

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caldecote Ward

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

Councillor's Monthly Report – April 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.

General

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 or important.

1. Rapid Covid Tests

If you need a rapid test, then remember a Rapid Testing Centre is available at The Hub, High Street, Cambourne, CB23 6GW, 8am-8pm, Mon-Sat. It is for key workers and people who are unable to work from home who are showing no symptoms to get tested if they are worried. You can book test at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rapidtesting>

COVID19 UPDATE

Good news: Lockdown #3 unlocking

Stage 1B of lockdown came into force on Monday 29th March. That means the following apply:

1. Rule of 6 or two households can meet outdoors only. Do not let anyone outside your household come indoors.
2. Outdoor sport and leisure facilities can now open
3. Organised outdoor sports for children and adults can take place
4. Outdoor parent and child group - up to 15 parents
5. Stay at home – continue to work from home if you can
6. Stay local - keep travel to minimum if you have to go out
7. Funerals (up to 30) and weddings (up to 6)
8. Travel abroad – banned for now other than for permitted reasons. No holidays.

Please remain cautious, even if you've had the vaccine. This is because the vaccine takes two to three weeks to work and for a full course, two doses are required. It is still possible to catch COVID after having had the vaccine, so please continue to sanitise your **hands**, wear your mask to cover your **face** and **social distance**.

Find the full details of easing lockdown at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary>

Workplace testing programme expands to offer free rapid home testing

On 28 March the Government announced that, from 6 April, the workplace testing programme will supply home test kits to companies with over ten workers where it is not possible to set up testing on-site. This could be due to a lack of space or because a company operates across multiple sites. Over 60,000 businesses across the country have already registered their interest to provide rapid tests to key workers.

Businesses are encouraged to **register before 12 April** in order to access free tests until the end of June, even if they're not yet open or are not able to start using the tests straight away.

Business Grants

The District Council has now paid out **£10,570,066** in Government grants to **4,447** businesses for the recent lockdowns running from November 2020 onwards, and it will be paying out further sums over coming weeks. We continue to do everything we can to support all businesses regardless of their size or turnover through our website, our newsletter and by direct contact with our expert business support team - we have advised a staggering 2000 businesses over the past 12 months.

In addition, we have been running a series of 7 Business Webinars and are planning 7 more with the one in July entitled *Rebuilding the Greater Cambridge Supply Chain post Covid*. It will focus on the Food and Drinks sector and so should be of great interest to our pubs, restaurants and takeaways. Watch out for further information.

Business rates relief

On 25 March, the Government announced £1.5 billion further funding for councils to provide additional targeted support to those businesses that have not already received business rates relief. The funding will be allocated to councils based on the stock of properties in the area whose sectors have been affected by the coronavirus outbreak and they will use their knowledge to make awards to local businesses. The Government will work with and support local government to enable ratepayers to apply as soon as possible this year.

Covid Recovery Grants for Villages:

SCDC has just launched an additional £30,000 Community Chest grant programme specifically for Covid Recovery. The aim is to help local community groups and parish councils resume activities that might have been stopped due to Covid or which have tailed off in recent months.

The Council's Grants Advisory Committee temporarily amended the rules around the eligibility criteria for its Community Chest Grant scheme for the next two months to allow applications for these grants of up to £2,000.

Previously, few parish councils could apply to the scheme as the criteria stipulated they had to have fewer than 160 registered electors. But for the next eight weeks, it will be **open to all parish councils and community groups** – including new ones that are now setting up. Applications are being accepted until 10 May 2021, with submissions being reviewed at the May 28 Grants Advisory Committee meeting.

Meanwhile, the normal Community Chest Grant scheme continues to run for community groups for a maximum grant of £1,000.

Applying for a Covid Recovery Community Chest Grant is the same as applying for a standard Community Chest Grant. The applicant simply selects which type of grant they are applying for at the start of the process with all other criteria being the same. You will find more information at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/community-development/grants/community-chest-grants/>

Vaccinations

Vaccination data - Localised for South Cambridgeshire villages

A new LGA report provides some data-led insight into the number of South Cambridgeshire adult residents who have received at least one dose of the vaccine. The report shows that, as of 18 March, 63,470 of South Cambridgeshire's 141,203 residents aged 16 or older have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. This equates to a first dose vaccination rate of 44,949 per 100,000 or

44.95%. South Cambridgeshire's vaccination rate is greater than the England average of 41,037 per 100,000 (41.04 %) and ranks South Cambridgeshire 112 out of 188 districts in England.

The report also breaks down the numbers into an almost village-by-village level. Most villages are put into groups of two or three communities, but our larger villages, such as Sawston, are presented as standalone entries. The data also provides a breakdown of residents by age group.

For example, for the week ending 21/03/2021 for Highfields and Hardwick 4092 residents over 16 have received at least one dose of vaccine. Check it out here

<https://reports.esd.org.uk/reports/8167?pat=LA&pa=E07000012%3AML5OA>

Vaccine hesitancy

Academic research published last week suggests high numbers of people refusing to take a COVID-19 vaccine could increase the mortality rate by up to eight times compared with ideal vaccination uptake when restrictions are relaxed. The [latest report by the Imperial College London COVID-19 response team](#) evaluates the potential impact of vaccine hesitancy on the control of the pandemic and suggests high vaccine hesitancy could prolong the need for non-pharmaceutical interventions, for example social distancing, to remain in place.

If you know anyone who is hesitant, please do your best to encourage them.

Virtual/Remote Meetings

At the beginning of lockdown 1, the Government enacted legislation to enable Councils to meet online. That will be stopping at the end of this month. I think it is a very short-sighted decision and just beggars belief that the Government cannot find a way to allow this to continue for County, District, Town and Parish Councils. Moving to remote meetings has allowed all of us to protect our councillors, our officers and the public which is surely just as important now as it was 12 months ago. Very few councils will have large enough spaces to allow all of the elected members to participate in meetings whilst at the same time socially distancing.

We have seen increased participation from members of the public who will now not be able to participate from home and can only do so in person. To add insult to injury, the Government is now consulting on the impact of remote meetings to see if they can incorporate it into future legislation. Putting cart before horse comes to mind! Go figure.

PLANNING

Five Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS)

The big good news here is that South Cambs jointly with Cambridge City have a 6.1 years of housing land supply. We announced this a week ago and it takes effect on 1st April. It is critical to avoiding fake news or scaremongering in certain quarters.

This 5YHLS figure of 6.1 years will reassure residents that we can move ahead applying our Local Plan policies for affordable housing, standards, sustainable locations, green belt and place-making without fear of rampant speculative and unsustainable development being imposed on villages and towns. Not meeting that threshold meant that it was difficult to refuse planning applications, as the government considered that the local plan policies were “out of date”.

Those who were around pre-2018 when the Council did not have a 5YHLS will remember the carnage that it brought to some villages as developers bombarded the council with speculative applications, a lot of which got approved at appeal. Caldecote had the two large sites as a result – the Linden Site (140 houses) and Balfour Beatty site (58) both of which are now being built out.

We still have work to do in the coming year to make sure that we keep on target. And we will do our best. I also encourage communities and Parish Councils to please work with us, so that we make sure that as best as it within our powers to do so, that developments are delivered in the most appropriate locations

You will find more details in the links below. The full report is 568 pages long, so perhaps you should read my blog post for a summary then delve into the full report if you still need more or need to identify the sites that have been included and the criteria and all that.

<https://tumiawkins.org.uk/5-year-housing-land-supply-for-south-cambridgeshire/>

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/current-plans-and-guidance/monitoring-delivery-in-greater-cambridge/>

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/2129/greater-cambridge-housing-trajectory-and-five-year-housing-land-supply-april-2021.pdf>

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Update

- a. The work on this is now at the stage where a rough idea of spatial strategy is beginning to take shape. What I can say for now is that the guiding principles are
- Reducing climate impacts through compact development located where active and sustainable travel can be maximised
 - Making best use of suitable brownfield land
 - Making best use of existing and committed key sustainable transport infrastructure.
 - Supporting rural communities to thrive and sustain services

This means we are looking at a combination of the 8 spatial strategies that came out of the First Conversation Issues and Options consultation that happened last year. We are working toward further public consultation later this year. Watch this space.

All the 650+ sites submitted in response to the Call for Sites can be seen at

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/greater-cambridge-local-plan/document-library/site-submissions/>

Making Historical Buildings Green

As you know, the UK and the Council have committed to achieving net zero carbon by 2050. To help with achieving this target, there are new energy standards to be applied to new homes. But there is a huge stock of existing homes that need to be improved to these standards. We recognise it is particularly challenging for historic buildings and that is why we have put together information on the Council's planning website that provides advice to owners on how to do this. Check it out at <https://greatercambridgeplanning.org/historic-environment/making-historic-homes-more-energy-efficient/>

Parish Planning Forum

I hope that the councillors that attended the last parish planning meetings found it useful. We are committed to continuing to work closely with parishes and providing information and training. Please let me know of any specific training you think you require for the future. As always, if you have concerns about any application in your villages, please contact your Area Team Manager in the first instance to talk things through. If difficulties persist, then do let me know.

You will find contact details here <https://greatercambridgeplanning.org/about-us/contact-us/development-management-area-teams/>

Extension of Construction Working Hours – Update

You may recall that last year, Government instructed Councils to approve requests from developers to extend construction working hours temporarily, up to 9pm Monday to Saturday, up to 1 April 2021. We could only refuse if there were very compelling reasons against it. This was to enable sites to operate safely in accordance with social distancing rules.

The Government has updated those guidelines through a WMS (Written Ministerial Statement) extending the period from 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021. The planning service has just 14 days to consider any such application and will notify parish councils of that request. If you have comments to make on the request, please do so very rapidly.

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/extension-to-changes-to-construction-working-hours/>

COMMUNITIES

Northstowe Community

South Cambs is making a multi-million-pound investment in Northstowe. We are acquiring the Local Centre and Enterprise Zone in Phase 1, for £5.05million. We will be working with the local businesses and residents to shape the plans for this area, including the Community Building that will sit within the local centre. Find out more about it at <https://www.scams.gov.uk/council-invests-more-than-5-million-in-northstowe-community-facilities-and-business-space/>?

New Police Station at Milton

The Planning Committee approved plans for the new Cambridgeshire Police hub to be built near the Park & Ride at Milton. It is an opportunity for the Police move into modern facilities that will enable them to work more efficiently and increase custody provision to meet the growing population of the area. There will still be a presence at Parkside. Works is expected to start toward the end of 2021, for the building to be ready for use mid 2023. Read more about it at

<https://www.cambs.police.uk/news-and-appeals/milton-hub-approved/>

Mental Health Support

Wild Mind is a program that helps young people aged 14 - 17 who are experiencing mental health problems. The program was developed by South Cambridgeshire District Council in collaboration with Cambridge Sports Lakes Trust. Its objective is to improve the mental health through group physical outdoor activities such as paddle boarding, bush craft and survival skills. They are held in person at Milton Country Park starting 21 March 2021 for 8 weeks. To find out more and register, go to <https://www.scams.gov.uk/sport-health-and-wellbeing/wild-minds/>

RECYCLING

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service

The Waste service got a boost this month, which I think was well deserved. Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal paid a socially distanced visit to the Waterbeach depot on 25th March, where she met and chatted to the men and women who continued to work during the pandemic. Their work was the more difficult as more waste was generated during lockdown, and their work pattern had to change to take account of social distancing guidelines and reduced workforce due to the need for colleagues to shield.

The Princess Royal also got to see Dennis Eagle eCollect, the first electric bin lorry to be operating in Cambridgeshire. Read more about it here <https://www.scams.gov.uk/royal-visit-to-thank-essential-waste-and-recycling-teams/>

Additional Blue Bins – Households can order more blue recycling bins, up to a maximum of 4 for free.

TRANSPORT

A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Upgrade

CONTRACT AWARDED For A428 Upgrade

On March 23rd, Government announced the award of the £507m contract to Skanska to deliver the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet road improvements. This has been a very long time coming as I recall attending meetings of the A428/A421 Alliance led by the Hunts MPs Jonathan Djanogly and Alistair Burt to campaign and lobby Government to upgrade the road. And it worked!

However, the project is sadly lacking in walking and cycling infrastructure and there is a lack of clarity around how much environmental enhancement will be associated with the new route. The DCO (Development Consent Order) has been submitted to and accepted by the Planning Inspectorate. This is the opportunity to try and get the environmental aspects beefed up by registering to be involved in the examination process as an Interested Party. Check out their website at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/a428-black-cat-to-caxton-gibbet/>

East West Rail – Bedford to Cambridge Railway.

The East West Railway Company announced their detailed routes for the new railway line from Bedford to Cambridge, including the route alignments that they prefer. The second non-statutory public consultation asking for our views starts on 31 March 2021 and ends on 9th June 2021.

There are 5 potential routes, but EWR seem to have a preference for two of these, and for the new station at Cambourne North. The route then goes south east to Cambridge South Station, opening up transportation from the West of Cambridge to the expanding biomedical campus and other business parks and job opportunities beyond.

These plans will have a big impact on several South Cambridgeshire villages, including Bourn and Caldecote. People in the villages are already expressing their understandable concern about potential impact on their communities and on the local environment. I encourage everyone to respond to the consultation so that it informs the final route selection by EWR. South Cambs will also be responding as a Statutory Consultee on behalf of the district.

It is vital that this new line contributes fully to the move to zero carbon from day one. That means that the line must be designed to be electrified and that no diesel trains should be allowed to use it. The consultation website is at <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/> so please have your say. Feel free to send me your views so I can take that into account when I respond and pass on to the Council.

Cambourne to Cambridge (C2C) Busway

The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) announced earlier this year that it had commissioned Amey Consulting to carry out independent audit of the key assumptions and constraints underpinning the selection of the C2C preferred route. The purpose is to test how robust the assumptions are, and whether they are still appropriate in the light of emerging plans for the Cambridge Autonomous Metro (CAM) project.

Those assumptions and constraints have been published and can be found at <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/asset-library/assumptions-constraints-statement-final.pdf>

Anyone interested in commenting should submit their comments to C2Caudit@sharedintelligence.net by 23 April 2021.

CAM Metro - Combined Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Authority (CPCA).

If you read the local Cambridge Press you will be aware of the Mayor's plans to build a Metro at a cost of between £2bn and £4bn. It has so far been very difficult to work out where this huge sum of money is to come from. But finally we have seen a report that says that the bulk of it will come from something called 'land value capture', raised from building potentially between 5 and 7 new garden villages in South Cambs and Huntingdon.

What is perhaps not so well known is that the CPCA is not a planning authority, has not statutory planning powers and so cannot determine if a development can be built or where it could go. So instead of giving us any certainty over how the CAM Metro can be funded we are now even more confused by the Mayor's plans!

The Boat Race

This year the Oxford Cambridge Boat Race will be held near Ely on Sunday 4 April as a closed sporting event, without spectators. [Fans are encouraged](#) to follow BBC television coverage of the race, as the riverbank and roads in the area will be closed to the public. Organisers are urging the public to "stay safe, stay away." This is a closed event with no spectators to keep everyone safe. The Environment Agency has also implemented river restrictions and closures over the bank holiday weekend.

LOCAL ISSUES

Bourn

Flooding has been high on the agenda for many communities because of the heavy rains last winter. You may recall that I provided comprehensive information in my February report and encouraged communities to give information to and work with communities to identify who owns which piece of waterway or ditch etc., and encourage maintenance and/or repairs to be done.

The Bourn Brook is one of the important waterways in the district and until recently, I was not aware that South Cambs maintained it. That work has I'm told been an annual one to clear debris and keep the water flowing. The banks though are the responsibility of the adjacent land owners.

The South Cambs team and I met with the Parish council team on a sunny day last month to "walk" the brook. We inspected the brook and some of the ditches along Caxton Road. I had no waders so my walk in the brook was short. I got to wade at the ford! The Council team have now carried out some clearance works and will be meeting again with the parish council and the Bourn Gold club owners in April.

Caldecote

Sewage Leak: The case of the leaking sewage system on Highfields Road was a rather smelly affair. Thank you to all those who reported it. It is an Anglian Water responsibility, rather than any of the two councils. But it took teamwork of residents, Parish Council, District Councillor and District Council Officers to get Anglian Water to sort it.

Highways Closure: The mind boggles as to how with little coordination, two road blocking repairs were to be carried out simultaneously in the village. The eagle eyed residents spotted that the first road closure at the bottom of the village was from 23rd March to 7th April. So there was no access to Fox Road. Then we got notification of a second road works from 29th March to 2nd April, blocking Highfields Road from Grafton Drive to Strympole Way. That would have blocked in residents of Strympole way, Blythe Way and all the roads off it including Woodfield, and Furlong Way/Copel close – perhaps just over a third of the village!!

I raised it with the Street Works team and chased even via twitter and finally on Friday got word that the second road closure had been postponed following discussions with the Utilities company. Phew!

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.

You will find my past reports at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/2020-21-monthly-reports/>. Feel free to read, share and/or download.

Please remember - The maxim **Hands – Face – Space** still very much the rule. Now add **Fresh Air**. Please Stay safe.

Tumi

Tumi Hawkins
1 April 2021

Email me @:	tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk
Read my blog at:	http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk
Twitter:	@CouncillorTumi
Facebook	@itsCouncillorTumi
LinkedIn	TumiHawkins
Call me on:	07802 323269