

Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service launched

The government has (1 August 2023) launched the [Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service \(HLPAS\), which offers government-funded legal advice and representation \(legal aid\) to individuals facing possession proceedings which could result in the loss of their homes](#). As of 1 August, individuals who receive a written notice for possession (e.g. an email from a landlord or a letter from a creditor) will be eligible to receive free legal assistance. The HLPAS will be delivered by housing law experts and provided in two stages. The first stage will involve the provision of legal advice on housing, welfare benefits and debt issues to individuals facing home possession proceedings, with the aim of resolving problems early and avoiding court proceedings where possible. The second stage will provide in-court legal representation during possession hearings for those individuals whose cases cannot be solved out of court. [Individuals can find their nearest Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service provider by typing in their postcode and ticking the box 'Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service' on GOV.UK.](#)

A Locality award has been agreed to Needham Market Community Centre for funding for replacement crockery and storage boxes jointly with Ross Piper.

CIL and section 106 Funding has been agreed for replacement of the scout hut in Needham Market and provision of play equipment at Crowley Park. A big thanks for the hard work put in by the town clerk in securing the funding and continued work on both projects.

CIL funding has also been agreed for surface improvements to Sally Woods Lane in Creeting St Mary.

MSDC have recently contacted community organisations and sports clubs in Creeting St Peter to make them aware of Section 106 that can be applied for within their parish. Section 106 is available to apply for by community groups towards the improvement of existing and creation of new social infrastructure, including play areas, village halls and sports facilities. This is part of a proactive approach to available Section 106 funding.

MSDC work to transform Building Services continues to make good progress. A review of the Whole House Servicing contract being delivered by Aaron Services has taken place. This was to ensure synergy between the contract and the new Compliance Team structure, in order to deliver a service putting tenants needs first. Following the review, the decision has been taken to end the contract with Aaron Services early, this September. The existing contract will be separated into two - one for heating works, and one for electrical. There will be a full procurement exercise, which is anticipated will take 12 months. In the interim two temporary contractors will maintain services.

Mid Suffolk Biodiversity Team.

Over the past two years, our free trees, hedging and wildflowers scheme has help plant nearly 400 large trees, over 10,000 small trees and hedgerow plants, and enough wildflower seed to cover over 12,000m². We are continuing it into 2024, to help us deliver on our Biodiversity Action Plan, support wildlife at a time when it is under great pressure, and make the district a better place for all. We are open for applications that both help wildlife and have public access. Applications can be for:

- Individual trees
- Tree planting schemes – street trees, a copse, an avenue
- Small community woods

- Hedgerows – both new and improving existing ones, especially where they help bridge gaps in the landscape
- Community or scattered orchards – we are keen to help retain our local heritage varieties and provide a source of free fruit for the local community, as well as helping wildlife
- New wildflower meadows, or changing short mown grass into a meadow area

We want to increase tree canopy cover across the district, currently well below the national average. We also want to help get 30% of our land managed for wildlife by 2030 (30 by 30 national initiative). We are doing what we can on the council's land, but need help on other land to be really successful. This can include parish land, school grounds, recreation grounds, land open to the public regularly, millennium greens and community spaces. If in doubt, ask. If you have a site or sites you want to do something on to help wildlife, or know of groups within your area that may want to get involved (schools, environmental groups, community groups, charities, etc.), get in touch with us or feel free to pass this on to others.

Details on the scheme, along with the application form, are available here:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/planting-schemes/trees-hedgerows-and-wildflowers-scheme/>

We can provide all plants and protection (canes, stakes, ties and tree guards). Please note, we cannot provide labour or cover the cost of planting and watering afterwards, but we can give advice on how to plant and look after the scheme. We may also be able to help find volunteers to help with the planting.

We are here to help give advice on any application, and you are welcome to ask questions ahead of applying – we want to make it as easy as possible for you to make a difference!

Community clean-ups and pride of place key aims of council's new campaign. Mid Suffolk District Council has launched a campaign to clean-up neighbourhoods, build community pride and tackle the doorstep issues that voters said mattered to them. [Community clean-ups and pride of place key aims of council's new campaign » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)