



Scattered Orchards

Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) are currently in the middle of the scattered orchard project as part of a local authority tree scape fund bid, where Stowmarket will see 36 fruit trees planted across 3 locations. So far, 12 trees have been planted on Elizabeth Way and 15 at Pikes Meadow. MSDC are looking forward to planting an additional 9 fruit trees on Gainsborough Road in the near future. Once established residents can enjoy a wide variety of fruits such as; apples, cherries, quince, greengage, pear and many more. In the future MSDC as keen to plant more trees that have a Suffolk connection, such as Lady Henniker apple trees which were planted this time, moving forward they would like to develop a programme where they are able to propagate local variety trees.



Meadow Management



Meadow Management was trialled in Stowmarket last year, this initiative was met with divided views. MSDC are now looking at a revised strategy for 2024, from feedback recieved from residents. Moving forwards MSDC will focus on using larger areas for meadow management and work hard to change opinions on the longer grass and wildflowers, this will include improving signage, social media messaging and information packs.

In addition, to help maintain support MSDC are changing the way their mowing team approaches this so they are more consistent and get it right from the start

Community Gardens



Town Councillor, Kieren LaThangue-Clayton provided an update about the Community Garden Project which has made good progress. A budget has now been set by Stowmarket Town Council and possible locations have been identified. It is hoped that initial work on the project will commence in April 2024, with the first garden being completed by Spring 2025. The Community Garden Project will be looking to recruit people to join the project team.

Locality Funding

Suffolk County Councillor Keith Welham has locality funding available and is keen to hear from any local community groups that may need funding, in particular environmentally themed projects. If you are interested in finding out more about this or would like to bid for funding please contact Keith Welham directly by email keith.welham@suffolk.gov.uk

Mid Suffolk District Councillor Terence Carter will also have funding available from April 2024.

Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC)

Mid Suffolk District Council are calling on local landowners to help them increase the districts' tree coverage and improve biodiversity. Of particular interest, is land of less agricultural value, near or next to land that may already be good for wildlife (woods, wetlands, meadows, heathland), or that can help join up other existing habitats, helping wildlife move more easily through the landscape. The survey identified that on average of just over 10% of Babergh and 8% of Mid Suffolk is covered by trees.



The aim is to increase coverage in both districts to a minimum of 15%, to support the councils' climate change and biodiversity ambitions. Those with available land can register their initial interest by emailing biodiversity@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Rattlesden River Valley Network



Local residents are continuing to observe diversity in and along the river, they have found lots of positive diversity and species such as water voles and otters.

Unfortunately the river has been affected by recent rain, with increased floods leaving a lot of sand and silt.

In certain parts a huge increase of Himalayan Balsom has been noticed, fears were expressed that the river line may be lost to this invasive species. Members of the Environment Forum were keen to work together to tackle this.

Stow Stories

Stow Stories received funding from Suffolk Archives which enabled 'Tinklers Quest' to be launched, several paintings were commissioned and are on display in 9 locations around the Town Centre, the next part is to digitalise the project.



Red Gables



Volunteers of Stowmarket (Eco) are continuing to litter pick throughout the town, and are looking forward to taking part in 'Team Up to Clean Up' next month.

Over 1000 hedgerows will be planted at Combs Ford Primary School in the next few weeks to celebrate their 40th Anniversary.

The Repair Cafe has reached over 300 repairs in just over 1 year.

Red Gables will be hosting Suffolk County Council's Cycling Event on Sunday 14th April 2pm-4pm, the day will include a cycling workshop, tips, maintenance and more.

Stowmarket Eco Future Group

Bonitas Wholefoods have donated money to Stowmarket Eco Future Group to produce an economical vegetarian/vegan recipe book which will encourage people to reduce food waste and create eco friendly food.

More good news followed, Stowmarket Eco Future Group have been networking and exploring a 'Climate Café' in Bury St Edmunds which has inspired them to recreate a similar event where people can express feelings, concerns and information. Also noted was how Stowmarket are becoming well known for being a green town, well done Stowmarket!



Stowmarket Town Council

In October, Go Green Go Wild was a hugely success environment themed event, the objective to inspire and educate young people about the value of wildlife and the importance of protecting the environment was achieved and over 1000 people attended. It has been agreed that this event will be held every 2 years, we look forward to 2025!



On the 5th December Stowmarket Town Council and Volunteers of Stowmarket Eco took part in the Community tree planting day, where 6 mature trees were planted on the Recreational Ground.

Looking forward to Spring, Stowmarket Town Council will be holding their annual 'Keep Stowmarket Tidy Week' Monday 3rd - Friday 5th April which includes 'Team Up to Clean Up' held on Tuesday 2nd April. If you're interested in taking part please email communities@stowmarket.org for more information.

Suffolk Tree Wardens



Tree and Land owner packs were delivered to residents in November with the Suffolk Tree Wardens hoping that this will encourage new owners to come forward.

Mentioned was the disappointment that trees are still being cut down in conservation areas with little information on the planning applications. Although, Suffolk Tree Wardens still feel that there is a lot to celebrate about in Stowmarket despite there being little land, trees are still being planted and initiatives are still finding small pockets of space to continue. Supplementary planning documents from Mid Suffolk District Council may help more trees to be planted in future.

Food Museum

Food Museum have struggled with a very wet winter and flooding. They are calling for volunteers to help clear the River Gipping of debris to help with this, the clearing days will be taking place on Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th February. If you would like to take part please contact the Food Museum directly.

Capital work is taking place on site with new toilets being built to a high environmental standard, including ethical insulation made using wool fibre, roof felt that has been installed with bats in mind.

Food Museum has received a grant from SHARE Museums East to purchase electrical tools, which will replace the petrol and 2 stroke powered machines, like hedge trimmers. which are much more environmentally friendly. They hope to be able to charge these with in their estate building using solar array.

The Food Museum was recently nominated for an award from Ipswich and East Suffolk for work that Green Therapy group,



Next Meeting

Wednesday 12th June 2024 at 7pm, John Milton Room

For more information about the Stowmarket Environment Forum please contact us on 01449 612060 or email communities@stowmarket.org