

## District councillor's report, December 2013

### 1. Mid Suffolk District Council secures prosecution for failure to comply with a listed building enforcement notice

A Mid Suffolk resident has been fined £400 and ordered to pay more than £1,000 in court costs for illegally installing solar panels on his home, which has listed building status.

John Walker, of The Thatched Barn, Hoxne, erected 16 solar panels on the roof of an outbuilding without applying for planning permission or listed building consent. Although he applied for retrospective permissions these were refused due to the impact the panels were having on the setting of the listed building. An officer commented: "every available avenue was explored before moving to prosecution. We would always rather work in partnership with people, and this does take time due to the national guidelines, but Mr Walker left the council with little option but to move to enforcement."

Following refusal of retrospective planning permission, the Council issued a Planning Contravention Notice to Mr Walker seeking answers to questions regarding his interest in the property and those responsible for the installation.

As no response was received, a listed building enforcement notice was issued on 12 March 2013. No appeal was lodged against this notice and the notice thereby took effect on 15 April 2013. A period of three months was provided in which to remove the solar panels and to make good the roof slopes of the building, which expired on 15 July, 2013.

"The harm caused was simply too great to ignore and it is very apparent that this action could have been avoided had Mr Walker sought appropriate advice."

### 2. Dog litter bins

The cost of the dog and litter bin emptying service will rise by £5 bin next April. This will bring the cost, to Town and Parish Councils, of emptying each litter bin to £20 per annum and each dog bin to £25 per annum. Following this increase, the element of subsidy will still amount to some 64% of the actual cost in the next financial year.