

Our Plan for Babergh

Quarter 4 Performance Report Appendix

A look back at the year 2024/25

In addition to our quarterly performance report, which focuses on our data and performance metrics, this appendix to the Quarter 4 report looks at the stories and case studies that brings that work to life. This appendix is organised by the 3 priorities set out in Our Plan for Babergh plus Our Approach



Revitalised & Improved Environment

Call for Land Scheme

Following our Stowmarket summit, a large woodland creation scheme has started this year in Wissington. Many smaller sites have also received support to plant trees, hedges and create meadows.

[Find out more about the Call for Land Scheme](#)

Public Realm – Attracting attention

Our Public Realm team delivered presentations to the Association of Public Service Excellence—two focused on grassland management and one to the national group—as well as to the Forestry Commission’s Woodland Accelerator Fund, highlighting our Call for Land scheme. The work of BMSDC has drawn interest from several external organisations.

Metropolitan Government of Tokyo

A delegation from the Metropolitan Government of Tokyo visited to discuss our Tree Canopy Cover Survey and draft Tree Planting Strategy, after we were nominated for national awards for their production. Supporting several schemes via the Rural Prosperity Fund, including wildflower meadow enrichment, creation of a garden of remembrance, clearance of a site to allow the local community to create a natural, accessible space, and creation of a community tree nursery

[Find out more about our visit from Tokyo](#)



The **Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)** which comes from central government (DEFRA) allowed us to provide 3 capital grant schemes; The Rural Business Growth Fund (for SMEs), The Rural Communities Fund (for charities and community organisations); and The Rural Culture & Creativity Fund (for cultural organisations).

- In Babergh we awarded 40 grants totalling £399,352.31 via REPF in 2024/25.

Here are some case studies for the Rural England Prosperity Fund

[Events Under Canvas](#)

[Armour Engineering](#)

[The Brook Inn, Washbrook](#)

The **Suffolk Business Grants Scheme (SBGS)** was funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) which comes from central government (MHCLG) and delivered by Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and West Suffolk Council with the support of business advisors at the Growth Hub. The SBGS provided revenue funding to support businesses across Suffolk to grow and become more productive, to encourage innovation and to become more environmentally sustainable through small grants to local small and medium enterprises (SME) businesses.

- In Babergh we awarded 3 grants totalling £13,945.07 in 2024/25.

[Read a case study about Insight Energy Renewables](#)

The **Business Innovation Support Scheme (BISS)** grants were funded by Babergh District Council and provided small grants under 4 schemes:

Enterprise & Innovation Fund - For any start-up or new business that has been trading for less than 12 months. Grants available of up to £5,000.

Growth & Increased Productivity Fund - Grants of up to £2,500 towards a project that will help achieve business growth or become more productive.

Environmental Sustainability Fund - Grants up to £2,500 towards changes that will help to reduce energy consumption.

High Street Premises Improvement Fund - Grants up to £2,500 towards improvements to the premises in a town or village centre.

In Babergh we awarded 7 grants totalling £17,281.85 in 2024/25

Economic Strategy

The new Babergh & Mid Suffolk Economic Strategy was created in collaboration with businesses across the districts and sets out our high-level ambition for supporting the economic growth of the Districts.

[Read our Economic Strategy](#)

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

During 2024/25 17 CIL projects were approved in the district to the value of £770,641 and 9 projects in total were completed with a value of £338,982.

The 9 completed projects included a variety of community support from improvements to community buildings, installation of solar panels and new play areas.



Long Melford Play Area



Glemsford Village Hall Solar Project



Boxted and Hartest Institute

[See a full list of Babergh CIL projects](#)



Resilient Communities

Capital Grants

Capital Grants are funding for projects providing improvements to, repairs to, or investment in community facilities such as play areas, village halls, sports clubs or charities. Up to £10,000 could be applied for across two funding rounds in 2024/25.

[Read the breakdown of Capital Grants Projects supported in Round 2](#)

Locality Awards

Locality Awards are a 'light-touch' Community Grant which allow District Councillors in Babergh to support small-scale community groups and projects or contribute towards larger projects taking place in their local area. Each Councillor has a budget of £2,000 to allocate.

Eligible projects range from improvements to community facilities and sports clubs, to wildflower planting, and the purchasing of equipment for youth groups or community shops. £64,000 has been allocated during 2024/25.

[See all Babergh 2024/25 Locality Awards](#)

Whilst a full list of grants and funding for 2024/25 can be found at the end of this document, here are two case studies demonstrating how BDC has supported communities. Further case studies can be found on our website: [Funding opportunities and support](#)

Suffolk Crucial Crew

Crucial Crew is a multi-agency safety event aimed at 10 to 11-year-olds, designed to provide children with vital life skills and safety advice. The program engages Year 6 students through interactive sessions that cover various safety topics, helping them learn how to keep themselves and others safe. Babergh District Council supported the Crucial Crew with £5,000 from our Small Grants fund.

[Read the full impact report](#)

Living Well in Winter

The Living Well in Winter Grant is aimed at supporting people in our communities to thrive over the winter months. The funding is aimed at helping local VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise) organisations tackle issues prevalent in our communities over the winter months. Up to £2,000 could be applied for. £15,172 was allocated during 2024/25

[Read the breakdown of our Living Well in Winter Projects](#)

Joint Local Plan

Following the adoption of Part 1 of the Joint local plan in November 2023, both Councils have formally adopted the Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary planning document. A Joint Local Development Scheme has been published to set out the timetable for the new full Joint Local Plan review.

[Read more about our Joint Local Plan](#)

Planning Applications

All major applications were determined in time, achieving 100% against the target of 60%. This is a significant increase over 2023, with all four quarters now achieving 100% in time.

Consents approved during 2024/25 include the redevelopment of Chambers Bus Depot in Bures, and a community care and rehabilitation facility in Holton St Mary.

The team continues to see an increase in Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) work, with projects both in and out of the district, and at all stages of the process. We have had 2 applications in the district, and 8 out of district NSIPs which we have been involved with.

Affordable Housing Delivery

During 2024/25 we have delivered 8 new affordable homes in Babergh, this includes affordable rent and shared ownership.

We have undertaken several rounds of public consultation with regards to a 14-unit scheme in Sudbury



Removal of Regulatory Notice

Over the last 2 years the housing teams have worked tirelessly to address the compliance issues which led to us having to self-refer to the regulator for non-compliance with the then Home consumer standard. Since then, we have undergone a significant transformation of our housing services, specifically our repairs and maintenance service, our asset and compliance service and our tenant engagement offer and governance structure, improving services for our tenants. In March of this year our Regulatory Notice was withdrawn by the Regulator as they were assured that we have embedded the changes required and have learnt lessons as a result.

Complaints Performance – improvements to time responded too

A key area of improvement within our Tenant Satisfaction Measures this year has been the way we handle complaints. With the restructure of the Repairs and Maintenance Team and the Property and Asset Compliance Team, there has been the introduction of Resident Liaison Officers who act as first points of contact for any tenant who makes a complaint about these service areas. The officers have worked tirelessly to respond to complaints in time (10 days, as per the Housing Ombudsman code), and as a result, all complaints logged with the Repairs and Maintenance Team since October have been responded too in time. We have seen our performance more than double across the whole service and work continues to get to our target of 85%.

Housing Regulatory KPI's

Achievements in the last 12 months

	Q4 2023/24	Q4 2024/25	Improvement
Overall satisfaction with the service provided by landlord (Babergh)	59%	73%	14%
Satisfaction that landlord provide a home that is well-maintained	58%	65%	7%
Satisfaction that landlords provide a home that is safe	68%	73%	5%
Satisfaction that landlord listens to views and acts upon them (Babergh)	44%	63%	19%
Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenant informed about things that matter to them (Babergh)	68%	76%	8%
Landlord treats me fairly and with respect (Babergh)	66%	75%	9%

Complaint in last 12 months - satisfaction with landlord's approach to complaints handling (Babergh)	33%	55%	22%
Satisfaction that landlord keeps communal areas clean and well-maintained (Babergh)	47%	68%	21%
Satisfaction that landlords make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods (Babergh)	53%	62%	9%
Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling ASB (Babergh)	49%	65%	16%

Digital Inclusion

In the last financial year, our digital skills team supported 76 people in Babergh to get online and feel more confident using their devices.

We worked with partners to provide more holistic support alongside digital skills sessions such as energy advice and support from Suffolk Centres for Warmth, as well as support for scams and fraud from our Community Safety Team. Our Digital Skills Officer also joined health colleagues on the Be Well Bus, joined local jobs fairs to offer support with the essential digital skills for work, and attended the Capel St Mary Pensioner Fair.

Residents in Need

42 households in Babergh, were helped through the Household Support Fund, which supports low income tenants who are struggling with the cost of their housing. Our Financial Inclusion Team distributed £33,990.23 to tenants in Babergh alongside benefits and budgeting support.

Communications & Awareness Raising

We worked with communications colleagues to deliver campaigns which raised awareness of the support available to residents over the winter months. This included targeted letters promoting Pension Credit and Winter Fuel Payments.

Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT)

We have worked closely with colleagues in Suffolk County and D&Bs throughout 2024/2025 to progress the LIFT pilot. We have now signed our contract with Policy in Practice, who will begin to build our BMSDC dashboard, and have convened several partners from advice and hardship groups and internal stakeholders to form a network. This network will work collaboratively using a range of data tools, including the LIFT dashboard, to deliver campaigns and initiatives to help with income maximisation, vulnerability, and hardship reduction across the districts.



Our Approach

BMSDC – Our Delivery Plan

Our Delivery Plan was completed early in 2025 and combines our priorities from Our Plan for Babergh and the Mid Suffolk Plan, and all the councils' statutory obligations and work that we do. This one plan shows how we are achieving our missions, and provides a golden thread to link through to our service plans and what we do every day for our communities and places.

[Read Our Delivery Plan](#)

Risk Appetite Statement

The addition of an appetite statement is the final piece of the jigsaw for our Risk Strategy. We now have a clear framework on how to score our risks based on the risk appetite of our Members.

[Read our Risk Appetite Statement](#)

State of the District Report

Our second annual State of the District report produced by Babergh District Council tells the story of our district through data and insight, providing commentary on the strengths and challenges within Babergh and how these are changing over time.

[Read our 2024 State of the District Report](#)

Databank

We launched our Databank project in April 2024 as part of a six month pilot to understand the levels and impact of digital exclusion in temporary accommodation. 16 Babergh households in temporary accommodation were supported with free mobile data through the National Databank.

Letter Review

We have commenced the letter reviews in housing and planning with a view to extending out more widely. The pilot will review the letters initially using co-pilot, with a view to then using a panel of lived experience experts to complete the accessibility review and make recommendations.

Complaints

1st annual report for complaints and benchmark performance was presented to Overview and Scrutiny in early 2025.

Launch of the new complaints system (see Digital Transformation). Since the launch of the complaints system on the 26th June 2024, we have closed 120 complaints submitted, an average of one every 1.6 days.

Digital Transformation

New Compliments, Comments, Complaints system as well as our new FOI system was released. The implementation of this has produced an improved user experience for staff with more automatic templates, reminders, and increased functionality around note/attachment storage.

For customers using the complaints form, we have been able to capture reasonable adjustments, there is a section that asks customers if they need any help or support throughout the complaints process, such as verbal communication.

[Read the full report from the Customer Experience Team](#)

An Overview of Grants & Funding Allocations 2024/25

Grant		Awarded 2024/25
Communities – Capital Grants	Grants funded by Babergh Council	£117,000
Communities – Revenue Grants		£141,868
Section 106 Funding	Developer contributions	£245,535
Locality Awards		£64,000
Food Security Fund	Central Government, Shared Prosperity Fund	£27,000
Living Well in Winter	Collaborative Communities board	£15,172
Social Enterprise Fund	Central Government, Shared Prosperity Fund	£27,000
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Developer Contribution. Completed projects 9	£388,982
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Developer Contribution. 17 projects approved for funding	£770,641
The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)	Central Government. 40 grants awarded	£399,352
The Suffolk Business Grants Scheme (SBGS)	Central Government Shared Prosperity Fund. 3 grants awarded	£13,945
Business Innovation Support Scheme (BISS)	Grants funded by Babergh District Council. 7 grants awarded	£17,281.85
Household Support Fund	Financial inclusion team	£33,990
Total		£2,273,864

Additional Match Funding Received by our Communities

Capital Gains & Community Development	Match Funding	£130,904
Section 106	Match Funding	£1,275,583