claydon & Barham Ward are:-

John Whitehead : 01473 833279 or john.whitehead@midsuffolk.gov.uk

John was first elected to Mid Suffolk District Council in 2011 and then re-elected in 2015. In his first two years John served on the Scrutiny Committee and Development Control Committee. John then joined the Executive Committee in the role of Portfolio Holder for Planning. In this last council year 2016/17 John has remained on the Executive Committee but in a change of role, became Portfolio Holder for Finance.

James Caston : 07789957444 or james.caston@midsuffolk.gov.uk

James was first elected to Mid Suffolk District Council in 2015. James is on the Scrutiny Committee, Regulatory Committee and Licensing Act 2003 Committee. Scrutiny Committee provides an excellent introduction for new councillors into the detailed workings of the Council and its interactions with many outside bodies.