

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ANNUAL REPORT FOR LAVENHAM 2025-26 – CLLRS MARGARET MAYBURY AND PAUL CLOVER

Local Government Reform

Council has been dominated this year by Local Government Reform (LGR). Two options were proposed for the new Unitary Authority (UA) model to serve Suffolk.

Suffolk County Council presented the case for one Unitary Authority while Babergh District Council alongside other District Councils proposed three Unitary Authorities.

The Secretary of State has decided that three Unitary Authorities would best serve Suffolk. Lavenham and Sudbury will be covered by Western Suffolk with approximately 60-66 councillors.

Elections for the new Councillor positions will be held in 2027 and a year long transition will occur where the new UA councillors work alongside the incumbent County/District councillors in creation the new administration. BDC will terminate in April 2028. The new UA councillors will not be involved in the day to day duties covered by County/District councillors.

Call for Sites

The first list of accepted sites is expected to be published in May 2026.

This list will then be refined to sites that are suitable for development alongside the content of adopted and emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP's).

Up to £20k funding is available in 2026-27 to support NDP's. Parish Councils will then be invited to make expressions of interest.

When considering the merits or otherwise of a particular site this should be carried out with reference to the overall new housing target set for the parish.

References to the new Joint Local Plan (2026-2045) will also come into play here, therefore a full understanding of these individual elements will be required in order to present the best case for the parish. Indicative housing requirements for NPD's will continue to evolve in 2026. It will probably be 2029-30 before the final list of sites is agreed.

With the Government's stated mission to build 1.5 million new homes by the end of their term, all communities will be affected by this. Therefore, it is important that all possible measures are implemented in order to help manage this expansion in housing stock in local communities.

Babergh Housing

Babergh District Council is focusing on increasing affordable housing through its [Homes and Housing Strategy](#) and a Joint Local Plan aiming to meet housing needs up to 2037. Key plans include building on council-owned land, utilizing s106 developer contributions for affordable units, and supporting community-led housing to address a significant increase in housing targets.

Ward Issues

Ward issues which your district councillors have interacted with, over the year, covered most of Babergh's statutory matters plus more, including:

- Resolving issues involving condition of Clay Hill Lane Byway
- Lobbying to affect replacement of protective filter grid at Lavenham Butcher's culvert in order to prevent flooding of premises and roadways.
- Making representations to Babergh Planning Department on behalf of Lavenham Parish Council in regard to local planning applications
- Locality budget award for emergency arboratorial works
- Supporting Neighbourhood Plan and advising on funding
- Advising on Call for Sites
- Lobbying against car park charges increase
- Advising on the new Better Recycling scheme
- Advising on Anglian Water's community funding
- Lobbying successfully to prevent the £500k redevelopment of Melford Rd/Girling St Junction, Sudbury and the consequent threat of increased congestion and pollution
- Lobbying against increased car park charges in Babergh towns
- Reporting on BDC Cork's Lane residential development
- Lobbying against the reduction in BDC sheltered housing facilities
- Advising on the Solar Together scheme and Solar Panel Partnership for businesses scheme.
- Reporting fly tipping and dog bin waste collection
- Reporting on Flooding issues and support
- Advising on Warm Homes grants for residents
- Advising on various grant and funding opportunities
- Advising on interim housing requirement
- Advising on Defibrillator Services
- Advising on Avian Flu outbreak
- Liaising on footpath maintenance
- Advising on SiD's data analysis
- Consulting on local bus services

Between us we attend as many parish council, social events, volunteering positions, Babergh committee and council meetings as is possible to do so. Our work is varied, fulfilling, sometimes frustrating too but thoroughly enjoyable. We are privileged to have such vibrant and caring parishes within our Ward. We extend our thanks to all our Ward parish councillors for their time and dedication to the needs of their parish and parishioners.

Cllr Margaret Maybury and Cllr Paul Clover 13/05/26