



Babergh and Mid Suffolk



Community Engagement 2012-2013

What we have learnt from our communities and what we are doing about it.

What has been happening?

Last year Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councillors kicked-off the first stage in what we hope will be an ongoing conversation with all of our communities.

Their aim was to ask questions about the big issues that affect our communities and listen carefully to the answers and, where possible, begin to work with our communities to start addressing the key issues raised.

It is different to anything we have done before because it is not linked to any one financial year or budget. It is about us all understanding each other better and trying to work together at a time of austerity to deliver what is needed by our communities.

We gathered views through a variety of different means: At special events, during town and parish council meetings, via an online survey and through people writing to us.

So thank-you to all of you who provided us with information, ideas and opinions. We received responses from over 560 individuals, town and parish councils, businesses and other organisations across the two districts!

In this leaflet, we summarise what we have been told, how we are using what we have been told and how we want to carry on hearing from you.

And if you are reading about our Community Engagement 2012 – 2013 for the first time – it is not too late to join the conversation!



What have we learnt to date?

Lots! Here's a summary:

We asked: *'What's good about living here?'*

You said:

- Pleasant and attractive place to live
- Quiet, peaceful lifestyle
- Friendly
- Relatively safe – low crime
- Good community spirit
- Rural environment, lovely countryside

We asked: *'What do you want to change?'*

You said:

- Speeding in villages and towns
- Parking issues
- Very little or nothing
- Improved public transport
- More facilities for sports and leisure
- Improved broadband was seen as essential across most of the area
- Any overlapping of services by Councils (County/ District/ Town or Parish)
- More encouragement for small businesses and shops
- Better understanding of local needs
- More affordable housing
- Planning – less red tape, better consultation and generally improved service

We asked: ***‘What should the councils be doing more of in future?’***

You said:

- The councils should be enablers to allow communities to do things for themselves
- Listening to people who live in the area, taking a note of their comments and seeking to make a difference to their lives
- More liaison between county and district councils
- Better communication between the district council, parish councils and communities

In addition, the following key themes were mentioned many times:

- Economy and Employment
- Our Environment
- Health and Wellbeing
- Access and Rural Isolation
- Housing
- Our communities





So what have we done with what we have learnt to date?

It is early days, but:

We have used the information to shape our councils' vision and priorities. These are important because they will determine what we do more of, what we do less of and what resources we allocate to different initiatives that affect our communities. These are as follows:

For Babergh:

Vision:

- To create an environment where individuals, families, communities and businesses can thrive and flourish.

Priorities:

- Shape, influence and provide the leadership to enable growth whilst protecting and enhancing our environment.
- Shape, influence and provide the leadership to achieve the right mix and supply of housing.
- Shape, influence and provide the leadership to support and facilitate active, healthy and safe communities.



For Mid Suffolk:

Vision:

- We will work to ensure that the economy, environment and communities of Mid Suffolk continue to thrive and achieve their full potential.

Priorities:

- Lead and shape the local economy by promoting and helping to deliver sustainable economic growth which is balanced with respect for wildlife, heritage and the natural and built environment.
- Ensure that there are enough good quality, environmentally efficient and cost effective homes with the appropriate tenures and in the right locations.
- Encourage and support individuals and communities to be self sufficient, strong, healthy and safe.

The Vision and Priorities for both districts now need to be confirmed by the full council in April.

What do you think of what we have said in this leaflet?

So have we heard correctly what communities want – or are we missing your ideas and viewpoints? Are we starting to move along the right lines with our priorities?



Write to us: Tell us what you think and send it on email to: tellus@midsuffolk.gov.uk



Or post to us either at: Community Engagement 2013 (Communications), Babergh District Council, Corks Lane, Hadleigh, Ipswich, IP7 6SL

Community Engagement 2013 (Performance and Audit Services), Mid Suffolk District Council, 131 High Street, Needham Market, Suffolk, IP6 8DL



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