

Helping to create thriving and resilient communities in Mid Suffolk

(2023-2027)

Vision and foreword from the Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council

This plan represents a re-set of the priorities and approach of Mid Suffolk District Council. Our society faces enormous challenges both now and in the future, and the council must play its part in enabling residents, households and communities to face these with confidence. Our approach reflects what our administration believes the people of Mid Suffolk want to see from their Council. It has three driving principles.

First, we want to see Mid Suffolk thriving. Not just economically – though that's important - but also culturally, socially and environmentally. With our focus on sustainability and community we want this district to be a great place to live, a great place to work, a great place to do business and a great place to visit. If we can achieve this, as councillors, as officers and working with all the other organisations involved, it will be something we can all be proud of.

Second, this plan puts environmental sustainability and social justice at the heart of everything we do. Climate change, the loss of biodiversity and the housing crisis are the challenges of our time, so we must do all we can to leave Mid Suffolk a better place for our children and grandchildren. We have to strengthen and enhance all the services we are responsible for and encourage and empower individual citizens, communities and businesses to play their part in creating a resilient district.

Third, I can promise leadership that is fully engaged to making change happen and committed to being transparent and responsive. We are not an administration that believes in business as usual, but one that faces the challenges that the future holds, and fully grasps the opportunities to improve the lives of the people of Mid Suffolk.

Cllr Andy Mellen

Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council

('Working Together' with Babergh District Council)

State of the District at a glance

Summary

 **102,700** residents and **44,300 households** (Census 2021)

25.3%



of residents aged 65 and over vs 18.4% across England. By 2043, the 65-plus population is expected to account for almost a third (32.4%) of all residents

Top 3 employment sectors:



- Wholesale and retail
- Manufacturing
- Construction



32.7%

of 16 to 64-year-olds hold a level 4 (degree-level) qualification or above vs 37.1% in England

Better than average levels of health but challenges remain



Life expectancy at birth:

Females - 84.8 years vs 83.1 in England
Males - 81.4 years vs 79.4 in England

25.3% of adults classed as physically inactive (25.8% across England)



87%

of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live



Median house prices are 9.15 times median annual resident earnings



Rollout of gigabit-capable broadband

Gigabit-capable broadband coverage: 46.6% vs 77.1% across England (June 2023)

8.5% average tree canopy cover for wards in Mid Suffolk



Our Approach

We want our communities in Mid Suffolk to thrive and we believe this can be achieved by working together.

We will achieve this by:

1. Providing open & honest leadership.
2. Putting environmental sustainability and social justice at the heart of everything we do.
3. Providing high quality council services that are easy to access when needed and that can be relied on.
4. Ensuring we are financially responsible with public money.
5. Continuing to listen to, and work in partnership with, all citizens of Mid Suffolk.
6. Working closely and cooperatively with others.
7. Enabling and empowering citizens to be active in their communities.
8. Nurturing community resilience and helping it to become more robust.

What we will focus on to help our communities and residents thrive

These are the actions we want to focus on. Some of these we can achieve directly but some we can only influence others to deliver as we do not run these services, but we will continue to represent everyone and lobby hard on their behalf.

Housing & infrastructure

- Increasing the availability of truly affordable homes, reducing homelessness
- Ensuring we have more insulated and energy efficient homes
- Supporting and encouraging private landlords and homeowners towards zero carbon living
- Enabling sustainability in the built environment
- Supporting better rural transport improving travel connectivity

Resilience

- Empowering and enabling more active citizenship
- Building capacity & capability within communities
- Ensuring we engage with all our communities
- Protecting heritage and its cultural significance
- Supporting local businesses
- Championing local food production
- Supporting the delivery of a greener, skilled economy

Community Wellbeing

- Enabling improved physical and mental wellbeing
- Working to respect, harness and promote local culture
- Enabling greater access to green spaces
- Enhancing walking and cycling opportunities
- Addressing inequalities (including health, poverty, educational and employment)
- Promoting greater pride in your place

Environmental Sustainability

- Working to achieve net zero carbon emissions as a Council and across the whole district
- Supporting and facilitating more community energy production
- Working towards zero waste
- Improving biodiversity and nature recovery
- Enabling and encouraging clean, secure, energy and water supply and management

Our next steps

We will develop an annual delivery plan to target activity in relation to each of the four areas of focus. This will include a combination of outcomes, outputs, performance indicators and targets that will form part of the quarterly performance reports and progress will be reported annually through the State of the District report. We will also utilise other external metrics for benchmarking such as the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) and the [Thriving Places Index](#).