

## DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT DECEMBER 2024

### **Pricing structure for emptying of dog waste and litter bins financial year 25/26**

The current annual costs for emptying litter and dog bins in Mid Suffolk is £49 per litter bin and £57 per dog bin. Historically dog bins were charged at a higher rate due to the weight collected and time take at each location.

MSDC have proposed simplifying the charges, introducing one cost for emptying either bin. Subject to approval by Cabinet – ratification is expected in the New Year – the proposed cost for emptying each bin will be **£50** per annum regardless of the waste stream collected. Councils will be credited for the overcharge in 2024/25.

### **New powers to tackle anti-social behaviour**

On 22 November, the Home Secretary, Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP, launched new powers to tackle antisocial behaviour:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-powers-to-clamp-down-on-anti-social-behaviour>

The new Respect Orders will give the police and councils powers to ban persistent offenders from town centres or from drinking in public spots such as high streets and local parks. These will be piloted prior to national rollout to make sure they are as effective as possible.

Perpetrators can also be mandated to undertake positive rehabilitation, such as attending drug or alcohol treatment services, or an anger management course to address the underlying causes of their behaviour.

Failure to comply with Respect Orders will be a criminal offence. Police will have the ability to immediately arrest anybody who is breaching their Respect Order.

As well as prison sentences of up to two years, criminal courts will also be able to issue unlimited fines and community orders, such as unpaid work, and curfews as punishment for breaching a Respect Order.

## **‘Workshop in a Box’ supports local engagement on the NHS 10-Year Health Plan**

In October, the government launched a national conversation about the future of the NHS, inviting the public to input via the Change NHS portal to shape the 10-Year Health Plan:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/change-nhs-help-build-a-health-service-fit-for-the-future/change-nhs-help-build-a-health-service-fit-for-the-future>

It has now launched ‘Workshop in a Box’ to help facilitate conversations with local communities.

<https://change.nhs.uk/en-GB/>

This resource includes a facilitator guide, workshop slide deck, and feedback form.

Online sessions to support facilitators will run from until mid-January 2025.

The resource will be available until 14 February 2025.

For questions, please email [changenhs@thinksinsight.com](mailto:changenhs@thinksinsight.com)

## **Regulator of Social Housing publishes analysis on tenant satisfaction in the social housing sector**

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has today (26 November) published its analysis of social landlords' first year of Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) results, as well as the results of its National Tenant Survey.

The TSMs are a set of questions that landlords need to ask tenants about their service, and management information data collected by landlords about the delivery of key services.

The TSMs help tenants hold their landlord to account in important areas, including their repairs service, maintenance of homes and complaint handling. They give valuable insight for social landlords, which they should use to improve their services to tenants and shared owners. They also serve as an important source of information for RSH's ongoing regulation of the sector.

The National Tenant Survey is an independent survey, commissioned by RSH, to provide greater insight into the factors that influence TSM results. It also serves as an independent benchmark for landlords' TSMs.

Press release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rsh-publishes-analysis-on-tenant-satisfaction-in-the-social-housing-sector>

## **Treating tenants with respect and combatting social housing stigma**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are among the first in the country to sign up to a new campaign to stop social housing stigma. An introductory workshop saw tenants, councillors and council officers come together to explore how to tackle the unfair stereotyping of council tenants.

A 'tackling stigma journey planner' was drawn up by the campaign together with the University of Durham, Sheffield Hallam University, the Chartered Institute of Housing, TPAS and YD Consultants. The councils will now work to develop commitments in line with this planner.

## **Warm Homes Plan launched**

On 21st November, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero launched the Warm Homes Plan:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/help-to-save-households-money-and-deliver-cleaner-heat-to-homesn>.

The plan will help people find ways to save money on energy bills and deliver warmer, cleaner energy to heat homes, with up to 300,000 homes to benefit from upgrades next year.

The package will support:

- homeowners in England and Wales to get a £7,500 heat pump grant through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme

- households install an air source heat pump without needing to submit a planning application in England
- social housing residents, lower income householders and renters to receive funded energy efficiency upgrades – including insulation and low-carbon heating – through the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund and Warm Homes: Local Grant respectively

## **Increase in legal aid to support most vulnerable**

Subject to consultation, the Ministry of Justice has today (29 November) announced that £20 million of funding will be invested in the legal aid sector every year to help vulnerable people challenge unfair housing legal battles and who may be at risk of losing their home, to have access to legal advice.

Press release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/historic-increase-in-legal-aid-to-support-most-vulnerable>

## **The Wilder Communities Partnership**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have joined forces with Suffolk Wildlife Trust alongside neighbouring councils to help local communities to protect and restore nature as part of a new partnership initiative. The Wilder Communities Partnership has received funding of £373,356 from the Suffolk Public Leaders Group (of which the councils are members) – to be distributed over the next three years for projects such as supporting local groups to create habitats for diverse species, providing guidance

on habitat management, giving training sessions on species conservation.

Existing initiatives have created valuable habitats for swifts, water voles, hedgehogs and stag beetles and have helped to preserve Suffolk's species-rich ancient grasslands.

## **Public health update**

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### **Reminder: A further case of Avian influenza confirmed in poultry in England this Autumn – registration reminder**

On 18 November, the government confirmed the first case of avian influenza since March 2024.

Risk levels have increased and all bird keepers are urged to take action to protect their birds and report signs of disease. Avian influenza is primarily considered a disease of birds and the risk to public health from the virus is very low.

It is now a legal requirement for everyone who keeps birds in England and Wales to be registered with the Animal & Plant Health Agency. New keepers of birds must be registered within 30 days of acquiring them.

Registering birds is important in the prevention and control of disease. The data is only used to help with disease surveillance work to keep birds safe, including contacting keepers with

information about disease outbreaks and advice on how to protect their birds.

Councils can direct bird keepers to the guidance on GOV.UK to complete their registration:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-as-a-keeper-of-less-than-50-poultry-or-other-captive-birds>

## **Reminder: Steps to help reduce the spread of stomach bugs and winter illnesses**

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is reminding parents of the simple steps they can take to reduce the spread of stomach bugs and winter illnesses to ensure they stay healthy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-issues-health-advice-following-the-half-term-break>

Cases of flu and norovirus are increasing as we head into the winter months. The UKHSA has advice on:

- Teaching good hygiene habits
- Knowing when to keep your child at home and when to send them to school
- Stopping the spread of stomach bugs
- Getting vaccinated

UKSA's e-bug resources for all ages can help you to explain and discuss hygiene habits and their importance, to your child or teenager.  
<https://www.e-bug.eu/>

Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

*Adrienne Marriott*  
*Blakenham District Councillor*  
*03/12/2024*