

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

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

District Councillors' Monthly Report – November 2022

Contact Details

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us using the details below.

Michael Atkins:	Cllr.Atkins@scambs.gov.uk	07968 264637
Ariel Cahn:	Cllr.CahnA@scambs.gov.uk	07455 128924
Lisa Redrup:	Cllr.Redrup@scambs.gov.uk	07855 324580

Bus services in our area continue (18 and 915 (now 26))

In September, Stagecoach announced the withdrawal of many bus services and rerouting of others after 30th October 2022. Both the No. 18, serving Comberton, Barton and Grantchester, and the 915, serving Harston, were withdrawn leaving these villages facing the prospect of no bus service.

The Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is responsible for Transport across the County, and, following Stagecoach's announcement decided to outsource the withdrawn services. The tender process was successful and we're happy to report that the No. 18 is now being run by Whippet Coaches and has the same stops as the previous Stagecoach service. The No. 915 is now being run by Centrebus as the No. 26 and will stop on request near to/opposite the Queens Head public house in Harston.

The CPCA is funding 22 services at a cost of about £1.5 million for 6 months and in the meantime will work on potential permanent solutions for bus services. It is most unlikely that government is going to provide the money to run the services, especially as bus cuts are happening all over the country. There are two options being considered. One is a 'Mayoral Precept' which means that probably £20 will be added to council tax specifically to subsidise bus services. The other option, which will provide money for a doubling of the bus network in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, is to introduce a road charge in Cambridge. This would generate about £50 million per year and is the subject of a public consultation ending December 23rd (see below).

GCP Making Connections Consultation: Have your say on plans to improve bus services, walking and cycling and introduce a congestion charge

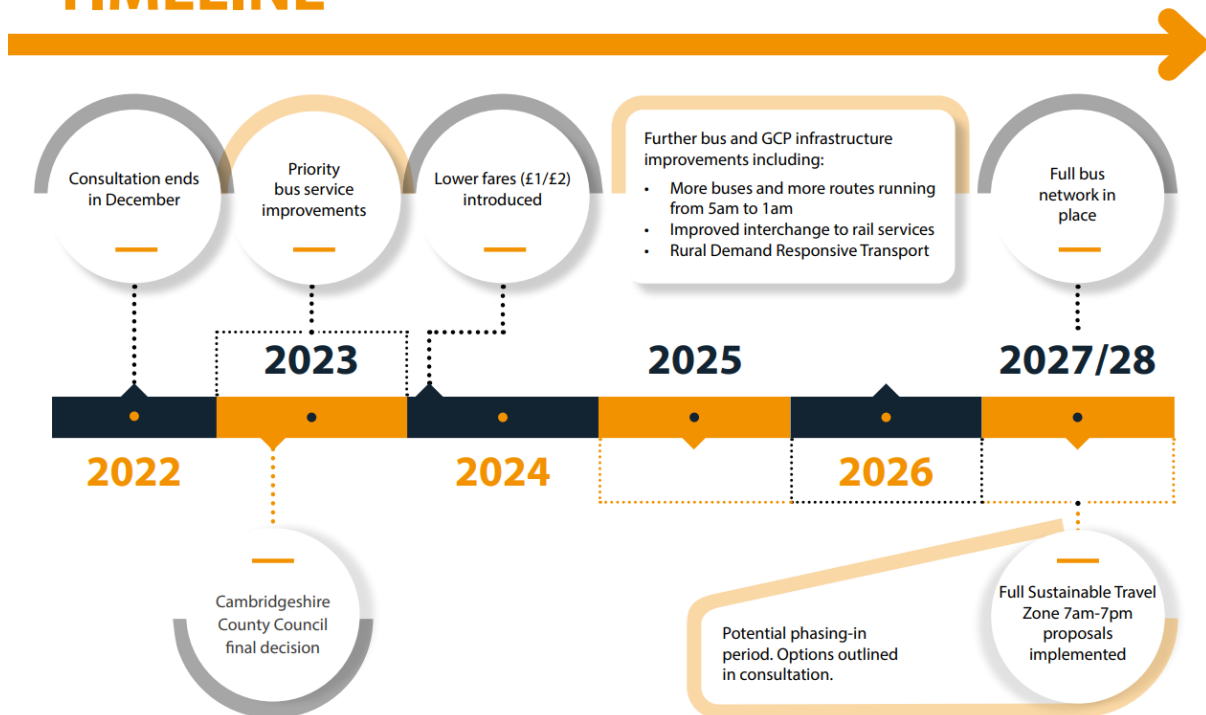
We ask everyone to engage with the consultation on the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP) proposal to improve public transport, make walking and cycling safer and more attractive, reduce congestion, and improve our environment through reduced greenhouse gas emissions and reduced air pollution.

The core proposal is for the GCP to forward fund improvements to the bus network to provide a public transport system far beyond what we have experienced here before. This would include regular services to villages, extending running times from 5 am – 1 am on Mon-Sat and 5 am – midnight on Sundays, and introducing £1 and £2 single bus fares. You can compare the proposed and current service levels/ fares for each village using this [interactive planner](#).

The improvements would be rolled out over the next few years, and then be sustained by a congestion charge on vehicles driving into the city between 7am and 7pm Monday to Friday. While driving would get more expensive, the scheme aims to make bus travel cheaper and more accessible.

Find out more at: <https://consultcambs.uk/engagementhq.com/making-connections-2022>

TIMELINE



In light of the recent bus cancellations by Stagecoach, it seems like a critical time to consider how we can ensure public transport is available and affordable for everyone, but particularly for those with no other way of travelling. These proposals are likely to require new ways of running the buses, such as franchising (used in London and Manchester), that give local authorities more control and protect users from operators prioritising profit.

This proposal has generated a lot of media and political attention and will be of interest to most residents. There are many points of local detail and personal concern which are essential to flush out and bring to attention. So, we strongly urge everyone to take part in the public consultation which **ends on 23rd December 2022**. The Chair of the GCP has said that they want to hear people's views on these proposals and answer people's questions, and that they haven't made up their minds on whether the scheme should go ahead.

Lastly, we'd like to highlight a few issues where there is some misinformation going around:

- The improvements in the bus services would be brought in over several years *before* the introduction of the congestion charge
- The Park & Ride sites would not be covered by the congestion charge, so they would remain an option, and they would be cheaper due to the plan to reduce bus fares
- The inclusion of the Addenbrookes site will be subject to further discussion. It is worth noting that staff are already heavily discouraged from driving and parking (unless working shifts, which would be outside the congestion charge times). Patients too ill to use public transport would be exempt.

How are we doing? SCDC Survey

SCDC has launched a short survey to help deliver service improvements for residents and businesses across our district. This is your chance to say what you think the council is getting right and where it needs to get better. The survey takes 5 minutes to complete and is available at: [SCDC survey](#).

Barton Greenway: please support these events in November

For those interested in improved walking, cycling, scootering and equestrian connections, please take part in one of these events to give your local knowledge and views on the detail of the Barton Greenway plans:

There will be two events during this period:

- Zoom event, Thursday 17th November, 6-8 pm. Please register online at: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5Nvf-H3xRwgRO_AuHI82tQ
- Barton Village Hall, Thursday 24th November, 1.30-7.30 pm

The plans will be available online at: [Consult Cambridgeshire \(engagementhq.com\)](https://www.engagementhq.com) from midday Mon 7th Nov. This includes an online survey which is open until midday Fri 2nd Dec.

Cost of living and priority services information

There is information on cost-of-living support on the SCDC website at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/>. This includes: where to turn for advice; benefits, money and debt advice; help with energy and water bills; help for parents and families; help with food and health costs; help with phone bills; help with making your home warmer; Age UK handy person service and; support if you are in distress.

QuidsIn Magazine

Available online at www.quidsinmagazine.com or in hard copy by calling 0845 646 0469). It has all sorts of information, recipes, support and more.

Warm Hubs

Warm Hubs are opening in community buildings until the end of March 2023 to help residents with the cost of living crisis. It is a collaboration between South and East Cambs District Councils, with funding from the local NHS Integrated Care System. The project is being delivered by charity Cambridgeshire Acre.

Our local Warm Hub opens from Thursday 10th November 2022 and is at Comberton Baptist Church, Green End, Comberton, Cambridge, CB23 7DY.

Opening times are: Monday, 3.30pm - 6:30pm, Thursday, 10.30am - 1.30pm

Information on other venues can be found at: [Cambridgeshire ACRE](https://www.cambridgeshireacre.org.uk)

UK Power Networks Priority Services Register

This register is for the elderly and those with health issues affected by losing electricity. Those on the register are contacted with information about large power cuts in the local area and provided with hot meals if the electricity has been off for 4 hours, especially over meal times. You can find out how to register online at <https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut/priority-services> or call 0800 169 9970.

Let's Talk: Your Health & Care

Let's Talk: Your health & care is Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System's new campaign, to give people who live, work or study in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough the opportunity to influence the next five years of health and wellbeing services locally.

Everyone's view is important – whether you've used health and care services recently or not. By hearing from local people, the people who plan and buy local services can better understand local issues and needs, and work together to tackle them. The questionnaire only takes a few minutes to fill in and covers a wide range of topics including getting appointments, the impact of the current cost of living on health and wellbeing, and what could help children and young people in the future. Take part in Let's Talk by filling in the questionnaire by 10th November: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RKB8RN9

Business Support – Visit South Cambs

The tourism website for South Cambridgeshire, created by the District Council, has now been running for a year. It is called “Visit South Cambs” and is at: <https://visitsouthcambs.co.uk/>. During the year, around 200 local venues have enjoyed free listings and more than 230 local events have been promoted, from village fetes to art exhibitions. The site has had over 8,000 unique visitors from around the world, reaching countries including America, Australia, and Japan.

SCDC’s Business Support and Development Team will be using social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) to ask residents and businesses to share what they love most about South Cambridgeshire using #WeLoveSouthCambs. The idea is to build up recommendations and inside secrets about the district’s hidden gems. You can nominate who you think serves the best ice cream, who gives the friendliest service, where are the most scenic country walk or most relaxing pub garden. Please feel free to share your tips on social media and re-share our Visit South Cambs posts too. You can contact Paul Jenkins-Green with your ideas: Paul.Jenkins-Green@scambs.gov.uk

New Council Homes Delivered Across the District

South Cambridgeshire District Council and partners have delivered 22 new build Council homes across the district, further increasing the number of homes that are genuinely affordable for local people to live in. This includes a mixture of affordable rent and shared ownership houses and apartments in Swavesey, Waterbeach, and Meldreth.

All properties are built to a high specification with high levels of insulation and double-glazed windows to help reduce monthly costs of keeping the homes warm as winter approaches. Every house and maisonette can also easily be adapted to install EV charging points in the future with external electric sockets installed at houses in Swavesey and Meldreth, and underground cabling to individual parking bays in Waterbeach.

All properties have been marketed to people with a local connection to the villages in the first instance, before then being opened up in stages across the district.

SCDC Support for Ukraine

Six months since the government launched its Homes For Ukraine scheme, the Council remains the top district in the country for hosting families, with 808 visas issued* and 720 guest arrived so far, since the government’s scheme began in March 2022. * *Government figures from 4 October 2022*

The council has provided extensive support to families fleeing the war since March 2022 with the help of local partnerships including more than 340 items of free tech goods delivered such as 93 laptops, 77 Chromebooks, 52 mobile phones and 124 SIM cards. In addition, hundreds of English lessons have been given plus day trips to help people integrate into life in a new country.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor please email HFULiaison@scambs.gov.uk. Hosts receive a £350 a month thank you payment and can apply for an opt-in additional £150, taking it to a total of £500 monthly. For more information please visit the Council’s dedicated [webpage](#)

Clothes Shop for Ukrainians - donations required

Free clothes are available for Ukrainian guests at a pop-up clothes shop in Sawston. The shop is open for Ukrainians to choose clothes only on every second and fourth Friday of the month from 4pm to 6pm.

The shop urgently needs donations of good quality **winter** clothing - warm coats, raincoats, gloves, trousers, sweaters, scarves, woolly hats, etc. Donations of unopened new socks and thick tights will also be very welcome. Donations can be dropped off at Sawston Free Church between 4-6pm every Thursday and Friday.

Try Traditional Cuisine and Support Ukraine on 19th November

Mums4Ukraine are organising a Ukrainian Food Festival on Saturday 19 November between 11:30am and 4pm at St. John the Evangelist's Church on Hill Roads Road, Cambridge (CB2 8RN).

There will be Ukrainian traditional dishes to taste, as well as music and a children's zone. There is no entrance fee and all funds raised from sales will go towards buying essential supplies such as toiletries and food for guests to ease the pressure on sponsors and their guests. Please register on Eventbrite at: <https://ukrainiancuisine.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Ukrainian Employment Survey

As you are already aware, the Government has confirmed that Ukrainian refugees are able to work in the UK for up to three years. SCDC is collaborating with local partners, communities, and businesses to ensure that we understand the barriers Ukrainian guests are facing in finding suitable employment. Can hosts please help us by making their guests aware of the following [survey](#). By guests completing it, this will help us provide the most appropriate support possible.

CAUTION Advised: Facebook groups

At SCDC, we appreciate the importance of community Facebook groups. These are invaluable tools for residents and guests to receive quick information from other members of the district. However, we wanted to ask both Ukrainian guests and hosts to remain vigilant when browsing these groups, as the information they convey is not always correct.

If you have queries in relation to any processes or services relating to the Homes for Ukraine scheme, or support you can receive, the best place for accurate information is either through us, or directly with other organisations providing a service. We want to ensure that both hosts and guests are fully informed with accurate and correct information. If you have doubts or queries, please contact us on Duty.Communitites@scambs.gov.uk

WEA courses for everyday life and work

WEA (Workers Educational Association) has two new online leaflets available, which detail courses aimed at improving everyday life and increasing job opportunities for guests. These range from ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses, to improving Maths and English skills, family and parenting packages to help guide children with their school work, and many more.

[The Skills for Life and Work courses](#) can be accessed online and cover areas such as online qualifications, digital skills or community interpreting. There are also courses to gain [Free online qualifications](#) in English and Maths or for those wishing to work in the health and social care or schools and childcare sectors, amongst other areas. For more information email cambs@wea.org.uk or see <https://www.wea.org.uk/>.

English language courses – places available

There are places still available in the English Beginner Plus Class at Cottenham on Tuesdays between 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm. This is an informal class ideal for those who know a little English already. Adults, older children and young people are welcome to enrol. Please contact Amy for more details on 07753 282967 or email hello@allearningplace.co.uk

Free Admission to National Trust Properties

The National Trust is offering a named 6-month free admission pass to all adult refugees, allowing access to many of the charity's sites around the country. The pass will also cover all children under the age of 18 and enable refugees to visit independently of the host family they are living with. If the recipient of the pass is here for longer than 6 months, they can apply for a new pass once their existing one expires. Passes should be received within two to three weeks of application.

Hosts can request a 6-month named pass for refugees living with a non NT member by emailing supporter.operations@nationaltrust.org.uk including the names of their guests, their address and whether they need an individual adult or family pass.

Community Groups can also request single use passes for visits to National Trust properties

for refugees they are hosting, asking for two passes per person up to a max of 100 people. Please ask your Community Group representative to email supporter.operations@nationaltrust.org.uk with their request for the single use access passes. They must state the number of passes they need (two passes per person up to a max of 100 people, so a maximum of 200 passes in total) and the name and the address of where the passes should be sent to. Single use access passes do not need to be named and the Community Group representative does not need to be an active NT member to request the passes.

You can find out more about some of the beautiful and varied National Trust sites around the country which you can visit with these amazing free pass offers at www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

Fun at the outdoor Forest School – *starts this weekend*

Fresh air, lots of fun activities and a chance to make friends are on the programme for a special outdoor Forest School being run at Milton Country Park. The weekly sessions will run for seven weeks and are designed for children aged 8-11 from families who are registered under the Home for Ukraine (HfU) scheme in South Cambridgeshire.

The Forest School aims to encourage children to learn through hands-on experience in a natural setting to help develop their confidence and self-esteem. The programme includes bushcraft skills, playing games, making friends, building dens, pond dipping, treasure hunts and lots more. The sessions will be held at the Wild Place at Milton Country Park on Sunday mornings from 10am to 12 noon on November 6, 13, 20, 27, and December 4, 11 and 18. For information or to register interest in attending, email: ufs@cambridgesportlakes.org.uk