

County Councillor Monthly Report - Sawston & Shelford Division

(includes Sawston, Little and Great Shelfords, Stapleford, Babraham, South Trimpington, Hauxton, Harston, Newton and Haslingfield)

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Making Connections update

At its Board meeting on 28 September, the Greater Cambridge Partnership decided not to proceed with the revised Making Connections proposals, as they clearly did not have sufficient public or political support. The work to develop a new approach for improving public transport, reducing congestion and improving air quality in Cambridge is under way.

CSET Busway update

Phase two of the Cambridge South East Transport project – a new dedicated busway, travel hub and active travel route connecting Cambridge with communities to the south-east of the city – has been formally paused following a decision at the GCP meeting on 28 September. Should funding become available, a formal request to Cambridgeshire County Council to submit a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo) application as the relevant Highways Authority for the area will be made. The GCP will continue to deliver its planned improvements along the A1307 as part of Phase one.

Foxton travel hub update

GCP has also recommended to members to consider whether the Foxton Travel Hub project should be paused. If members take the decision to pause the projects the GCP would develop them to a point where they are 'planning ready' whilst we seek alternative sources of funding to enable them to be delivered in future.

Bus services contracts

The long-awaited revision of the Combined Authority's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough was vetoed at the September meeting of the Combined Authority Board.

Meanwhile, the Board decided to approve the extension of 51 bus service contracts to March 2025 including routes 15 and 26. Services recommended for further review include 7A and 31. The Board also agreed to commission a review by an independent auditor of the bus franchising assessment—a step forward towards the aim of improving bus services across Cambridgeshire.

Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023 fund

Applications are now open for the Sustainable Farming Incentive. The SFI pays farmers for taking actions that support food production, farm productivity and resilience, whilst protecting the environment. More information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-applicationdates-for-sustainable-farming-incentive-2023>

Help to insulate your home

If your home has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D to G, and if you are in council tax band A-D (in England) you may qualify for cheaper (or even free) insulation. The government has launched a £1 billion scheme to help some families insulate their homes. Families in lower council tax bands with less energy-efficient homes will be offered upgrades such as roof, loft or cavity wall insulation.

You can use an online checker for the scheme to find out if you are eligible. The tool will ask a series of questions – including how you heat your home, whether your home has solid or cavity walls, and if you are receiving any benefits. You can be a homeowner, landlord or tenant (either renting privately or from a housing association). If you're a tenant, speak to your landlord before you apply. You'll need their permission before any insulation can be installed. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme>

A separate online checker has also been launched for the Home Upgrade Grant, which will help people in off-gas-grid homes with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D to G. The grant provides energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating to households in England.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-home-upgrade-grant> If you use the online checkers you will then be referred to either your energy supplier, for support from the Energy Company Obligation programme and Great British Insulation Scheme, or your council for the Home Upgrade Grant.

Smart street lamps

Cambridgeshire is one of six areas to be granted funding to test smart street lamps that can house EV charging hubs and boost wireless coverage including 5G. The County Council has been awarded £220,000 to install 'smart poles' on which to host various smart city infrastructure.

Weeds and street sweeping

At the County Council's Highways & Transport Committee meeting on 3 October the issue of the relationship between weeds and street sweeping was discussed. Residents have complained about debris from unswept streets (district council) being caught up in weeds from uncleared gutters and gulleys (county council). Subsequently the reassurance was provided that county council officers were entering into discussions with district council officers about how better to align management of our streets, kerbs, gulleys and gutters.

More 20MPH schemes get the green light

Twenty more 20MPH schemes across South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire have been given the go-ahead in the latest round of funding from the County Council.

The County Council is keen to find additional funding to increase the number of applications it can support. With eighty-eight applications received, it is clear that road safety measures are very popular with residents and local communities.

A 20mph limit is prioritised against the following criteria:

- evidence of traffic incidents or potential dangers within an existing 30/40mph zone
- vulnerable road users
- visible homes, shops and businesses
- a school or a school route
- a cycling route
- an area that would benefit from more active travel such as cycling and walking.

Cambridgeshire County Council put in place a new process for communities to access additional funding to install more 20mph zones or limits. The scheme will reopen for new applications in January 2024 with any schemes which fell below the funding level for this year automatically entered.

Either a 20mph limit or a 20mph zone will be installed depending on the specific location. A 20mph limit typically covers individual or a small number of streets and requires signs only, whereas 20mph zones typically cover larger areas and require both signs and markings.

To find out more about 20mph schemes, and to submit an application visit: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/20mph-funding>

Free vehicle checks

A series of free vehicle checking events is being organised around the county throughout October, in support of the national campaign for safer vehicles.

Members of the public are invited to attend a free vehicle check session, where they will be taught how to conduct a simple check on their own vehicle and spot potentially dangerous problems. The check consists of examining tyre condition and tread depth, ensuring correctly working external lights and correct washer fluid levels. To assist members of the public, a free top-up of screen wash will be offered to every participating vehicle, as well as free resources to help with subsequent checking.

The events are being delivered by the Vision Zero Road Safety Partnership, of which Cambridgeshire County Council is an active member. The partnership aims to reduce the number of road traffic collisions across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and for zero deaths on the county's roads by 2040. More information on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CambsRoadSafety

EWR: latest round of consultations

EWR's latest round of informal mediated consultations has taken place over the last two weeks, including a hybrid in-person/online event in Great Shelford. There was a distinct lack of notable information despite a lengthy discussion. Notes from 'Cambridge and the surrounding area' meeting attached to this report.