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Sculptures feature in the garden of Stour House, one of the gardens opening on Sunday in Clare.

Q&A event will throw light on impact of government change

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Major changes are being proposed for how councils operate in Suffolk, which if implemented could see communities having a single unitary authority covering all aspects of district and county council work.

It is the biggest shake-up of local government in 50 years and residents and businesses in Haverhill are invited to a special public event being staged in the town to help everyone understand what's happening - and why it matters.

Taking place on Tuesday, July 29 from 6.30pm to 8.30pm at St Mary's Church, *Local Government Reorganisation: What it Means and Why it Matters to You* - organised by the ONE Haverhill Partnership - aims to help residents, businesses, and community groups understand the options being considered for local

“When we all understand how things work, we’re in a much stronger position to shape the future of the place we live and work in”

Henry Wilson
ONE Haverhill Partnership
chairman

government
Henry Wilson, chair of ONE Haverhill, said: “I’m really pleased we’re creating this space for local people and businesses to get involved in something as important as how our town will be run in the future.”

“Devolution and local government reorganisation can feel a bit confusing - I know I’ve had the luxury of having it explained to me in detail, and I think everyone in Haverhill deserves that same

clarity.
“When we all understand how things work, we’re in a much stronger position to shape the future of the place we live and work in.”

“I want to see Haverhill - and the people in it - continue to use their knowledge to grow and thrive.”
Supporters of the two or three authority area model say a smaller unitary authority can better reflect the distinct needs of the part of Suffolk it covers.

However, supporters of the One Suffolk unitary model believe that the financial and operational arguments for a single authority covering all of Suffolk are undeniable.

The evening will open with a welcome from Mr Wilson and will be chaired by Roy Graham, trustee of Reach Community Projects.

Colin Poole, clerk to Haverhill Town Council, will provide a clear, factual overview of devolution and

Gardens opening for charity all have different character
A stone circle and an overhead sculpture are features that will be found in the gardens of houses in Clare when they open to the public on Sunday.

As part of the National Garden Scheme the gardens at Cliftons, 11 Nethergate Street, Stour House and Riverside House, both in Stoke Road, will open between 11.30am and 4.30pm. Entry is £10 per person. All three are next to the River Stour. Homemade teas will be available at Cliftons. All proceeds to the NGS.

Stour House has a very large garden with multiple habitats and a stone circle, gothic follies and many sculptures while Riverside House is a quintessentially English garden with deep borders and a lawn. Cliftons has an enclosed vegetable garden with raised bed, deep flower borders and a woodland area with stumpery.

the LGR story so far - particularly what the changes could mean at a local level.

Two key perspectives will then be presented:

• Councillor Richard Rout, portfolio holder for LGR at Suffolk County Council, will explain the county council's case for a single unitary authority for Suffolk.

• Councillor Cliff Waterman, leader of West Suffolk Council, will outline the district and borough councils' vision for two or three unitary authorities (a decision on whether two or three is being pursued will be confirmed by the time of the event).

The second half of the evening will be dedicated to audience questions and comments, offering a valuable opportunity for those who live and work in Haverhill to gain a better understanding and share reflections.

Free tickets are available at: suffolkdevolution.eventbrite.co.uk

Plan that paves way for thousands of new homes is adopted

A framework for development in West Suffolk has been adopted which will see thousands of new homes built including more affordable properties.

West Suffolk Council formally adopted its local plan at a meeting on Tuesday, which allocates sites for 4,963 new homes alongside 8,712 that already have planning permission.

They will be built between now and 2041 and the blueprint sets aside 85

hectares for employment growth for businesses.

A new affordable housing policy ensures that a developer applying to build 10 or more homes on a greenfield site will have to make 40 per cent of them for affordable housing compared to 30 per cent seen in many other places nationally.

West Suffolk is one of the first local planning authorities in the country to put in place such a policy.

The plan has been five years in the making and shaped by 6,400 comments across three stages of public consultation.

Cllr Cliff Waterman, leader of West Suffolk Council, said of the plan: “It means that businesses in West Suffolk will have land to expand, so that they can both create and keep jobs here rather than having to look elsewhere to grow. It caters for new businesses including start-ups and others that

recognise the benefits of West Suffolk's strategic location.

“And it protects other areas from development such as the countryside while also providing the mechanism for negotiating vital infrastructure funding to benefit existing and future communities in West Suffolk.”

He added: “I am hugely proud of all that this Local Plan strives to achieve toward our ambition for a thriving West Suffolk.”