

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

Comprising Barton, Coton, Comberton, Grantchester, Harlton,
Harston, Haslingfield, Hauxton, and South Trumpington

District Councillors' Monthly Report – September 2022

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Cost of Living

We are all beginning to feel the pinch of the cost-of-living crisis. The Autumn 2022 issue of South Cambs magazine has a 2 page pull-out of information that we hope will help. You should receive it by the end of the first week of September. You can find the electronic copy on the council website at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/south-cambs-magazine/the-south-cambs-magazine/>.

The SCDC website is another way to find available support, such as with energy bills, check entitlements (whether it be Universal Credit, help with childcare costs, Disability and Carers benefits etc), as well as encouragement to claim entitlements – this is especially focussed on Local Council Tax support and Discretionary Housing Payment.

Support is also available from our partner agency, Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency. This includes grant funding to replace a boiler for eligible homeowners whose health is impacted by a lack of warmth.

Warm Hub centres

Local authorities are responding to the cost-of-living crisis by helping communities to set up “Warm Hubs”. These are places where people can find a safe, warm and friendly environment to spend part of their day and so reduce their energy bills at home.

Warm Hubs can run from any publicly accessible community building, such as community centres, village halls, churches/church halls, day centres, youth centres or libraries. They will be run by volunteers, with support and training from Cambridgeshire ACRE.

South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire District Councils have partnered with Cambridgeshire ACRE to work with interested communities to:

- Identify a suitable publicly accessible community building
- Support the recruitment of volunteers
- Deliver training and support to volunteers
- Promote and publicise the Hub.

More information, including contact details to suggest a community facility, is available here: <https://www.cambsacre.org.uk/introducing-warm-hubs/>.

Public Transport and City Access Strategy

A proposed package of measures to improve public transport and active travel and tackle congestion, greenhouse gas emissions and pollution in Greater Cambridge will be presented at the GCP Joint Assembly Meeting on 8 September to decide if the measures should be taken to a public consultation in autumn. The proposed measures include:

- A transformed bus network, offering faster, more frequent, more reliable services with longer operating hours and new routes, and flat fares for bus journeys (£1/£2 single fares).
- Lower traffic levels enabling improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure and supporting public realm enhancements.
- A Sustainable Travel Zone consisting of a road user charge between 7am and 7pm on weekdays designed to fund the bus and active travel improvements, reduce traffic levels, pollution and emissions, and support improved social, health and wellbeing outcomes. The proposed charge for cars and motorbikes is £5. Discounts, exemptions, and reimbursement schemes are also proposed for specific groups.

Investment in bus services and fare reductions would begin in advance of any road user charge starting. Bus service changes would require investment in additional fleet, depots, drivers and infrastructure. Some of the bus network improvements would also require additional network capacity to offer fast and reliable services. The proposal is to start improving bus services from mid-2023, introduce the £1/£2 flat fare from 2024, and bring in the Sustainable Travel Zone road user charge when the full network is operational in 2028.

In addition, the proposed package suggests making wider investments to support people to shift to sustainable modes of travel and reduce reliance on private cars. This could include a significant expansion of car club provision, which could save occasional users hundreds or even thousands of pounds per year compared to owning a car. Other measures could support disabled people to use public transport, or to access specialist or adapted cycles. Feedback on potential investments and what would be most helpful would be sought as part of the proposed consultation, with final proposals then brought together for review.

The report is available within the meeting agenda pack at:

https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccs_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1857/Committee/36/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx

Small Electrical Recycling Bins

Items such as hair dryers, kettles and toasters can now be taken to various recycling points across the city and district, as well as the household recycling centres. Check www.recyclenow.com/recycling-locator to find your nearest recycling point.

Free Entry to Wimpole for Community Groups

The Wimpole Estate, a local National Trust property, are offering local community groups free admission to the estate and its facilities. Each pass issued under this initiative would provide free access for up to 16 people and may be used on any day except bank holidays and the weekends preceding bank holidays.

Polly Ingham-Watts, the General Manager of Wimpole Hall, is passionate that everyone can enjoy all that Wimpole has to offer and recognises that National Trust membership or the standard admission charges are not accessible to everyone.

Those intending to use the pass are asked to email wimpolehall@nationaltrust.org.uk or call the estate before coming, stating the name of the group, the number of people, and the approximate time of arrival. For more information visit <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wimpole-estate>.

Community Forums – Autumn 2022 Dates

Community forums take place in locations where major development is planned (Bourn; Cambourne; Cambridge East; North East Cambridge; Northstowe; North West and West Cambridge; and Waterbeach).

The dates for the autumn 2022 forums are below. Once the details for each forum have been confirmed, they will be updated on [our website](#), as well as on [Facebook events](#).

- Wednesday 5 October - North East Cambridge
- Wednesday 12 October – Northstowe
- Wednesday 19 October - Cambridge East
- Wednesday 2 November - A428 Cluster – Bourn Airfield
- Wednesday 2 November - A428 Cluster – Cambourne
- Wednesday 9 November - North West and West Cambridge
- Wednesday 16 November - Waterbeach

For more information on forums, visit [our website](#) or email the Communities Team on Duty.Communities@scamb.gov.uk.

Comments Requested on New Plan for Joint Health and Wellbeing Board for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Health and Wellbeing Boards were set up by the Government in 2012. They bring together health and social care partners. The aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population. Health and Wellbeing Boards must have health and wellbeing strategies. There will be a new strategy for 2022 to 2030. The three main goals are:

- To increase the number of years people spend in good health
- To reduce inequalities in preventable deaths before the age of 75
- To achieve better outcomes for our children

There are four priorities to help achieve these goals:

- Create an environment for people to be as healthy as can be
- Reducing poverty through better employment and housing
- Promoting early intervention and prevention measures to improve mental health and wellbeing
- Our children are ready to enter and exit education prepared for the next phase of their lives

The County Council would like to get feedback on the four health and wellbeing priorities. You can [complete the online form](#) to make your views known.

SCDC Support for Ukraine

Bicycles update

The scheme to offer free bikes for Ukrainian guests via Owl Bikes (part of the Papworth Trust), Camtrust and Tag Bikes, is continuing to work well, although due to the high demand we request that you bear with us if you or your guests have applied and are still waiting to hear. We would also encourage any residents with spare bikes they no longer need to offer them to Camtrust (01223 236786, info@camtrust.co.uk) or TAG Bikes (01480 377697). Owl Bikes is currently working on the stock they have in hand. Donations of unwanted helmets, spare tyres and parts would also be welcomed.

Ukrainian guests who are keen to get out and about on their bikes can join with the CTC Cambridge cycling club where experienced riders from the group will buddy up with guests to help them get to know the area's roads. Email secretary@ctccambridge.org.uk if your guests would like to take advantage of this offer.

Warning for Ukrainian guests to guard against scams

Scammers work at all levels in our society, and no-one is immune from their illegal activities, including Ukrainian guests. One incident which has come to our attention is of two female refugees being told they would have their refugee status revoked if they didn't each pay up £350. Please do warn your guests to be vigilant, particularly online. General information on how to spot and avoid scams is available from

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/community-protection/against-scams-partnership> which works with public, private and voluntary sector organisations to stop scams and doorstep crime across the county.

Children's Books in Ukrainian

Cambridgeshire Libraries now has a collection of brand-new children's books in Ukrainian. Those wishing to borrow books can pop into the Cambridge Central Library and have a browse. Collections are also available at St Ives and Ely libraries.

Alternatively, guests can request books for free on a child's library card to be delivered to their local library anywhere in Cambridgeshire and pick them up from there. You can find the locations of local libraries here: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/libraries>. You can also browse the library service's e-book selection on Libby.

Help with medical costs via the NHS Low Income Scheme (LIS)

Ukrainian guests may be able to access help for medical costs via:

<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-low-income-scheme>. The scheme can help with:

- Costs for NHS prescriptions
- NHS dental treatment
- Cost of sight tests, glass and contact lenses
- Cost of travelling to receive NHS treatment
- NHS wigs and fabric supports.

To apply for the NHS LIS, guests need to complete an HC1 form. If the application is successful, then either an HC2 certificate will be issued (for full help with health costs) or an HC3 certificate will be issued (for limited health with health costs). The certificates detail how much they will have to pay towards their health costs.

If guests have already paid for their prescriptions and later find that they are eligible for free prescriptions, they can apply for full or partial reimbursement of prescription costs depending on income. Receipts for any prescription costs must be submitted in evidence.

If they do not qualify for free prescriptions, and are resident in England, they can buy a pre-payment prescription (PPCs) from the NHS. A three or 12-month PPC covers all prescriptions for that period, no matter how many they need. Prescriptions currently cost £9.35 per item, but a PPC costs £30.25 for three months or £108.10 for 12 months. It is possible to pay in ten monthly instalments if they buy a 12-month PPC.

Looking for a local dentist

With a fall in the number of dentists practising in the UK, many patients are struggling to get dental treatment. If your guests are looking to make an appointment with a local dentist, you may find the NHS Find a Dentist site helpful.

If urgent dental treatment is required, then contact NHS 111, who will be able to direct you to a dentist for urgent care.

Patients are entitled to free NHS dental treatment if they are:

- Under 18 years of age
- Pregnant
- Have had a baby within the last 12 months
- Are in prison or a young offender's institution.

Free NHS dental treatment is also available to anyone who has an HC2 or HC3 certificate under the NHS Low Income Scheme (LIS) – see details above on how to apply. However, guests should continue to pay for any treatment carried out until they find out they are eligible under the NHS LIS and their exemptions are confirmed.

If guests receive treatment and find out within three months of the treatment that they are entitled to receive free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment, they can claim a refund.

For more information, visit www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-nhs-dental-costs or email nhsbsa.dentalservices@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

Learning opportunities to welcome guests, help them understand life in the UK and how to access the jobs market

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is very supportive of our Ukrainian guests and is the only Combined Authority in the country to fully fund English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) provision, giving in the region of £1.2m to local education providers for the 2021/22 academic year.

To date, 307 Ukrainian refugees have been supported through ESOL in the region.

The WEA (Workers' Educational Association) has set up online ESOL courses funded by the CPCA and is keen to welcome Ukrainian guests. The courses can be helpful in settling guests into the UK and helping to prepare them for a job and, even if their English is not good, they can still join.

Anyone interested in the courses below can register either online or by calling 0300 3033464. Please follow the link to the course page below for more details. The courses are free to those Ukrainian guests on the Homes for Ukraine scheme if they claim benefits or are on a low income (under £21,000).

[Cambridgeshire - Welcome to the UK C2229132](#)

Start date: 14/10/2022, Fridays 10am via Zoom

This course is designed to help learners have a good understanding of British culture, history, traditions, laws and customs, and to feel confident about living in the UK. It will include the fundamental principles of British Life including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and participation in community life.

[Cambridgeshire - Supporting Employment Opportunities for ESOL Learners C2229133](#)

Start date: 14/10/2022, Fridays 12:30pm via Zoom

The purpose of this course is to support students in successfully gaining a job, progressing in a chosen field, and preparing students for further study. It is designed to assist and give confidence to ESOL learners to progress from the course to find employment or to go into Further Education and also to develop their employment prospects and confidence.

Ukrainian guests may also be interested in the WEA's Employability Skills course which will help those new to the UK to apply for jobs:

[Cambridgeshire – Employability Skills \(CV writing, interview skills\) Ref: C2229068](#)

Start date: 20/09/2022, Tuesdays 10am via Zoom

The course will assist people who are new to the UK to navigate the jobs market, giving them help to compile a CV, understand where jobs are advertised and identify where they can find support. There will also be guidance and practice on developing interview skills and hints and tips on how to manage nerves and come across more positively in interviews.

Children's messages of kindness and hope on Ukraine Independence Day

Children from our guest families and also children from local schools helped to mark Ukraine Independence Day (August 24) by sharing messages of kindness and hope.

Showing the impact of war, as seen through the eyes of a child, the powerful messages were shared on our social media platforms as part of our South Cambridgeshire District Council #StandForFreedom campaign – and some also featured in the local [press](#).

One British six-year-old boy drew a blue and yellow heart and wrote a heart-warming message to families who fled Ukraine to live in Britain, saying 'You are safe here'; while an eight-year-old Ukrainian boy, living with one of our South Cambridgeshire host families, drew a picture of an army tank with the words 'We believe in our victory!', and a nine-year-old Ukrainian girl, also living with a local host family, drew colourful pictures with doves, hearts and the national flower, the sunflower, to represent hope and peace for the future.

In marking the day, the Council also wanted to take this opportunity to commend the many host families, volunteers and community groups who have warmly welcomed Ukraine families into the district and to thank them for their continued kindness and support.

H.A.Y. South Cambs! How Are You?

A reminder for host families and guests that the organisation H.A.Y. South Cambs! How Are You?, which promotes positive mental health in South Cambridgeshire, has a section dedicated to support for Ukrainian guests and host families.

You can find it at: [Ukrainian Guests & Host Families - How Are You South Cambs \(haysouthcambs.co.uk\)](http://haysouthcambs.co.uk)

The website gives information on the support groups which guests and hosts can access in the local area, with details on what local volunteers and community groups are offering, from activities to practical help to employment opportunities and more, and an interactive map showing where different support groups are situated.

If you know of other local support groups which currently don't feature on H.A.Y.'s website, then please get in touch via the CLP@scambs.gov.uk mailbox.