

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

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

District Councillors' Monthly Report – September 2023

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns relating to SCDC services, please contact us using the details below. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues etc.

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Cost of living information

Visit <https://www.scams.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/> for information on: 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.

Comberton and Grantchester Community Hubs

Visit a safe and friendly environment to enjoy free refreshments and social activities, obtain information and advice, and share the company of others. Local Community Hubs include:

- Comberton Baptist Church, Green End, Comberton, Cambridge, CB23 7DY.
Opening times: Monday, 3pm – 5 pm
- Grantchester Communal Hall, Tabrum Close, Grantchester, Cambridge, CB3 9NW
Opening time: Friday, 10am – 12pm

Information on other venues can be found at

<https://www.cambsacre.org.uk/projects/cambridgeshire-community-hubs-network/>

Bin collection changes

Bin collections for many residents of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City will change from the week beginning Monday 18 September 2023. Everyone with a change has been written to and letters began arriving locally on the 7th September. In Haslingfield, the bin collection day will change to Thursday, starting from the 21st September. The next few collections are:

- Wed 13 September – blue and green bins
- Thurs 21st September – black bin
- Thurs 28th September – blue and green bins
- Thurs 5th October – black bin

Optimising collection routes takes place every few years to accommodate housing growth and keep the rounds as efficient as possible. This time the new routes have also been designed to incorporate the capabilities of our electric vehicle fleet, as well as spreading collections over 4 weekdays instead of 5. Bins will no longer be collected on Mondays, avoiding the disruption to collections following bank holiday Mondays as crews will no longer have to catch up.

You can find out more at: <https://www.scams.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/bin-collection-changes/>

Update on Government announcement to ‘turbocharge’ plans for growth in and around Cambridge

There is still little information available to clarify government plans for boosting building in and around Cambridge. Peter Freeman has been appointed by the Secretary of State to lead this work ([Meet Peter Freeman, head of Homes England – the man charged with delivering Cambridge growth \(cambridgeindependent.co.uk\)](#)) and as far as we know has spent the last six weeks fact-finding. As part of this, the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development at the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, Stephen Kelly, has taken him through the detail of the planning challenges here, including the water constraints. A Cambridge Delivery Group is expected to be set up, but the make up and how it will work is not yet known.

The Council has said it is vital there is clarity over how many homes the Government is planning for and where they believe they should go. Council leaders are pressing the Government urgently to make sure local people have this information.

Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council, said: “The Greater Cambridge area already has identified a need for 50,000 new homes. Our plans for how that need could be met have been prepared following local consultation and we have a robust evidence base to back up what is being suggested. When we published those plans earlier this year, we said very clearly that that level of growth could only be delivered if the challenge over water supply could be solved, and the environment, including our vital chalk streams, is enhanced and improved. On the face of it this announcement seems to centre on what we are already planning to deliver in Greater Cambridge hence why we need more information. Until we have that, we, along with our local communities, will remain concerned. We have tens of thousands of homes already agreed to be built in new towns and villages in this area and we’d much rather the Government worked with big developers, including the Government’s own agency Homes England, to incentivise them to build these sites out faster and with a wider range of homes for all to help with the affordability of housing in the area. If this announcement does that then it will be welcomed. We will of course be engaging with the Government to understand this more and ensure that local people are represented in these discussions.”

Some background on the government’s plans can be found at the following links:

[Long-term plan for housing: Secretary of State's speech - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Long-term plan for housing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Can King’s Cross provide a template for UK regeneration? | Financial Times \(ft.com\)](#)

Revised Making Connections Proposals

The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) published revised proposals that targeted charges to peak times and provided 50 free days per year in response to the Making Connections consultation last year. The revised proposals were due to be discussed at the GCP Joint Assembly on the 7th September, but this did not happen due to concerns from councillors about the proposals.

The SCDC representatives read out the following statement from Cllr Bridget Smith:

There continue to be some concerns around the proposals to tackle congestion and fund bus services in Greater Cambridge. Further work is urgently required in order to strengthen public support and understanding. This will provide the opportunity to continue work with partners at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), neighbouring councils and central government on plans for the significant improvements to public transport and active travel that the consultation responses clearly called for. Additionally, the long-term sources of revenue required for a sustainable public transport system requires further interrogation to improve public confidence.

Now is certainly not a time for inaction. What has been done through the sustainable travel zone (STZ) consultation is a very significant step in our collective journey to find a fair and equitable answer to the pressing problems of congestion, air quality and climate change.

We need to continue work at pace to move forwards to a solution that does not shy away from the challenges, but that attracts greater public support. In order to develop this work, we need to fully understand the implications and risks posed by not going ahead with the STZ, so that these can be addressed in the design.

The consultation responses have shown us how important a bus service is and how many people feel let down by the lack of government investment in public transport. The continued loss of bus routes cuts people off in our villages, particularly young people whose choice of school and college is limited by the lack of a regular rural bus service and those without cars whose job opportunities are similarly restricted.

What has emerged since the consultation began is how important it is for local authorities to have greater control over the services provided by bus operators (routes, frequency, prices), and we support the priority being placed by the CPCA on the outline business case for partnership enhancement or bus franchising.

75 bus service that serves Haslingfield is under review by the CPCA

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), the authority responsible for public transport that subsidises rural bus services, is assessing the bus services currently supported and the funding available.

Of the 77 bus services currently under review, it will be recommended at the September 13 Combined Authority Transport and Infrastructure Committee that 51 contracts are extended from March 2024 until March 2025, with the Combined Authority continuing to work with bus companies and local partners to help promote these services to encourage more people to use buses.

The Combined Authority will continue to gather information on the remaining bus routes, including the 75 service (Cambridge – Orwell – Wrestlingworth) that serves Haslingfield, to complete the review of all the services it currently funds. It will continue to have discussions on bus routes with relevant communities to help identify options for improvement, to make them better meet local needs and to increase patronage. Options for improvement to be explored with local partners and communities can include timetables, frequency, and stops, and where it makes sense, to help explore alternative proposals, for example linking with home to school services.

Information, including the report, can be accessed here: [First findings into review aiming to improve bus network - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority \(cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk)

Bin lorry fire caused by batteries

Please follow the guidance below on recycling batteries. Batteries put in normal bins can cause fires, such as the recent fire in a bin lorry in Trumpington.

Most small common household portable batteries can be placed out for collection at the kerbside weekly, including: AA, AAA, C, D and button cells. Put used batteries inside a small plastic bag, tie up the top, and leave that bag on top of any of your three bins (black, blue or green) when they go out for collection.

However, residents of flats with shared bins should not leave batteries on these but can take them to one of the many public battery collection points at corner shop chains, supermarkets, chemists and petrol stations as well as those at recycling points and Household Recycling Centres. Visit www.recyclenow.com to see all locations.

Larger batteries should be taken to household recycling centres at Milton or Thriplow.

Wild Minds – Teenage Mental Health Referral Programme

If you're aged 12-17 and feeling stressed, anxious or down, you'll find a friendly welcome at Milton Country Park.

The 8 week programmes are designed to give you an introduction to a wide variety of outdoor activities with a particular focus on nature, wellbeing, bush craft and mindfulness.

From campfire cooking and survival skills to natural craft and canoeing, we want to share our passion for the outdoors and help you slow down, tune in, build confidence and discover your wild side!

- When: sessions run in eight week blocks on Sunday afternoons (times vary depending on the season)
- Led by: experienced instructors, supported by a mental health practitioner
- Where: Milton Country Park, Cambridge Road, Milton, CB24 GAZ
- Cost: FREE

Find at more at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/health-and-wellbeing/wild-minds/>.