

LEADERS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Success of recent Needham Lake drop in and launch of plans

In October, we shared blueprints for the Needham Lake visitor centre which are now being developed to create a high quality and environmentally sustainable building including a café and new public convenience facilities.

This included a drop-in event on Thursday 10 October at Needham Market Community Centre.

We also carried out a survey at the event and have continued to promote this on social media.

The plans complement the rural nature of the site and aims to boost the number of visitors to the lake each year, supporting the local economy and encouraging more people to enjoy a range of outdoor leisure pursuits.

We’re now encouraging high quality, innovative tenant to bid to manage the new visitor centre and café.

Thank you and success of National democracy week, including our Cllrs webinar

Thank you to everyone who took part in National Democracy Week.

During the week, our councillors talked to groups we don’t often see in the council chamber. The week kicked off with a panel of Members from both councils holding an hour long live webinar with pupils at Thurston Community College. Members covered a range of topics, from planning to litter picking, responding to questions sent in live by the pupils watching.

Later in the week, staff and councillors set out to local markets to speak with people about what the council does and how it shapes our communities, giving market-goers in Stowmarket the chance to ask questions, find out more about services and discover what local government means for them.

Success of National Customer Services week the launch of our new Customer Charter

Having identified our customers as one of our five core values, during National Customer Services Week we launched our Customer Charter, which sets out the clear standards which we expect of our staff, and what our customers expect from us.

Importantly, customers aren’t just our residents, but anyone we interact with to deliver our services. This includes ourselves as councillors, colleagues, businesses, partners, local authorities, suppliers or others.

The week saw staff and councillors challenged to update their profile, add a voicemail among other tasks, with stories shared from staff based in our call centres.

We want to make it clear to all employees, that customers are central to the work we do every day, and by making sure we have a clear set of guidelines about what our customers should expect from us, we can be consistent in our approach, monitor our performance, get better at listening to customer feedback and improve our services.

If you would like further information about the charter, please do speak to myself or our corporate manager for customers.

Cllr open evening at the Mix in Stowmarket on 12th Nov

I’d like to remind all councillors of the open evening being held at the Mix in Stowmarket on 12 November. You are all invited to attend and hear about the ways in which staff at the Mix are working to support young people. It’s also an opportunity to hear from you. If you would like to attend, you must respond to the email invitation you received on 14 October.

Recycle Week & Empty home Week social media campaign

During Recycle Week, we ran a series of social media posts throughout the week to get residents thinking about how they can reduce waste and recycle better. The posts included daily challenges where answers could be found on the Suffolk Recycling website.

Please do encourage our residents to access the recycling dos, dont’s and tips online via the Suffolk Recycling website. Groups, whether they are neighbours, community clubs or other can also sign up for free education sessions.

Empty Homes Week

Empty Homes Week saw us encouraging residents to report empty homes in the district as well as to seek out our empty homes interest free loans of up to £20,000 if they themselves own an empty home.

Extension of holiday free swims

Following successful take up this summer, we have extended our free swim programme for under 17s during this October half term and the Christmas holidays. This will help to promote healthy and active lifestyles in Mid Suffolk. Free swims available at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre in Stowmarket and Stradbroke Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre.

Please do encourage residents in your wards to take part.

Former MSDC HQ Needham - Building work begins

As I’m sure you’re aware, planning for a total of 135 new homes were approved in February, on both the former HQ offices and former Needham Market Middle School site.

Building work is due to begin later this year and should be completed by the end of 2020.

Tree for life promotion

We are continuing to promote our Tree for Life scheme in Mid Suffolk, which sees parents and carers of all newborn or newly adopted children in 2019 able to apply for a free tree. This is ahead of this year’s deadline in January. The scheme also includes an option to apply for a memorial tree for parents who have sadly lost a child during the same period.

We will be contacting successful applicants early next year to confirm when they can choose and collect their tree.