

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

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

District Councillors' Monthly Report – November 2025

District Councillor 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.

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

Cost-of-living information

Visit <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/> for information on: 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 handyperson service and; support if you are in distress.

Tackling period poverty with environmentally friendly menstrual products

South Cambridgeshire District Council is once again providing free environmentally friendly menstrual products for hundreds more residents to help tackle period poverty. Councillors agreed to champion the cause, to ensure dignity for all. A funding pot of almost £10,000 has been agreed for the project, which will offer South Cambridgeshire residents a choice of one of three period product packs - either washable pads, period pants or reusable period cups.

Hey Girls, a UK-wide social enterprise, will be distributing the packs, and [residents can now apply online](#). The scheme will run on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Community Hubs

Community Hubs offer residents somewhere to socialise, take part in new activities and to receive information on cost-of-living support and how to stay healthy and well.

Local Community Hubs include:

- Grantchester Communal Hall, Tabrum Close, Grantchester, Cambridge, CB3 9NW
Opens: Friday, 10am – 12pm
- Toft Community Hub – Toft Methodist Chapel, High Street, Toft, Cambridge, CB23 2RL
Opens: Monday, 10am – 12pm.

Find out more at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/community-hubs>

Postal Vote Re-applications

Postal votes are due to expire at the end of January 2026 for anyone who's had a postal vote for over 3 years and hasn't yet reapplied. If this applies to you, you will have been contacted by the Elections Team at South Cambridgeshire District Council by either email or post. Anyone who has not made a new application by the end of January will have their postal vote cancelled, which will be confirmed to them in writing.

You can reapply online at www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote (you need to enter your National Insurance Number and upload a photo of your signature) or you can request a paper form from SCDC either by calling 01954 713 000 or emailing elections@scambs.gov.uk.

Planning

Greater Cambridge Local Plan consultation

SCDC and Cambridge City Council have been working together on a combined Greater Cambridge Local Plan. This will set future land use and local planning policy and so it is important that everyone has a chance to provide their feedback. A public consultation on the proposals will take place between 1st December 2025 and 31st January 2026. These times have been chosen to enable submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State by the end of 2026.

If you'd like to look at the draft proposals ahead of the consultation, you can access the report for the [Scrutiny and Overview committee meeting](#) where it will be discussed on the 6th November or the [scrutiny document pack](#). Alternatively, you can wait until a more user-friendly version becomes available in readiness for the consultation.

Cambourne to Cambridge Busway public inquiry

The Cambourne to Cambridge busway scheme developed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is intended to provide high quality public transport from Cambourne through the new Bourn Airfield development to Cambridge City. The busway is a requirement in the adopted Local Plan 2018 to deliver Bourn Airfield. However, there have been many concerns raised about the project, and they are being considered in the public inquiry where the Government planning inspector is hearing from all sides.

The public inquiry began on Tuesday 16th September 2025 at the Cambridge Belfry in Cambourne and is expected to conclude on Friday 21st November 2025. You can watch the livestream and find the timetable and all the submissions on the enquiry website at:

<https://gateleyhamer-pi.com/en-gb/c-to-c/>

Fens Reservoir consultation – 15th October to 10th December 2025

The Phase 3 consultation for a new reservoir in the Fens will begin on Wednesday 15th October and run until Wednesday 10th December 2025. It will focus on the following areas:

- **Updates to the reservoir design** showing potential opportunities for leisure, areas for wildlife, and links to surrounding towns and villages.
- **Updated proposals for the raw water and treated water infrastructure** that are needed to transfer water from sources to the reservoir, treat it and supply it to Anglian Water and Cambridge Water customers.
- **Information on how the project could be delivered** including early thinking on construction and transport options.
- **Information on the approach to the environment** including, assessment of potential impacts and potential steps to manage impacts in construction and operation.
- **Early plans on providing power for the reservoir**, including the current proposals for powering the site using renewable technology.

Locally, proposed works relate to transfer of the water into the area, which involves a new service reservoir at Madingley along with a supply pipeline. Since the previous consultation, Anglian Water has extended the area identified for the service reservoir to include additional land that may be needed for an outfall pipeline connecting the reservoir to the Bin Brook stream.

You can find out more about the plans, details of community events and access the consultation at <https://fensreservoir.co.uk/>.

Christmas market – Sunday 7th December at Cambourne Village College

Save the date for the annual indoor Christmas market in Cambourne. They'll be around 100 local businesses stalls offering a fantastic variety of gifts, crafts, festive treats, and hot food - there's something for everyone!

Environment

Climate and Nature Strategy – consultation open until 5th November 2025

South Cambridgeshire District Council is currently consulting on its new Climate and Nature Strategy and would like to hear as many views as possible on the vision and proposals.

You can access the strategy and the survey at <https://engage.scambs.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/climate-and-nature-strategies> and the survey will be open until the end of Wednesday 5th November.

6 Free Trees

South Cambridgeshire District Council is again inviting parish and town councils to take part in its popular Six Free Trees scheme, which has already helped plant 758 trees in communities since its launch.

The initiative offers each parish or town council the opportunity to claim either six small trees (whips) or one large pot-grown tree, with a choice of native species. Generally, free trees given out as part of the scheme can be planted on parish land or school grounds, and schools interested in participating are encouraged to contact their parish or town council to apply on their behalf.

The Six Free Trees Scheme has been run by South Cambridgeshire District Council since 2019, making this its fifth year in operation. As a result, some parish or town councils may find they have limited space for more trees. The District Council will therefore also consider providing free trees for other publicly accessible locations that are not on parish or town council or school land. This is subject to permission from the landowner and the District Council's approval.

Those wanting to claim free trees should complete the form at www.scambs.gov.uk/six-free-trees. Applications will close on 30 November – but the District Council encourages early applications to ensure timely delivery and planting during the optimal season.

South Cambridgeshire residents invited to help shape Council priorities

SCDC has launched a consultation inviting residents to share their views on the [Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030](#), which sets out a long-term vision for a fairer, kinder and greener South Cambridgeshire under five key priorities:

- Healthy and supported communities
- Sustainable homes and vibrant places
- Being green to our core
- Helping businesses to thrive
- Financially secure and fit for the future

SCDC is asking for comments on how these priorities should be delivered in the year ahead, through its *annual* Corporate Action Plan for 2026/2027. The consultation will run until the end of the day on Sunday 16th November. To find out more and take part, visit <https://engage.scambs.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/cap-26-27>.

Empty properties transformed into modern family homes across the district

A major milestone has been reached in tackling long-term empty homes in South Cambridgeshire, with 75 properties brought back into use in the last three years.

Success stems from the District Council's strategic decision to appoint an Empty Homes Officer in 2022 - an initiative that has transformed neglected properties into vibrant homes for new families, eased housing pressures, and revitalised communities across the district.

Cllr Natalie Warren Green, Lead Cabinet Member for Environment for South Cambridgeshire District Council, said: "A recent case involved a home in Comberton,

which had been empty for 17 years with an overgrown garden. Thanks to our intervention and support the property has been renovated and sold as a striking modern home for a new family. The work to enable this highlights the dedication and persistence required to bring long-term vacant properties back into use and showcases the transformative work happening quietly behind the scenes by our Empty Homes Officer. Their role supports families, unlocks housing potential, and breathes new life into communities. We're committed to tackling empty properties and creating opportunities for them to become homes again. This is a fantastic example of what can be achieved with the right support. We encourage anyone who either owns or knows of an empty property to get in touch. Whether it's been vacant for years or just recently, we're here to help bring it back into use - and make a real difference to local neighbourhoods."

To find out more about our work bringing empty homes back into use visit our [webpage](#).

'How are we doing?' survey launched

SCDC has recently launched a new 'How are we doing?' survey to give residents, businesses and other stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on the Council's services – both positive and negative – to ensure that we are delivering the best services possible. The feedback received will be reported to the Leadership Team and the appropriate teams. If you wish to comment, please use this link: www.scams.gov.uk/leave-feedback. Official complaints or service requests should still go through the usual channels.

Council leaders welcome multi-million-pound investment in Greater Cambridge – but say more detail is needed

The leaders of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District councils have welcomed the Government's announcement that they will invest up to £400 million to help solve some of the challenges that hamper inclusive and sustainable growth in the area.

The Government announced on Thursday 23rd October their intention to consult on setting up a centrally led Development Corporation to help plan, manage, and deliver large-scale development projects in Greater Cambridge.

Council leaders have said for many years that national intervention on matters such as water supply, wastewater, power, transport and healthcare has been urgently needed and have lobbied successive governments. Lack of water supply and infrastructure to deal with wastewater is already insufficient to ensure all the current locally planned high quality new communities and homes can be delivered.

The leaders of the councils have said that, like any announcement of this kind, further discussion and details are now needed to understand the Government's intentions and to ensure it also supports local priorities.

Both councils will work with Government to ensure decisions on the precise form and purpose that any development corporation takes are shaped and informed by good evidence and input from the democratically elected and accountable leaders for the area. Once more information is known the Government will consult local residents on setting up a development corporation, allowing local voices to be heard.

The Government's announcement included:

- Up to £400 million of initial government funding to kickstart development
- A pledge to increase the supply of affordable homes
- Investment in infrastructure
- Business expansion – with £15 million for the University of Cambridge for a proposed Innovation Hub to create lab space for science start-ups to grow and compete on the global stage

Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council, said: “We have lobbied successive governments for national support on the infrastructure we need, including on wastewater and water supply. We’ve also made clear time and time again the challenges our local area faces when it comes to traffic and public transport. Getting this right is a top priority if we are to continue to ensure Greater Cambridge is a great place to live, grow-up, work and learn.

“We recognise that a Development Corporation’s capabilities, including the ability to call upon the resources of the Government, do potentially provide a means to address some of these challenges but it’s key that local voices shape any decisions about our area.

“An intention to also increase the number of truly affordable homes is also very welcome but, like any announcement of this kind, we need to understand the detail that sits behind it and how it can become a reality. It’s also personally very welcome that ministers have recognised our advocacy for growth in a way that protects more land for nature and will soon be setting out plans for a new forest locally.

“We will be working with Government to ensure we get this information, and we will want to be sure that the priorities of local people are fully considered. We know that for a Development Corporation to be formed the Government will need to consult. When all the information is available and the Government is able to do that, we will ensure we encourage everyone locally to have their voice heard.”

Update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

LGR is the government’s plan to reorganise local authorities into unitary bodies which will replace the current district, county, and city councils. The changes will mean that residents will get all of their council services – for example, bin collections, housing support, roads maintenance or social care – through one organisation.

The seven councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have been working collaboratively since December 2024 to identify viable options for the new unitary authorities, and the results of a countywide engagement survey have just been published. The feedback from this survey will help to inform how councils are to be structured from April 2028, when the government’s requirement for LGR is due to take effect.

The survey revealed overall support for reorganisation if it results in improved services. Respondents were clear that reorganisation must safeguard rural representation and identity as well as deliver tangible benefits, such as investing in services and being quicker to respond, and ensure councillors have local area knowledge.

To see more of the findings, the survey summary reports are available at:
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/about-your-council/local-government-reorganisation/joint-engagement-with-other-local-councils-and-three-options>.

The business cases now being developed by the councils must be submitted by the government’s deadline of 28th November and there is an extraordinary council meeting and cabinet meeting planned for 24th November. The government will then consult further before it ultimately makes a final decision on which arrangements will be put into place.