

District Councillor Report: Earl Stonham

November 2024

Affordable Housing on former Stowmarket Middle School site	38 new affordable homes have been constructed on the site that was previously occupied by the former Stowmarket Middle School, which closed in 2015. These houses include a wide range of sizes and rents, in order to increase affordability.
Council meeting	The monthly council was due to take place on the 31 st October, however it was cancelled due to agenda items being deferred to later meetings. The next meeting is due to take place on the 21 st November.
New Progress Power Community Benefit Fund	Mid Suffolk District Council has opened applications to a new fund which will make £270,000 available to community organisations and projects over the next three years. The Progress Power Community Benefit Fund has been provided by power generation business Drax as part of the development of the Progress Power Station on the former Eye Airfield site. £90,000 has been made available by the company each year to support local projects in the vicinity of the power station, with the fund and grant applications administered by Mid Suffolk District Council.
Stowmarket Town Centre revitalisation	At this month's cabinet meeting, funding was agreed for a list of new measures to help revitalise Stowmarket Town Centre. Measures discussed included a £400k grant scheme to assist with existing retailers, £100k to increase sustainability from the Wayfinding project, and £16k at developing overnight accommodation within the town.
Solar Together Scheme: Deadline extension	The extension for the Solar Together scheme has been extended to the 15 th November. The scheme is available for all residents for free.
Living Well in Winter Grant	The annual Living Well in Winter Grant was launched this year in order to support communities through the winter months. This includes assistance with financial management, improved accessibility for recreational activities, and the creation of new connections to allow community ties to flourish during the winter months.
Launch of Taxi Bus	An innovative new transport service "The Mid Suffolk Taxi Bus" – was launched at the end of October. It is being delivered by Swift Taxi Cabs, with funding from a Mid Suffolk District Council Rural Transport Grant. The service is designed to link villages in the District which have little or no public transport with towns that have useful services. The first two circular routes connecting Stowmarket to Bacton and Thurston are running. Earl Stonham is on Route 10/11 between Debenham and Stowmarket which will start soon. A further On-demand service is due to be introduced but will not cover any of the villages in the Stonhams ward.