

# South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caldecote Ward

(comprises the Parishes of Caldecote, Childerley, Kingston, Bourn, Longstowe & Little Gransden)

## Councillor's Monthly Report – January 2021

This report of previous month events is for all the Ward, so please be aware that some of the content may not be relevant to your particular Parish.

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### General

Welcome to 2021. Please contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues etc. Don't fight on your own. I am available to help you to get the best outcome possible for your situation.

If you have time to spare – check out articles on my blog <http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk>. What I post on there is my view and not LibDem or South Cambs official policy unless I state that it is.

### IMPORTANT REMINDERS

These are items in my previous reports that require action due to time limitations.

#### 1. Green Homes Grant scheme

Government funding to make homes more energy efficient to help you saving money on household bills. **The scheme closes on 31 March 2021.** It could up to two thirds to full cost of improvements, from £5000 to £10,000 depending on your circumstances. Find out more if you are eligible at <https://greenhomesgrant.campaign.gov.uk/?> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-green-homes-grant-scheme>.

#### 2. Luton Airport Flight Path Consultation.

There is an ongoing consultation by London Luton Airport (LLA). Proposed changes could see incoming flights stacked at or above approximately 8,000ft and then approach Luton via some of our villages into the airport. With the Westerly operations, the route for descent into Luton may likely affect parts of Bourn, Longstowe and Little Gransden. For the Easterly operations, Little Gransden is the closest to the route option corridor. **The consultation closes on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021.**

See my comments at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/flight-stacking-changes-at-london-luton-airport/>

#### 3. Broadband Voucher Scheme

Those that are suffering from low broadband speeds (less than 30 Mbps) can still take advantage of the Government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme

<https://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/funding-schemes/rural-gigabit-voucher-scheme/>.

The Voucher is worth up to £3500 for small businesses and £1500 for residential premises. It remains **open till 31 March 2021** or until the funds run out. The funds can then be used to commission service from suppliers such a BT or others.

Also Connecting Cambridgeshire has secured £500,000 extra **“top-up” funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority** to provide an additional “top-up” of £1,500 per premise.

Check out my comments here <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/broadband-for-rural-communities/>

#### 4. Planning Pre-Application Service

I reported on this last month and though is not time critical, it is important for anyone considering building works that may require planning permission in 2021 and beyond.

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service has launched an improved pre-application planning advice service. The new service offers a wide range of planning advice from a 15 minute free consultation with a planner about minor household applications, through to paid-for specialist advice on a number of aspects of planning, including listed building expertise, ecology and housing. There is a menu of service levels to choose from.

The aim of the service is to help potential applicants develop the best quality proposals that will meet with planning requirements which should lead to applications being validated and decided more quickly. Read more about it on our website.

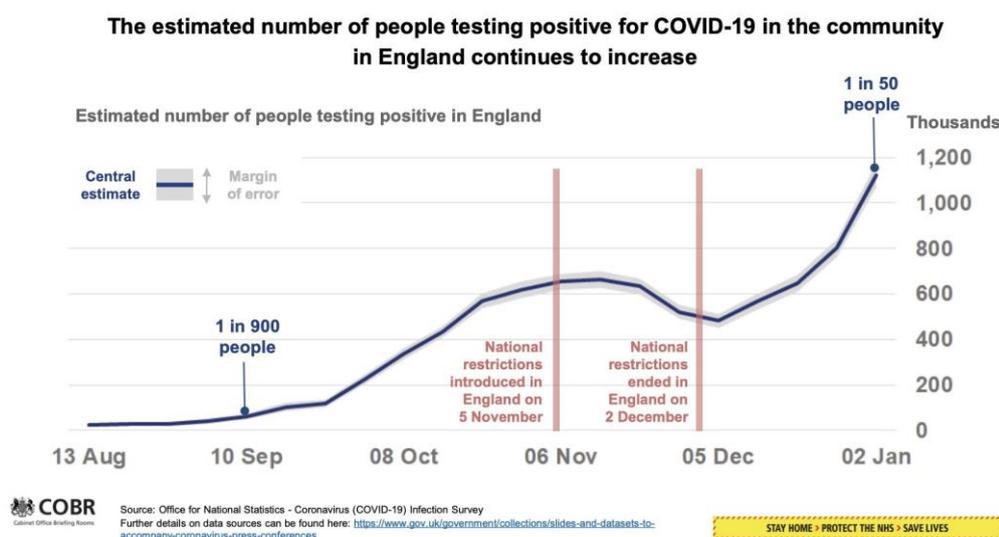
<https://www.scams.gov.uk/improved-planning-advice-service-for-greater-cambridge-launched/>

## COVID19 UPDATE

**Good news** is that there are now two vaccines licensed for use in the UK namely the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-pfizer-biontech-vaccine-for-covid-19>) and the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca>). They have both gone through all the testing and approval processes and are certified to be safe. Two doses of vaccinations are required for both to give the best protection possible. The vaccines are currently available through your GP surgery. It will be made more widely available as soon as the government can arrange it.

Phase 1 rollout will be on the basis of health care workers at risk, people who live or work in care homes, and age groups from 80+ working down to 50+, as these people are expected to represent 99% of those who are likely to die from the disease. The next phase will then be those at high risk of exposure and/or key workers delivery public services.

**Bad news** is that Lockdown 3 started with effect from 12.01am on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021, and will continue until mid February at least when the Government will review its' effectiveness. The district had only just moved from Tier 2 to Tier 4, but now in full lockdown. Unfortunately, the mutant Covid19 strain spreads quicker and faster and has resulted in the rapid increase in infections over the last 2-3 weeks.



In the meantime, we must all **stay at home**. The new guidelines are more stringent than previous guidelines. No one must leave home except to shop for essential food, if they cannot work from home, or to exercise. Schools and colleges are closed, except for children of those who are key

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workers. Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) who shielded the last time must shield again now and not leave home except for medical appointments. I have listed some of the important guidelines here but you will also find more details on the government website here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#summary-what-you-can-and-cannot-do-during-the-national-lockdown> .

Please make use of the various support groups that are available within your communities for shopping, collecting medicine, etc.

### **Support for Businesses**

The local business directory at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/local-business-directory> is still there to help residents find out more about what local businesses are offering. The listings include details of Covid-secure measures that businesses have put in place, and information about current opening arrangements/online ordering/click and collect facilities.

Following the new national lockdown, we are awaiting further information government and the Business Support Group will be in contact with local businesses when we have established an application process. For the most up to date information and full details of current available grants, including eligibility criteria and application processes, visit our website: <https://www.scams.gov.uk/business/coronavirus-information-for-businesses/financial-support-for-business/> or email our BusinessGrants@scams.gov.uk or [openforbusiness@scams.gov.uk](mailto:openforbusiness@scams.gov.uk) The team hope to reply emails within 24-48 hours as they are very busy.

### **Shop Local Directory**

The directory that was created in December is still available and open to businesses to register on it. It is an initiative to help local businesses and to encourage residents to “shop local”. If you are a customer facing business, consider registering if you have not done so already. It is free to register at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/local-business-directory>.

We continue to encourage everyone to shop local and use the directory.

### **Support for Education**

South Cambs council has made available £30,000 in funding to help vulnerable people and those in need including digitally-excluded children to get online. It is in addition to the Government’s winter support grant scheme. The charity Cambridge Online is running this on our behalf. Contact them by email using [help@cambridgeonline.org.uk](mailto:help@cambridgeonline.org.uk) or call the Cambridge Online helpline on 01223 300407, quoting ‘South Cambs Winter Support Grant’. Their website is at <http://cambridgeonline.org.uk/>

## **PLANNING**

### **Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSPS)**

#### **PAS Review report on Planning Committee**

As I previously reported, as part of its improvement program, the Shared Planning Service requested a Peer review of its three **planning committees** by the independent Planning Advisory Service (PAS). The report has now been released and can be found on our website at <https://scams.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s120312/Appendix%20A%20-%20Peer%20Review%20Final%20Report%202020.pdf>

It is a comprehensive report that recognises the strengths of the planning committee process, and the quality of its decision making. It is gratifying to note the praise given for responding speedily to the Covid19 issue by adopting new online working processes and procedures, and the focus on public engagement. It also said the current scheme of delegation which we put in place back in June is

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more transparent as it has clear criteria for referral to committee and detailed reporting to Parish Councils on the outcomes of their referral.

Nevertheless, there are issues to be improved upon. Building a culture of trust between Councillors and officers, improving report writing, briefings for committee members and clear, providing timely advice from planners and legal officers during meetings, a key area that needs to be examined.

The Scheme of Delegation to be kept under review. More training will be provided for Parish Councils and improved communications are key. We have agreed to establish a Planning Development Group to take forward the 8 recommendations made in the Peer review report.

### **New Town Aspiration by Thakeham**

Early in December there was a bit of a furore over the announcement by Thakeham, a speculative development company, over its plans for a new town of 25,000 homes in the south west of the district. The broad area would encompass the villages of Shepreth, Melbourn, Meldreth, Whaddon, Bassingbourn, Wimpole, Orwell, Barrington and Foxton. The new town, dubbed 'South West Cambridge,' would profoundly change the hinterland of a multitude of villages and eradicate the rural nature of much of South Cambridgeshire.

I emphasise the comments in the council news release at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/new-town-proposals-to-be-considered-alongside-650-other-suggested-locations-for-new-homes-and-jobs/> and also on BBC radio cambridgeshire interview on it. It is an aspiration which they literally just announced. While it has contacted relevant landowners, Thakeham has made no contact with local residents or their elected representatives.

We need Thakeham submit specific proposals through the Local Plan process and it will be published on our website for all to see, and we will use it to carry out all the necessary assessments. So apparently Thakeham now proposes to make a late submission in the Call for Sites. Watch this space.

## **HEALTH & WELLBEING**

### **Community Lifeline Service**

As part of the support to those who are vulnerable or live on their own, the Council offers the Community Life Line service. It offers emergency response at the touch of a button which when pressed, connects to a response centre who then arrange for which ever help is needed. If you are interested and wish to apply, check website at - <https://www.scams.gov.uk/community-lifeline-service> or call 01954 713470, 01954 713370 or email [lifelines@scams.gov.uk](mailto:lifelines@scams.gov.uk)

### **Community Warden Scheme**

The Council launched seven new Community Warden Schemes (CWS) covering 20 villages, and one of the schemes covers the villages of **Bourn, Caldecote**, Comberton, Hardwick, Toft, Papworth and Wimpole. It is being run for us by Age UK, who have already been running similar schemes in the area. The Council has invested £200,000 to enable the existing 15-scheme service to be expanded, now covering nearly half of the entire district.

The scheme helps those above 60 who prefer to remain living independently in their homes to do so safely, happily and not feel isolated. Wardens can visit to help make or deliver meals, do shopping, collect prescriptions or with paperwork such reading posts, filling in forms being filled in, just have a chat and be a listening ear. Read more about it at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/seven-new-warden-schemes-launch-as-funding-for-2021-2024-announced/> If you live in Bourn or Caldecote and are interested in the service, please call the new Community Warden Paula Rowley on **07812495997**.

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## **Christmas Meal Scheme**

South Cambs provided 1,000 traditional turkey dinners to families in need, elderly and vulnerable residents in the district. It was paid for with funds from DEFRA and the Government Winter Support Grant administered by the council. The majority was cooked by C3 Church group, and the remaining by the existing service at Over Day Centre which has been operating throughout the pandemic and has benefitted some residents in Caldecote. Read about it on our website at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/christmas-dinner-on-the-menu-for-almost-1-000-vulnerable-and-older-people/>

## **Grants for Green Projects**

The Council continues to put its money where its mouth is on Being Green to our Core by awarding grants to more communities to implement projects that will help communities move the district toward achieving net zero carbon by 2050. The council received numerous bids for projects focussing on low carbon lifestyles covering areas such as cycling, community buildings and tree planting. Although none of the projects submitted by communities in the Ward got selected, those that were show just what is possible and could be emulated by others. Read more about it at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/more-zcc-grass-roots-green-projects-receive-grants/>

## **LOCAL ISSUES**

### **Rain and Flooding pre-Christmas**

As many know, the Christmas week was an eventful one with lots of rain, and then flooding during the night of Christmas Eve eve. Some houses and businesses in Bourn were flooded, high water levels in Longstowe and Little Gransden were reported, resulting in some roads becoming impassable. Bourn brook rose to 2.48m at one point – or just over 8ft in old money, turning the crossing with Caxton End into a swimming pool and threatening houses nearby. The area around the Doctors Surgery on Alms Hill was also affected.

South Cambs officers were out all that night helping vulnerable residents throughout the district, and were able to provide emergency sandbags.

This unfortunate episode is a reminder to all Parishes to update their Emergency Plans. In addition, residents and businesses are advised to have their own flood/emergency plans in place that will help to prevent or reduce the damage that may be caused by flood waters. Please check out more advice on our website at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/community-development/crime-anti-social-behaviour-and-community-safety/emergency-planning/flooding/>

### **Bourn Quarter 20/02568/FUL**

The application for redeveloping the former TKA Tallent site was going to planning committee on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 but was postponed to the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

### **Bourn Airfield New Village S/3440/18/OL**

Likewise this application that was to go before the South Cambridgeshire District Council planning committee on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 has been postponed to 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021. This is because it responded to my campaign to remove the R17 block (proposal for up to 150 houses) in the field at the top of Highfields Road which would have pretty much obliterated the setting of Highfields and obscured the historic views into and out of the village. It was specifically against the Bourn SPD and the Caldecote Village Design Guide, but Countryside had wanted to “take its chances” with the committee. Glad they saw sense in the end.

### **Cambridge Club - Strawberries & Cream Events at Childerley Orchard 2021**

Looks like a new event is being planned for Summer 2021 at Childerley by Proud Events, and events company. Some residents would have received a letter informing about their plans for the

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Strawberries and Cream event, which it says is a “true family festival weekend experience, where children can explore and adults can enjoy a celebration of great music, local produce and their favourite podcasters”. The organisers need to obtain a TEN licence for such an event from South Cambs, but to my knowledge that has not happened yet. The company have also been advertising tickets at <https://www.ticketmaster.co.uk/the-cambridge-club-festival-tickets/artist/5345388> but it is unclear whether giving current situation with Covid19, such an event would be possible. We just have to wait and see.

### **Casework**

Irrespective of the current Covid19 lockdown, please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. I will help as best I can.

Please remember - The maxim **Hands – Face – Space** still very much the rule.  
LOCKDOWN #3 – STAY HOME

*Tumi*

Tumi Hawkins  
7 January 2021

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