

District Councillor Report: Elmswell Parish Council

April 2026

Devolution and local government reform	<p>The government has decided that there will be 3 unitary authorities in Suffolk.</p> <p>While detailed boundaries are still being finalised, the three unitary councils, West Suffolk, East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich are planned to be in place from May 2028.</p> <p>Elections for the new shadow authorities will take place in May 2027, with the new councils formally taking over responsibilities from May 2028.</p> <p>The idea of the transition period is to enable detailed work for reorganisation to take place, and services will be delivered as usual throughout the process.</p>
Funding for Neighbourhood Plans	<p>Government funding for Neighbourhood plans has been withdrawn.</p> <p>MSDC has now introduced funding to support Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans / Reviews, which seek to allocate sites for housing development that make an agreed contribution to meeting the district-wide housing needs.</p> <p>There is a limit of £20,000 for any specific Neighbourhood Development Plan.</p>
£120k boost for art and culture in Mid Suffolk	<p>This year, 10 organisations have received a share of £119,496 from the Mid Suffolk Culture Fund. for projects covering a wide range of areas and all age groups, including Stowmarket Culture Group, which has been awarded £15,000 for the delivery of the 'Jubilant' youth summer arts festival, and Orchestras Live, which will use a grant of more than £8,000 to facilitate an intergenerational orchestral project in Eye and the surrounding areas.</p>
A14 litter	<p>Work has started on a clear up of the A14. Two trucks of rubbish were cleared from the side of the A14 between junctions 49 and 50 , for Tot Hill and Stowmarket while the road was closed for work.</p>
Works starting on 3G football pitch	<p>Works to deliver a brand new 3G football pitch and mini athletics track in Stowmarket are due to start in the coming weeks.</p> <p>The project is being funded by contributions from Mid Suffolk District Council, the Premier League, The FA, the Government's Football Foundation as well as S106 developer contributions.</p> <p>Being built in the grounds of Stowmarket High School, the 3G pitch and athletics track will be available for community use with Everyone Active managing the facilities and associated booking system outside of school times.</p>
Riverside land purchased for future generations	<p>Mid Suffolk District Council has purchased almost eight acres of land in the heart of Stowmarket to preserve it as a future riverside haven for nature and wildlife for future generations. The land, between Takers Lane and the River Rat, adjoins the council's existing open space at Pikes Meadow – unlocking potential for a new riverside walk, connecting Combs Ford and Gipping Way. This is part of the Council's aim to enhance biodiversity and nature, but it also provides public green space, as well as safeguarding the land from future development.</p>
Elmswell – Woolpit cycle link	<p>Latest update from SCC colleagues suggests the design of the scheme will be completed by Spring 2027. We are checking with MSDC infrastructure officers that this will not cause issues with funding deadlines.</p>
Councillor drop-in sessions	<p>Jen and Sarah are regularly available for residents to come to meet for a chat. Next sessions are as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 28th April 10:00 – 12:00 at Wesley Café, Elmswell • Tuesday 19th May 10:00 – 12:00 at Wesley Café, Elmswell

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