

District Councillor Report (October 2024)

Dear Councillors,

The new government, following their national conference, are starting to make their 'political direction' known to everyone, including Babergh District Council. At our full council meeting on 24th September we passed a motion to write to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner and local Members of Parliament to reiterate the need for immediate changes to the broken council funding model. It's extremely difficult to plan ahead when the 'value of resources' available is only made known to you 3 months or so before you make your budgetary decisions. Across the country, many councils are facing significant financial problems due to years of erratic national policy changes. BDC needs to invest in desperately needed new council properties, ensure repairs and maintenance services are robust, and make existing homes more efficient.

Babergh have endorsed plans which will see improved recycling introduced from 2026, alongside already agreed plans for weekly food waste collections starting at the same time. The changes were discussed and accepted, in principle, by Council on the 24th September, ensuring the council can meet new government legislation. From 2026, residents will be able to recycle more items in their existing household recycling bin. Glass and cartons such as Tetra Pak – which currently must be taken to SCC recycling centres will be included. This additional recycling, combined with new weekly food waste collections, should have a significant impact on recycling rates, allowing over 58% of the waste that residents currently have to put in their black rubbish bin to be recycled instead. Clearly, there will be 'bedding in' issues – the governing alliance at Babergh are looking very closely at ways to successfully integrate, what is, the biggest change in 'waste collection' for a generation. All local authorities in Suffolk, as part of [the Suffolk Waste Partnership](#), are reviewing their waste and recycling services to ensure they meet [new nationwide 'Simpler Recycling' requirements by 31 March 2026](#). The legislation aims to make items collected for recycling consistent across England and Wales and improve national recycling rates which have not increased for some years.

On other matters a few notes below on general community action themes as follows:

Babergh Notes

I attended the BDC Council meeting on 24th September where Council considered and passed the new 'Simpler Recycling policy' – I'm sure there is much more to come on this subject as residents begin to understand the practicalities of the process.

Babergh planning committee hasn't met in September, mainly due to larger applications being delayed a little, post summer holidays, and an overall lack of significant planning applications coming into the district from applicants.

The joint BMSDC Overview and Scrutiny committee hasn't met in September, but has a busy programme of scrutiny work over the coming months. We will be looking at the Joint Homes and Housing Strategy on the 14th October.

As ever, I remain open to any members who would like to be briefed on specific anonymised examples of the council's work, in this area, please let me know. These meetings are also open to both parish councillors and members of the public wishing to attend either in person or online.

District Councillor Resident Surgeries

My regular meeting opportunity for residents in Capel St Mary Library will be Tuesday 15th October 9.30 – 11.00am. The forward date for next month will be Tuesday 12th November 9.30 – 11.00am. No appointment is necessary, but if residents need more of a confidential chat, please let them know beforehand so I can arrange some privacy. I'm also available 'on demand' at the Capel PC office in conjunction with Julie Lawes (Capel PC Clerk & RFO)

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