



Mid Suffolk District Report for The Stonhams Ward

District Councillor Locality Budget

The deadline for submissions was the 8th January 2016 and all submissions will now be reviewed. It is hoped that all responses will be forwarded to Parish Councils and other applicants before the end of February.

Housing

Council tenants who want to buy their own homes are being urged to apply for £20k grants to help them onto the property ladder.

Both councils were successful in applying for funding from the Government's £84m Right-to-Buy Social Mobility Fund, which was launched earlier this year.

This two-year funding opportunity, called HomeOwn, is designed to help Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council tenants to move out of their existing rented accommodation and to buy a home that best suits their needs on the open market.

The scheme enables Babergh and Mid Suffolk to make one-off payments to council tenants, of up to £20,000, as a cash incentive to buy a house for the first time – freeing up a council house for someone else in the process.

Initially the scheme was offered to tenants living in one and two-bed-homes. It has now been opened up to all eligible tenants regardless of the size of their current property.

A maximum of ten tenants from each council area can use the grants but so far only one grant has been successfully applied for.

Cllr Nick Gowrley, Mid Suffolk District Council's Portfolio Holder for Housing, said: "These grants are a great opportunity for our council tenants to be in a really good position to buy their own home. We all know how difficult it is for people to actually get a foot on the housing ladder so any assistance we are able to offer is fantastic.

"Housing is a strategic priority for both councils. We need to free up council properties to help more people move off of the housing register so if you think you may be able to do just that and eligible for one of these grants, then get in touch."

To apply for the incentive, tenants will need to show that the purchase of a property on the open market will be a sustainable one, they must have a clear rent account for the past 12 months, be purchasing a property that meets their current housing needs (all of the household must move into the new property) and prove that they can re-pay a mortgage.



For further information on this scheme – and to check eligibility – please contact Paulina Malinowska, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' Home Ownership Officer, on email: paulina.malinowska@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk or 01449 724753.

Mid Suffolk Income Reduction

It was expected that income to Mid Suffolk from the Government would be reduced by 30% for the next year. In actual fact, it has been reduced by 46% - far more than we were expecting. We are looking at further ways that we can save money and hope to have more information in the coming month.

Accommodation Review

We are currently looking at ways to reduce the costs for accommodation within the Councils. This may mean a restructuring of the way we work and or/where we are housed.

Litter

You may already be aware of the Clean For the Queen initiative however we would like to share our ideas with you for this and our own spin off campaign "Join The Tidy Town Pledge" (this link takes you to the KBT vision for Clean For The Queen <http://www.cleanforthequeen.co.uk/our-vision-for-the-clean-for-the-queen-campaign/2579/2/15/2361/159>). Public Realm encourages and supports Town and Parish Councils, community groups and individuals to take part in community litter picks at any time but Spring is often the busiest time for these type of activities to take place. The dedicated weekend chosen for Clean For The Queen is 4 – 6th March 2016 and whilst we are happy to support groups who wish to litter pick on that weekend we will not discourage them if they chose an alternative date as it would be difficult for us to provide kit if everyone wanted to litter pick on the same weekend. We have anticipated increased demand and will be increasing our stock of litter pick sticks and hi-vis waistcoats.