

South Cambridgeshire District Councillor's Monthly Report

Month of September 2012

1. Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation

Thank you to the Parish Council and all those who responded to the consultation. My comprehensive response also included the comments from the responses of the parish councils in the Ward.

2. South Cambs District Council Accounts

SCDC has produced a short and simple guide to their accounts for year ending 31/03/12 – it's surprisingly interesting – more so when you consider how much you've paid into it! SCDC has 491 employees, 57 Councillors and spent £27 million – all working for you (apparently). The report is available to download from South Cambs website <http://bit.ly/PlainEnglishAccounts2011-12> or as hard copy if you email sally.smart@scambs.gov.uk.

3. Community Pride and Heroes Award

Congratulations to Toft residents Tom Preece and Arpi Johnson whose nominations for Young Village Hero and Village Hero awards, saw them both come in as runners up for those categories. Tom was nominated for his work in helping to found and champion Toft Lions football club whilst Arpi was nominated for her tireless dedication to the community including 30 years of service in the WRVS, driving in the social car scheme, being a Girl Guide Ambassador and helping with the local children's club. Well done to both.

4. Parish Planting Scheme Grants

There are grants available from the council for planting new trees. Local people are able to apply for funds which can be used to create new orchards or restore/expand existing ones. Local landowners and parish councils can also apply for a Tree and Hedge grant. Applicants who are successful will receive packs of high quality subsidised trees and hedging plants as well as free planting and maintenance advice. However, to qualify, applicants should be able to plant a minimum of 100 metres of hedgerow or 100 trees. Find more information at <http://scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Conservation/TreesAndHedges/initiatives.htm> or email conservation@scambs.gov.uk or call on 03450 450 500. There's only 4 weeks left to grab a grant!

5. Help for Local Businesses

The Council has decided to provide help for local businesses by creating a Business Support Fund to offer free advice and guidance to businesses operating in South Cambridgeshire for at least 12 months and can who demonstrate difficulties due to the recession. Grants of up to £1,000 may also be available for further support. Those looking to start a business can attend also a range of workshops to help them along the way. The free service being provided by Exemplas on behalf of the council, will run until March 2013. For further information call 0844 346 0755 or email southcambsbusinesssupport@exemplas.com or go to the website www.cambridge-plus.com/content/business-support.

6. Broadband – Connecting Cambridgeshire

As the registered Digital Champion for Caldecote, Kingston, Toft and Comberton, I am reminding residents of Toft, Kingston and Old Caldecote to get online and register their demand for broadband services at www.ConnectingCambridgeshire.co.uk. These villages are connected to the Comberton exchange, and is the only opportunity for a while to get the Comberton exchange upgraded for broadband services.

	#Premises	#registrations	%total registered
Comberton	870	49	5.6
Kingston	93	35	37.6
Toft	372	49	13.2
Caldecote	664	30	4.5

The table above shows the registration stats as of 1st October. The figures show all of Caldecote, but in reality only those in Old Caldecote are on the Comberton exchange.

We need to have all premises registered to stand a chance of getting the exchange upgraded. Please encourage any one you know in those villages to register. People who do not have access to the internet can register online or on paper forms in libraries, council offices and other public places. They can also call me on 01954 210840 for assistance.

7. Superfast Broadband Race to Infinity Update

Some residents of Caldecote are now in a position to order BT's Infinity service. Hurray!! The first PON (Passive Optical Network) serving the Grafton Drive area was commissioned and ready for service on 19 September 2012. One resident has ordered their superfast broadband service, and expecting installation on 6 October 2012. The remaining 5 PONs serving the rest of the village and other communities in the Madingley exchange area will come onstream over the coming weeks, with two more expected to be ready in the next two weeks. There are about 170 premises that will need an aerial fibre solution, but I don't know which ones yet. I will continue to update residents as I get the information from BT. Thanks for your patience.

8. South Cambs to Build New Council Houses

It is many years since the Council has built any of its own houses but that could be about to change – so it says. Discussions are currently under way looking in to the possibility of building 200 new and 200 replacement houses over the next 10 years. The numbers are small but, with increasing numbers of people needing affordable rental housing every bit helps. Linton has been identified as one of the first places that might benefit. I will update as and when there is any news of any potential building in or near our Ward.

9. Green Issues

The general public and businesses are invited to the Gamlingay Green Day on 20 October 2012. There will be stalls, talks and displays from local wildlife organisations and green energy businesses, from 10 am to 2 pm at the Gamlingay Eco-Hub. The event is organised by Gamlingay Environment Action Group, with the Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership, and will be helpful for communities that signed up for the SPEP programme or interested in going green.

10. Casework

Your Councillor is here to help you. Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints. I can be contacted by phone, email or via my website. I hope I can help but even if I can't, then it's highly likely that I know someone who can!

11. Dates for your diary

3 October 2012	10am	Planning Committee Meeting
5 October 2012	12pm	Close of consultation on Council Tax Benefits
20 October 2012	10am-2pm	Gamlingay Green Day

Tumi

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4-Oct-12

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