

PAUL CLOVER/ MARGARET MAYBURY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FOR GREAT WALDINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 20TH APRIL 2026.

Three Unitary Authorities for Suffolk

The Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government has confirmed that three unitary councils will replace SCC and the five district and borough councils for Suffolk. These will cover western Suffolk, central and eastern Suffolk and Ipswich and Southern Suffolk. Lavenham and Sudbury will come under western Suffolk with approximately 60-66 councillors -all with increased workloads. 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 creating the new administration which will come into operation in April 2028. During transition the new UA councillors will not be involved in the day to day duties covered by County/District councillors. It will be some 4-5 years before the cost of transition breaks even.

Forthcoming county council elections

We are now in the pre-election period with its usual restrictions on publicity and use of council resources.

Call for Sites

At a recent meeting BDC briefed parish councils on the process to be expected under the new Call for Sites. Following evaluation, 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 Council's 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 NDP's will continue to evolve in 2026. It will probably be 2029-30 before the final list of sites is agreed.

Better Recycling

Bins will begin to be delivered in late April/May. Just as a recap and excluding the brown garden waste bin, in a standard household, alongside your black and blue 240litre bins there will be a black green lidded bin. These will be collected on a three week rotational basis.

The Black bin will be for general waste but not food.

The Blue bin will take clean, dry glass bottles, jars, tetrapak cartons, plastics of all types and aluminium products including foil.

The Green lidded bin will take paper and card.

Additionally, residents will receive two food caddies, one small one for kitchen surface and one larger external one for collection on a weekly basis.

Should additional storage of bins be a problem, the following will apply:

The Council will evaluate properties to determine their suitability for the Standard Waste Collection Service based on the following criteria:

- Steep Slope/Bank
- Number of steps
- No garden (both front and back)
- No external access to waste containers (i.e. only presented by access through property)
- Restricted access for vehicle or crews

For properties that do not meet the criteria, the Council will undertake a discretionary assessment.

If a property is deemed unsuitable for the Standard Waste Collection Service, residents will be contacted and informed about the wheeled bins or containers they will receive as part of the Non-Standard Collection Service.

The Council's assessment decision is final.

For non standard waste collections:

If it is determined that the Standard Waste Collection Service is not suitable for a household, alternative containers will be provided.

Where refuse collections are made using authorised single use sacks for refuse, the Council will supply and deliver these upon request (maximum of once a year).

Where collections for recycling cannot be achieved using wheeled bins, the Council will make provision by supplying sacks or smaller containers for the relevant waste

stream. Recycling materials will still be required to be separated as per the Standard Waste Collection Service requirements.

Non-standard waste collections will be made to the same schedule as the Standard Waste Collection Service.

For situations where more/less bins are required, these will be assessed on various criteria and is on application. There will be a one-off charge for additional capacity.

Fuel prices

Despite escalating fuel prices, the Govt has so far refused to delay the forthcoming tax hike in fuel duty in direct contrast to other European countries.

Compared with many counties, Suffolk has a high number of properties that are subject to the wild fluctuations on heating oil prices. Some 20,000 homes in Babergh and Mid Suffolk alone. Presently help appears to be in the form of community oil clubs where savings can be effected by buying in bulk. Interest free loans are also available from Eastern Savings and Loan Credit Union subject to credit checks. The Govt. have awarded Suffolk £1.7m in funding and it may be possible to apply for a grant from the Suffolk Local Welfare Assistance Scheme. Further advice can be sought from Sudbury Citizens Advice on 01787 321400.