

# South Cambs Magazine Winter 2024

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## Hello

Welcome to the winter edition of South Cambs Magazine

This edition is full of important information including the latest cost-of-living support, an update on various grant funding available, and our Council becoming a White Ribbon Accredited organisation.

Our dedicated leisure and tourism website Visit South Cambs has provided us with a festive round up on page 6, with inspiration on local events and markets to attend, farm shops to grab

your Christmas food, salons for a pre-Christmas pamper and winter walks to reset over the busy period.

Students got involved in Climate and Environment workshops with our councillors and officers at an event held at Comberton Village College, where we also held our first committee meeting at a school. This gave the students an insight into how we make decisions, and an opportunity to present questions to the committee. Turn to page 8 for more information on how the day went.

Back in the summer we awarded a total of £125,000 in our latest round of Zero Carbon Communities grants. These projects will help to reduce carbon emissions, and encourage community engagement on climate change. To find out more turn to page 9.

We've got some top tips on reducing your food waste over Christmas, from freezing tips to rescue recipes using leftovers! Continuing from our fashion revolution article in the autumn edition of the magazine, there are some great ideas on how to jazz up an old jumper for Christmas jumper day, and where you can hire your outfit for party season. Turn to page 14 to find out more.

Winter can be financially the most difficult time, and we want to make you aware of all the support you may be eligible for. We've also explained the changes to the Winter Fuel Payment and how to check if you or someone you know is eligible for benefits. Read more on page 16.

And finally, we're hosting our annual Indoor Christmas Market at Cambourne Village College on Saturday 7 December from 11am to 3pm. This will be our biggest event yet with around 100 independent traders participating with a range of handmade items, gifts, food and more! Mrs Claus' Workshop will keep the children entertained, and hot food is available from the food trucks. The event is free entry, so please do pop along to support our local businesses.

I hope you enjoy reading the magazine. Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Cllr Bridget Smith  
Leader  
South Cambridgeshire District Council

## Contact us

It's easier to contact us online. You can do more online at a time to suit you.

### Chat with SAM, our new AI Assistant

SAM can help you instantly, or signpost you to the relevant team that can help you further. Just click on the speech bubble icon on our website and ask SAM a question.

[www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)

You can also create a My South Cambs account, to see personalised information – such as your Council Tax payments or your Benefits account.

<https://mysouthcambs.scambs.gov.uk>

Or you can email us, phone us, write to us, visit our offices, or get in touch using our social media channels.

[scdc@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:scdc@scambs.gov.uk)

01954 713 000

South Cambridgeshire District Council, South Cambs Hall, Cambourne Business Park,  
Cambourne, CB23 6EA

Our office opening hours are 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. If you come to the office, we'll try our very best to resolve your query there and then. If we can't, our advisors will book you a follow-up appointment when you will be able to speak to someone from our relevant service.

Alternatively, you can book your own appointment at

[www.scams.gov.uk/book-an-appointment](http://www.scams.gov.uk/book-an-appointment)

Facebook, LinkedIn: South Cambridgeshire District Council

X, Instagram: @SouthCambs

Request a large print copy [communications@scams.gov.uk](mailto:communications@scams.gov.uk)

## Spring 2025 Edition

The next issue of South Cambs Magazine will be delivered between Monday 24 February and Saturday 8 March 2025. Contact Smart Distribution for delivery enquiries.

[scdc@smartdistribution.co.uk](mailto:scdc@smartdistribution.co.uk) 0800 6444 011

## Putting residents first

### If you phone us we will:

- resolve your enquiry as quickly as possible
- provide voicemail if the person you need is unavailable
- answer your phone message within three working days.

### If you write to us we will:

- reply to your letter or email within 10 working days.

### If we write to you we will:

- write in plain language
- arrange for translation, large type, braille or audio tapes upon request.

### If we visit you we will:

- carry identification that you can check with a phone call to us
- arrive at the time we say we will, or give you as much notice as possible if we have to change the time.

### If we get it wrong we will:

- apologise if we have made a mistake or failed to meet our standards
- acknowledge your written complaint within three working days
- reply in full to your complaint within 10 working days.

## Assisted Digital Service Support

We have set up Assisted Digital Service Support to ensure that nobody is excluded from completing an online application or e-form due to difficulty with digital skills or access to a computer. Eligible customers are offered telephone support or face to face support by one of our contact centre advisors. Your local library or Parish Council hub can also help.

[www.scams.gov.uk/contact-us](http://www.scams.gov.uk/contact-us)

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## News in brief

### **New shared workspace open**

South Cambs Connect, an affordable and modern workspace designed to provide a creative and dedicated coworking environment, has opened at our Cambourne office. It is available for use by local budding entrepreneurs, start-up businesses, Community Interest Companies, and community groups.

This co-working environment and engagement space is designed as a place for people, businesses and communities to expand their professional and personal horizons, network, innovate and collaborate. A free trial period runs up until the end of this year – all we ask for is your feedback.

To find out more about what's on offer and book your space visit

**[www.scambs.gov.uk/south-cambs-connect](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/south-cambs-connect)**

### **“Northstowe Avenue” named by resident**

Resident of Northstowe, Thomas Nallor, submitted the chosen name “Northstowe Avenue” to be used for the main gateway into Northstowe. Homes England, the government's homes and regeneration agency, unanimously agreed on the road name out of 104 entries into their competition.

“Northstowe” was chosen as it differentiates the road from the villages and parishes around it and celebrates the town's heritage. “Avenue” is defined as a ‘broad passageway bordered by trees’ and recognises the general biodiversity of the Northstowe development as a whole.

### **Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service**

We help fund Cambridgeshire Handyperson Services run by Age UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - who offer a free Home Safety Assessment. This service supports disabled and older people in their own homes to live independently and safely for longer.

Handyperson jobs can also be completed at a rate of £30 per hour.

These include:

- door access step
- general carpentry and putting up shelves
- assembling flat-packed items, general plumbing, renewing shower sealant, changing taps and washers
- fitting blinds / curtains
- key safe supply and fit (£65 is charged for this service)
- banister and galvanised rails (Quoted for individually)
- grab rails (Free)
- changing light bulbs (Free, if completed at assessment).

For more information: 01480 700 205 [chp@ageukcap.org.uk](mailto:chp@ageukcap.org.uk)

## **Could you drive for local community car scheme?**

The OWLS (Over, Willingham, Longstanton and Swavesey) Community Car Scheme recently celebrated a milestone 10,000th journey with a tea party for 20 of its customers. Those attending spoke of OWLS as a 'lifeline' with many saying they couldn't manage without it. Most journeys are for medical appointments with customers paying 30p a mile, with a minimum charge of £4.

This much valued service to the local community relies on its volunteer drivers and coordinators but needs more drivers to meet growing demand. Drivers live in the villages covered, receive 45p a mile, are DBS checked, can use their existing insurance, and do not have to commit to regular days or times. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority also offer free additional insurance to volunteer drivers in the form of public liability cover. If you can help, please ring OWLS on 07505 254363.

Other Community Transport Schemes run in the district, each with their own pricing structure. For more information visit [www.scambsgov.uk/community-transport](http://www.scambsgov.uk/community-transport)

If you can become a volunteer driver for one of the schemes, call Care Network Cambridgeshire on 01954 211919.

## **Recycle your Christmas tree**

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity's team of volunteers will once again be on-hand to collect your real tree in January, hassle-free, and for a donation. Trees are chipped and used for mulch or composted. Residents of postcode areas CB1, CB2, CB3, CB4, CB5, CB21, CB22, CB23, CB24, CB25, SG8 and SG19 can register for a collection at [www.arhc.org.uk/tree-recycling](http://www.arhc.org.uk/tree-recycling)

Collections will be carried out between Thursday 9 and Saturday 11 January. You can register up to 10am on Sunday 5 January. Last year the Hospice's volunteers collected a record 3,600 trees and raised over £65,000 for the charity!

## **Volunteer Cambs**

Volunteering is not just about helping others and making a difference. It brings many benefits. It's good for your health, helps raise confidence, and introduces you to like-minded people. Volunteer Cambs connects local good causes with willing volunteers - a perfect volunteering matchmaking service! It's really easy to sign up, and support is available.

Anyone can volunteer, whether you're retired, a skilled professional, a student, a corporate team or a family who want to volunteer together. Since launching the initiative in February 2024, 1,000 people have registered as potential volunteers.

For more information, just visit [www.volunteercambs.org.uk](http://www.volunteercambs.org.uk)

## Exploitation training

County lines, where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, and child exploitation, can impact any family. The business model that criminals use is highly practiced, adaptable and effective. By educating communities on what to look out for and how to find support early, we hope to make South Cambridgeshire unattractive to those looking for young people to exploit.

Our staff have received training from the Ivison Trust to enable us to deliver a presentation to parents and communities to help them to protect young people. If you would like us to visit a group that you are involved with, just email [communitysafety@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@scambs.gov.uk) and we'll arrange a visit with you.

## Shop local: Visit South Cambs – Festive Round Up

Is it really that time of year again? Oh yes, it is! And where better to get into the festive spirit than South Cambs? Our [visitsouthcambs.co.uk](http://visitsouthcambs.co.uk) website is the place to check out for all the seasonal highlights.

Wimpole Estate embrace the season, thrilling kids and adults alike with the Illuminations Trail and stunning decorations in the Mansion House. Stapleford Granary is hosting a series of Candlelit Concerts and a Winter Fair.

You'll also find Christmas lights switch-on celebrations, Santa's grottos, carol concerts, wreath making workshops, pantos and more.

There are also some lovely local markets happening where you can browse a range of gift ideas including homeware, jewellery, accessories, toys and games, and beauty products. Our own South Cambridgeshire Christmas Market is taking place in Cambourne Village College on Saturday 7 December. Last year saw over 70 stalls, and this year we're expecting around 100 traders.

As well as markets, there is a host of independent retailers for unique gift ideas, like Maggie's Farm and Burwash Manor in Barton, Histon's Topiary Tree and Homemade at the Barn in Kneesworth.

Don't forget our lovely farm shops sell fresh from the farm meat and veg, plus tasty jams, cheeses and chutneys. If you're looking for a tasty tippie to go with Christmas dinner, why not nip into Wee Vinoteca in Barton or Case Solved Wines in Linton for some expert pairing.

Anyone still needing to book their Christmas parties should check out the eat and drink section of [visitsouthcambs.co.uk](http://visitsouthcambs.co.uk) for a great choice of local restaurants and pubs. And as it's party season, you'll find several beauticians and hairdressers on the site too, like Girton's Beauty by Amineh, the Hair Care Bunch in Hardwick and Bliss Beauty Salon in Sawston. Most also do gift vouchers!

If you're finding it all too much, take some time out and immerse yourself in the local countryside with a Winter Tree and Wellness Walk around Wandlebury Country Park.

If you don't celebrate Christmas, there are plenty of ideas and inspiration for things to do on Visit South Cambs. From family-friendly activities to restaurants for a quiet night out, you'll find plenty of places to go and things to do.

Cllr Peter McDonald, our Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development, said:

"There is so much going on in South Cambridgeshire throughout the festive months. Visit South Cambs is a fantastic tool to find activities, restaurants and days out that are local to us, so check the website out to not only find inspiration on what to do, but help support local businesses too."

Listings are free for local hospitality, leisure and independent retail businesses and event organisers. Just visit [www.visitsouthcambs.co.uk/free-listings](http://www.visitsouthcambs.co.uk/free-listings) and fill in our simple form.

## Shop local: Step into Narnia at The Botanical Nest

Nestled five miles from Cambridge in the heart of Dry Drayton, you will find an off the high street hidden gem. The Botanical Nest by Emily Tallulah is where shopping meets wellness.

This homely haven exudes a warm and welcoming atmosphere from the moment you step through the door into a Narnia-like quaint world of bespoke gifts and beautifully curated furnishings, as well as a (quite literally) flourishing floristry. It is quite a sight to be seen.

Whether you need a pick-me-up pamper or a shopping session, choosing from the array of toiletries, toys, jewellery, home and garden wares, to special occasion floristry and blossoming bouquets, this place has you covered.

Emily and her team prefer to use the traditional methods of their craft by reusing materials, offering an organic, natural feel whilst promoting recycling and reducing single use plastics.

What also makes this business special, is that it also hosts a collective of other dynamic female empowered and female owned businesses who all support each other, including:

### **Aesthetics by Abby**

Abby is a trained aesthetic practitioner, and Registered Midwife. Abby's nurse-led clinic is all about providing a positive, supportive environment within an oasis of calm and tranquillity to restore and enhance your natural beauty.

### **Katie Louise Nails**

Katie started her budding business a year ago; she also has a degree in criminology! Katie's nail tech specialism in creative manicures means she has a flare for design to suit any occasion and can indulge in seasonal styles within her pamper paradise.

### **Violet & Bloom**

Georgina worked and trained in a city centre salon for many years. She provides an intimate hairdressing service and an uplifting experience within a relaxing environment, transforming her client's hair into luscious new looks, quite literally where their style blooms.

The beauty of these four businesses is that they all provide personal, bespoke 1-2-1 service to meet your needs. A number of special occasions will be happening at this collective during the festive period, including pop-up Christmas shopping evenings, wreath, bouquets and garland making workshops and 'jingle and mingle' events. Enjoy 10% off all purchases over £20 during each event. For further details, visit [www.thebotanicalnest.com](http://www.thebotanicalnest.com)

Are you a business trading within South Cambridgeshire and would like some support? Perhaps you need help with growth, marketing, sustainability or any other business support – or want to be featured in a future issue of South Cambs Magazine. If so, email [openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk) or visit [www.scambs.gov.uk/business](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/business) for further information.

## Shop local: South Cambs businesses and community groups share more than £875,000 in grants

Hundreds of thousands of pounds in grant funding has been provided to help support our local rural economy.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund used money from the Government. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority was the lead local authority for the fund, while we were

responsible for grant scheme delivery and allocation. Our District Councillors decided to use the funds to establish a grants scheme to support local businesses, communities and the economy.

Our Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Cllr Peter McDonald, said: “It’s inspiring to see such a wide range of groups receiving support through this grant, which was specifically designed to breathe new life into our district. We offer a wide range of grants and urge local community groups and businesses to check what is available and apply.

Our Business Support team is always happy to give advice and guidance and help you complete funding applications. Just email [openforbusiness@scambbs.gov.uk](mailto:openforbusiness@scambbs.gov.uk) to get the ball rolling and see how we can help.”

Applications were assessed by our Grants Advisory Committee. 26 different projects shared a total of £876,101 in funding – including...

- £100,000 for a skate park project organised by Over Parish Council.
- £80,000 towards improving accessibility for visitors and enhancing biodiversity practices at Wysing Arts Centre.
- £50,000 towards costs of solar panels, a heat recovery system and automatic doors at Willow Grange Farm, allowing the business to expand operations and drive energy efficiency.
- £25,000 for a bakery expansion at The Linton Kitchen.
- Swavesey Memorial Hall who received £25,000 for a solar panels project.
- £23,100 towards canning and solar generation at Lord Conrad’s Brewery and Tap in Dry Drayton.
- More than £20,000 for a playground renovation at the Weston Colville Reading Room and Recreational Ground Charity.
- £18,500 for website development at the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund Grant Scheme is now closed as all the funding has been awarded. Check our website for details of other grants that are open. This includes a £200,000 fund to help rejuvenate high streets in South Cambridgeshire. The Improving the High Street grant, funded by the Government’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund, offers grants of between £5,000 and £20,000 to businesses, charities, community groups and Parish Councils to support projects that boost the heart of communities across the district.

[www.scambbs.gov.uk/business/grants-and-funding](http://www.scambbs.gov.uk/business/grants-and-funding)

## **Climate and environment: Students take climate action in our first committee meeting in a school**

Students received an inside look into the Council in October, when councillors took our Climate and Environment Advisory Committee on the road to Comberton Village College.

The move was one of the recommendations to come out of a deep-dive into youth engagement with us, conducted by a group of councillors in the Young People in South Cambridgeshire Task and Finish Group. The group reported to Council at the end of last year, with councillors across the board keen to get young people in the district more engaged in local democracy, as well as contributing towards our actions to tackle climate change.

On the day itself, students from Comberton, Cambourne and Sawston Village Colleges joined our officers, the Leader of the Council, and members of our Climate and Environment Advisory Committee to take part in a series of workshops.

These covered areas such as the circular economy, local nature and biodiversity, water, sustainable food, and air quality, with the students thinking about their vision for the future and



how we could help achieve this. Discussions were also held about how decision-making works at local government level, who has the power to do what, and how organisations can work together to get decisions made.

Students then worked with councillors and officers to come up with a range of questions to ask at the Committee meeting. The students rose to the challenge, asking the committee a range of questions, from whether we could support the installation of water butts, to if improved provision for bicycle storage could be included within the Local Plan.

Also in attendance was Member of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire and our former District Councillor, Pippa Heylings, who spoke to students about her role as MP, giving them a rare opportunity to hear directly from their MP and ask her their burning questions.

The event was a great success, with councillors and officers coming away greatly impressed by the enthusiasm and knowledge of the students involved, and the ideas that came out of the workshops. Many were noted by councillors, and will no doubt contribute to steps that we take in maintaining and improving the district's environment and landscape in the future.

Cllr Brian Milnes, our Lead Cabinet Member for Environment, was at the school and said: "Young people are the driving force of our future, and their voices are crucial in shaping how we tackle the climate emergency. By getting involved, we hope local students see there is an opportunity to bring fresh ideas, innovation, and passion to the table.

## **Climate and environment: Council continues support for community-led climate action**

For six years, our Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme has helped parish councils and community groups realise their climate ambitions with around £625,000 awarded to date.

Supporting community-led action is central to our response to the climate and ecological emergencies that we face.

This local approach allows communities to assess their own needs as they make the transition to net zero, and to design and deliver projects to meet them.

The latest round of funding was awarded in the summer, giving a boost to 11 local projects amounting to a total of £125,000. Applications were invited under two themes:

- Reducing carbon emissions
- Achieving wider community engagement on climate change.

In the carbon reduction category, five grants were awarded to install solar panels on community buildings at Balsham Village Hall, Caxton Village Hall, Kingston Village Hall, Over Day Centre, and the Spicers Pavilion in Sawston.

Kingston Village Hall Committee have been the first to complete their solar panel installation. They built on the interest in the project and cohosted a drop-in with their installer to encourage village residents to consider solar panels for their own homes. The Village Hall Committee's work is a good case study in how to build an education and engagement piece around a capital project.

Also in the carbon reduction category, Cambridge and District Citizens Advice received a grant to replace their lighting with energyefficient LEDs, and Cottenham Community Centre will renovate and repurpose an underused space into an energy-efficient activities hall with enhanced insulation and heating controls.

Four grants were awarded to projects aimed at increasing community engagement around climate change. Cambridge Carbon Footprint will continue to strengthen their network of repair cafes and their provision of Open Eco Homes tours and thermal imaging camera loans.

If you're curious to see where your home is losing heat this winter, visit Cambridge Carbon Footprint's website at [www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org](http://www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org) to learn about borrowing a thermal camera.

The Let's Cook Project will use their grant to teach climate-friendly cooking skills, with an emphasis on reducing avoidable food waste.

Meanwhile, Climate Change Gardening will establish a kit for events to encourage gardeners to adopt climate-friendly practices.

Cllr Brian Milnes, our Lead Cabinet Member for Environment, said:

"If you have an idea for a project in your community that could reduce carbon emissions, get in touch with our team at [climateandenvironment@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:climateandenvironment@scambs.gov.uk)

We are particularly interested in capital projects like energy efficiency improvements to community buildings and renewable generation systems."

## Climate and environment: Power up with one of our Electric Vehicle Charge Point grants

Our Electric Vehicle Charge Point grant is one of several grant schemes that support residents to reduce their carbon emissions and tackle climate change.

This grant funds electric vehicle (EV) chargers for public use. We hope that chargers funded through the grant will be especially useful for people who would like an EV but can't charge at home. There is also a wider benefit, as chargers can be used by visitors to the area and the wider public.

This grant is open to parish councils, community groups and charities, with up to £5,000 available per project for purchasing and installing EV chargers. So far, the grant has given out £23,500 to fund public EV chargers in village halls and community buildings, with Steeple Morden being the first village to benefit from the grant. Jeremy Clayton, Chairman of Steeple Morden Parish Council said:

"After overcoming the early challenges of planning and installation, our EV chargers have seen various use patterns since going live in spring 2023, with some users returning regularly and others, perhaps passing through, just a single use. We seem to be encouraging and supporting a significant number of people making their transition to electric vehicles which was our goal and it is helping South Cambridgeshire become a greener place."

Over 44% of carbon emissions in South Cambridgeshire come from transport, largely through use of petrol and diesel vehicles. Moving to electric vehicles to reduce these emissions is a vital part of our response to climate change. The EV charging network is not perfect, so we hope our grant will be able to support wider efforts to grow and improve the network. More chargers with greater reliability can encourage up take of EVs and bring down carbon emissions in our area and the wider world.

If you know of a local community building, parish council building, or village hall that would benefit from an EV charger, please get in touch with your parish council or building management. They may be able to apply for a grant to support EV charging in your village.

The funding is available for the rest of this financial year, so applications must be submitted before April 2025. More information can be found at our website at

[www.scambs.gov.uk/ev-charger-grant](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/ev-charger-grant)

Other local councils are supporting publicly accessible EV charging across the whole county. Cambridgeshire County Council are also offering fully funded EV chargers to parish councils.

If you or your parish council would like to know more, you can contact Cambridgeshire County Council on [electricvehicles@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:electricvehicles@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

## Climate and environment: Flooding: Be prepared

Flooding can occur at any time of the year and is often unpredictable. Be prepared. Everyone can check their risk of flooding at [www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk](http://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk)

Where possible, stock up on sandbags, and essential items like a torch, a handheld radio, food, and medication in case you get cut off.

The Environment Agency provide a flood warning service. Check if alerts are provided for your area at [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-floodwarnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-floodwarnings) In areas of potential flood risk, parish flood groups are often active.

Contact your parish council for details of any such group in your area.

### Drains – who is responsible for what?

- Anglian Water is responsible for problems with surface water and sewers.
- Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for maintenance and upkeep of road drainage systems to reduce the risk of standing water on roads and pavements.
- Land drainage is usually the responsibility of the landowner. In some rare cases it may be the drains upkeep is passed to the Local Authority. Awarded Watercourses are a network of drainage ditches throughout the district which we maintain.
- For private properties, our Environmental Health team can insist the owner maintains drains.
- For Council homes, we attempt to fix any serious drainage problems as they are identified.

Flooding to property or land should be reported to the Cambridgeshire County Council Flood and Water Team at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/report-a-flood](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/report-a-flood)

Contact details for organisations listed above are on our website:

[www.scams.gov.uk/flooding](http://www.scams.gov.uk/flooding)

### What to do in a flood

- Protecting lives is your priority. Leave the area if instructed to do so by the emergency services. If there is a risk to life, call 999.
- Tune in to local radio and check village Facebook groups for updates close to home.
- Find advice on our website at [www.scams.gov.uk/flooding](http://www.scams.gov.uk/flooding)
- Report any flooding to the County Council at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/report-a-flood](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/report-a-flood) – Especially if you are alone or in a vulnerable household.
- Check in with your local flood advisory group if you have one.
- Move your car to higher ground if possible.
- Turn off the mains power and water and put sandbags in toilets.
- Shut windows and lock doors.
- Empty freezers and refrigerators, leaving doors open.
- Move people, pets and valuables to a safer place (for example, upstairs).
- Check you can easily find any essentials, should you need to leave home. From medicines to mobile phones and charging cables, and home insurance documents to emergency cash or credit cards, or nappies and baby food for young children.
- Keep a copy of your most recent prescription with you.
- Flood water is very dangerous - whether fast flowing, deep, or dirty. If you must enter floodwater, move slowly and carefully, wearing strong footwear and using a stick to check you are not about to step into a hole or onto a sharp object.

- Do not attempt to drive through flooded roads, as the water may be deeper than you think. It only takes 28 cm to float a vehicle.
- Watch out for any fallen power lines and do not approach them.

## Recycling and waste: Have yourself a calmer little Christmas

Have you noticed how more food gets thrown away when we're busy or stressed? No wonder 30% more food is wasted over Christmas than at other times of year.

Do your future self a favour and prepare now for a calmer, cheaper, less wasteful festive period.

### Use up frozen foods now

No one wants to run out of food at Christmas, so we buy more than we need. Ensure there's space in your freezer for any surplus by eating up what's in there now. Stock up on freezer bags or containers as well.

### Gifting food

Food can make great gifts, but only if it's eaten and not thrown away! Unless you know their tastes well, opt for classics like shortbread and avoid the likes of xmas-pud flavour fudge.

### Plan ahead

Use the portion calculator at [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com) to work out how much to buy and cook. Serve smaller portions, with a 'spares' dish for second helpings - leftovers can be easily saved instead of getting soggy with gravy and being binned.

### Embrace leftovers

We do love leftovers on Boxing Day, with almost half of us using up turkey. But other foods are left out, which is a shame as we could be putting our feet up instead of more cooking! Whatever food you have left over there's a use for it – just cover it and pop in the fridge while you browse recipes.

### Freeze

Work out whether leftovers can be eaten within two days – if not then freeze. If you can, freeze things like roast potatoes on a tray first, before transferring to a bag, so they won't stick together. Remember to label and date everything!

### Compost

Any food that has gone bad or scraps from food preparation can be added to your green bin along with garden waste so it can be composted. You can pick up a free kitchen caddy to help collect wasted food from our office at South Cambridgeshire Hall in Cambourne, where you can also buy paper caddy liners.

Our Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing, Cllr Natalie Warren- Green, said:

“Food waste makes up a large proportion – about a third - of the waste people put in their black bins. A lot of it can be prevented and the rest can be composted, reducing its environmental impact. We throw away about 710,000 tonnes of potatoes every year. If we could stop that, it would prevent about 330,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from getting into the atmosphere!”

### Hungry for more tips?

Check out:

- The Full Freezer: Instagram Facebook
- The Batch Lady: Instagram Facebook
- Kitche app: app-store google-play

Use the portion calculator at [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com) to work out how much to buy and cook.

## Recycling and waste: Bin collection calendar

Bins must be put out by 6am on your collection day. Close lids fully. Please report missed collections between 3:30pm on collection day and 3:30pm the next working day.

For advice on how to leave out extra recycling for collection and other policies, see [www.scams.gov.uk/bins](http://www.scams.gov.uk/bins)

The collections scheduled on Christmas Day and New Year's Day will both be two days early and will take place on the Monday of those two weeks.

### NEVER BIN BATTERIES OR VAPES

They cause fires in our bin lorries, and must be recycled separately. Vapes can be taken back to vape shops, supermarkets, petrol stations or to the large Household Recycling Centres for recycling.

Small household batteries can be put in a small plastic bag, tied shut and left on the top of your bin on collection day. Larger batteries such as e-bike batteries should be taken to Household Recycling Centres.

## Recycling and waste: what goes in which bin?

### What can you recycle through your blue bin?

#### Yes

- Cardboard Paper & magazines
- Tins, cans & foil
- Aerosol cans
- Shredded paper (in envelope or clear sack)
- Glass bottles & jars
- Cartons
- Plastic pots, tubs, trays & empty bags
- Plastic bottles
- Christmas wrapping paper (except foil or plastic)

#### No

- Black bin bags or rubbish
- Nappies, tissues, kitchen paper, wipes & sanitary waste
- Polystyrene glass dishes
- Mirrors, Pyrex, plates/ crockery

The following can be recycled elsewhere – check our website.

- Clothing and textiles
- Food, liquid or garden waste
- Wood, plasterboard & DIY waste
- Furniture or electricals
- Scrap metal e.g. pans
- Hard plastics e.g. bucket
- Crisp packets

### **Please put used batteries in a clear plastic bag and NOT in your bin.**

Place the bag on top of any of your wheelie bins. Batteries must not be put inside the bin. Small portable household batteries can be put in the clear bag - e.g. AA, AAA, 6v, 9v, D, C, button. Do not include mobile phone or laptop batteries. Instead take these to a Household Recycling Centre.

### **What can you compost through your green bin?**

#### **Yes**

- Untreated wood and sawdust
- Garden waste
- Cooked/uncooked food waste (including meat, fish and dairy)
- Used paper tissues and kitchen paper
- Real Christmas trees (cut up with lid closed)

#### **No**

- Plastic & plastic bags
- Compostable bags e.g. Biobags
- Nappies, wipes and sanitary waste
- Soil or stones
- Painted or treated wood
- Cat or dog waste
- Plant pots and seedling trays
- Loose ash (wood ash CAN go in the green bin, but only if enclosed in paper bags)

### **What rubbish can go in your black bin?**

Please try to reduce rubbish that cannot be recycled or composted

#### **Yes**

General rubbish including nappies, wipes, sanitary waste, polystyrene, broken crockery or glassware (wrapped).

#### **No**

- Rubble/bricks
- Soil
- Very heavy items
- Electrical items
- Batteries
- Loose ash or vacuum dust. Please bag.

Not sure if it can be recycled? Check the 'What goes in which bin?' page on our website, via [www.scambsgov.uk/bins](http://www.scambsgov.uk/bins) for hundreds more items.

## **Recycling and waste: 'Tis the season to dress up**

In your last issue of South Cambs Magazine, we looked at the need to revolutionise fashion and stop over-buying new clothes. This time we're taking a deep dive into festive fashion tips.

### **Party on**

Whether you're going to a party, dinner, or dressing up for Christmas Day, you'll get all the fun of choosing new outfits without a bulging wardrobe or even laundry (reason enough alone,

surely) by hiring clothes. Some high street shops like John Lewis now offer hire options. Online rental company Hirestreet offers flexible hire from one-off hires right up to a monthly subscription service. After wearing, clothes are simply popped back in the post to be cleaned by them. For fancy dress parties, Cambridge's Wardrobe on Cromwell Road is the place to hire your outfit.

### **Christmas Jumper Day**

Christmas jumpers are the ultimate 'one-trick-pony' of the clothing world, it being acceptable to be seen in one for just a brief window each December. If you have one, do dig it out and wear it again this year. If you don't, and you want one, consider the following options:

- Organise a jumper swap at work, school or with friends. This could also be a fundraiser – for example some schools hold a jumper 'amnesty' and then a sale.
- Buy one second-hand from a charity shop.
- 'Festivize' an existing jumper – pin on tinsel, battery-powered fairy lights and other decorations that you can remove and return the jumper to normal service.
- Choose carefully – unless you really want super kitsch, choose a 'winter' look like a Nordic or Fairisle jumper that you can wear all season.

### **What's on your wish-list?**

If you're hoping to receive clothes as gifts, why not ask for second-hand or vintage items? Let your family know that you'd be delighted to receive pre-loved clothing as a gift, and your favourite places to find it. Alternatively, request a repair. Ask your loved-one to organise getting your favourite boots re-soled, arrange for those moth-holes in your beloved sweater to be beautifully darned, or send off your damaged wetsuit to be repaired. Sneaking your partner's torn clothes away and gifting them back repaired also makes a thoughtful surprise gift.

### **Recirculate**

Don't forget if you receive unwanted clothing gifts or just have a wardrobe clear-out then there are so many ways to give your clothes a new life – sell, give away, swap, 'shwop' at stores for vouchers, donate or drop off at clothing collection banks.

## **Cost-of-living support: Ensuring you get the help you need**

As cost-of-living pressures continue, so does our support for you, especially as winter approaches. Whether it's help with food, energy bills, financial support, or access to essential household items, there is assistance available.

### **Are you claiming the right benefits?**

Many people miss out on benefits they are entitled to. Use the benefits calculator at [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk) to check eligibility for Universal Credit, Pension Credit, and childcare support. Our website also offers advice around Council Tax reductions and housing benefits.

### **Food support**

Access to nutritious food is essential, and South Cambridgeshire has multiple food banks that don't require vouchers. These can be found at locations across the district. There is also the Mobile Food Hub, run in partnership with Hope CIC, which visits several locations to distribute surplus food, with no referral needed. Read more at [www.scambs.gov.uk/foodbanks](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/foodbanks) or for emergency food parcels, call us on 01954 713000.

## Energy support

Winter brings an increased burden on energy bills, so we have identified several initiatives to help you stay warm. Cold Weather Payments are available to all those on means-tested benefits, while the Winter Fuel Payment is available to those of pension age receiving a means-tested benefit. Additionally, residents can receive up to six prepayment meter fuel vouchers, each worth £49, through the HACT Fuel Fund. Visit [www.scams.gov.uk/cost-of-living](http://www.scams.gov.uk/cost-of-living) to find out more on each of these schemes.

## Debt support

If you're struggling with debt, it's essential to seek help sooner rather than later. Citizens Advice, Turn2us, and National Debtline provide free and confidential support. You can also apply for Discretionary Housing Payments if you need additional help with housing costs. Charis Grants is another organisation offering assistance with utility bills and essential household items. We also offer support through an Income Maximisation appointment, and you can access this by emailing [incomemaximisation@scams.gov.uk](mailto:incomemaximisation@scams.gov.uk) for personalised benefits checks, budgeting advice, and money-saving tips.

## Access to white Goods

For families experiencing financial hardship, Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme and LEAP provide white goods like fridges and cookers to families in financial hardship. Hope CIC also supports those on means-tested benefits.

## Community Hubs

We are continuing to support Community Hubs that act as local centres for help, providing advice, food support, and social opportunities. A full list of Community Hubs can be found at [www.scams.gov.uk/cost-of-livingsupport/community-hubs](http://www.scams.gov.uk/cost-of-livingsupport/community-hubs)

For more information on all of the support outlined on this page, visit [www.scams.gov.uk/cost-of-living](http://www.scams.gov.uk/cost-of-living), call 01954 713000, or email [duty.communities@scams.gov.uk](mailto:duty.communities@scams.gov.uk)

The right support can make all the difference this winter.

## Cost-of-living support: Winter Fuel Payment changes: What you need to know

The Winter Fuel Payment is a tax-free payment made to pensioners to help with winter energy bills. Previously, this has been worth up to £300 and has been provided to everyone above State Pension age in England.

Under new changes outlined recently by the Government, access to the Winter Fuel Payment will be restricted, with only pensioners receiving a means-tested benefit able to get the payment.

Starting this winter, you'll only be able to get a Winter Fuel Payment if you are:

1. over the State Pension age, and
2. receiving one of the following benefits:
  - Income Support
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Pension Credit
  - Universal Credit (for example, through a joint claim with your partner).



You must have been eligible between 16 and 22 September 2024, known as the 'qualifying week', to receive the Winter Fuel Payment this winter. It is however still possible to receive the payment this winter if you apply for Pension Credit by 21 December 2024 and backdate your application to 21 September 2024 which is within the qualifying week. As you can only backdate an application by a maximum of three months, you must do this by 21 December.

Due to the changes in eligibility requirements, we are encouraging South Cambridgeshire residents to ensure they are claiming all they are eligible for, as this may open the door to still receive the Winter Fuel Payment. To see if you or someone you know is eligible for Pension Credit, complete a short benefits check at [www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)

To see details on how to apply for Pension Credit, visit [www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim). For additional support to apply, please email our local partner Hope CIC at [office@hopeagainst.org](mailto:office@hopeagainst.org) or call them on 07474 725477 and leave a message.

If eligible, the amount you could receive is outlined below.

If between the qualifying dates of 16 and 22 Sept 2024 you're on an eligible benefit and:

- **You live alone (or none of the people you live with qualify)**
  - If you were born between 23 Sept 1944 and 22 Sept 1958: £200
  - If you were born on or before 22 Sept 1944: £300
- **You live with a partner under 80 and jointly claim any of the benefits**
  - If you were born between 23 Sept 1944 and 22 Sept 1958: £200 – only one of you will get this
  - If you were born on or before 22 Sept 1944: £300 – only one of you will get this
- **You live with a partner 80 or over and jointly claim any of the benefits**
  - If you were born between 23 Sept 1944 and 22 Sept 1958: £300 – only one of you will get this
  - If you were born on or before 22 Sept 1944: £300 – only one of you will get this
- **You lived in a care home for less than 13 weeks including the week of 16 to 22 September 2024**
  - If you were born between 23 Sept 1944 and 22 Sept 1958: £200
  - If you were born on or before 22 Sept 1944: £300

If you have a long-term health condition, are in receipt of certain welfare benefits or on a low income and have an old inefficient boiler, did you know you could be eligible for a grant to cover the costs of a new boiler?

Cambs Home Improvement Agency (Cambs HIA), a service we share with neighbouring councils, has grants available to pay for a replacement boiler and other measures to help improve the warmth of your home.

Excess cold can really worsen your health so don't delay, contact Cambs HIA now. They can tell you within a few days if you can have a grant or not and then get the work organised on your behalf soon after if applicable.

Don't leave it until your boiler breaks this winter. Contact Cambs HIA now on 01954 713330 or 01954 713347.

## Planning: Consultations launched on new development guidance documents

You now have the chance to influence the quality of future developments through a public consultation on three new and important planning documents.

Known as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), they will provide further information and detailed guidance on policies in our current Local Plan. They have been created by our Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service with Cambridge City Council.

These documents provide developers with clearer expectations on design and technical information for their projects. They aim to streamline the planning process and ultimately lead to higher quality developments.

### Planning Obligations SPD

This SPD focuses on planning obligations, also known as section 106 contributions. These financial contributions from developers go towards infrastructure that mitigates the impact of new development for homes or businesses.

Examples include new schools and roads, upgrading playgrounds, or providing additional waste collection vehicles. The draft SPD sets out our proposed approach and clarifies this process for both developers and residents, ultimately aiming to reduce delays in securing necessary infrastructure.

### Health Impact Assessment SPD

The planning and design of where we live, work and socialise has a major influence on our health and wellbeing. From the design of our villages and towns to access to the countryside, the built and natural environment affects our health and quality of life.

This SPD provides an updated method for testing the impact of development on health and wellbeing. It helps developers show how they have considered health in the design of new places and helps us to consider whether developments have met our quality requirements.

### Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document

The Cambridge Biomedical Campus, including Addenbrooke's Hospital, is an international centre of excellence for patient care, biomedical research and healthcare education and plays an important local, regional and national role in medical facilities and research.

There are also approved plans for the new Cambridge Children's Hospital and Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital, meaning the campus will be home to four hospitals, including the established Addenbrooke's and Royal Papworth. It is also a base for a growing number of commercial life science companies including AstraZeneca.

Development should be joined up across the campus, so this SPD outlines our ambitions for the area. It aims to create a well-integrated campus that benefits those working and receiving care there, and surrounding communities.

### Public Engagement and Participation

Our Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, Cllr Dr. Tumi Hawkins, said:

"These are three important elements of the local planning process, so do have your say on them all through our online or inperson consultation events. The consultations run until 5pm on Friday 24 January. By taking part, you are helping shape the future of Greater Cambridge and ensuring new developments contribute to thriving and healthy communities."

Have your say and find out more about the consultation events online

[www.greatercambridgeplanning.org](http://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org)

## Planning: Greater Cambridge Shared Planning leads the way with Artificial Intelligence

Our Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service with Cambridge City Council is pioneering the development of a new Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool to improve how your feedback on planning policies is reviewed and analysed.

Funded through the Government's PropTech Innovation Fund, this project aims to use AI to transform the way you engage in the planning system.

Developed in partnership with the University of Liverpool, the AI tool - known as a Large Language Model (LLM) - is being specifically designed to process and summarise the thousands of comments that residents, community groups and other stakeholders submit during consultations on the Local Plan and other planning documents.

Cllr Dr. Tumi Hawkins, our Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, said:

"With Greater Cambridge Shared Planning being one of the first planning services in the UK to develop its own bespoke LLM, the aim is to provide more reliable and meaningful insights into what people in the area think about proposed developments and planning policies."

Cllr Dr. Hawkins added:

"In the last two consultations on the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, around 19,000 comments were submitted by residents, community associations, parish councils, developers, and other stakeholders. Reviewing so many responses takes a considerable amount of time. The AI tool has the potential to significantly improve this by offering a faster, more efficient way to summarise comments without compromising on quality."

While the University of Liverpool is the primary partner developing the AI tool, additional input from Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge, funded by the AI@Cam initiative, will enrich the project and the collaboration will help to ensure that the AI is developed responsibly, prioritising transparency and inclusivity in its implementation.

The plan is that the new tool will help our planning service make more informed and efficient decisions, whilst ensuring that the views of local communities continue to play a key role in helping to shape the new Local Plan and other planning documents.

Professor Alexander Lord, Lever Chair at the University of Liverpool said:

"Few aspects of public policy arouse such strong feelings in local communities as planning and so it will be very important for us to develop technologies that we can all be confident represent citizens' views accurately."

While the tool is being developed, there will be safeguards in place, including manual checking of responses to avoid any AI hallucinations - where the AI might generate incorrect or made-up information - or misrepresentations. The tool is designed to assist our team, with people still playing a key role in ensuring accuracy and quality throughout the process.

## Communities: Unlocking potential through new Health and Employment Hubs

A new project has been launched to address the challenges faced by people aged 18 to 64 who are out of work due to health-related issues.

The initiative offers a person-centred approach, providing participants with a dedicated Link Worker who can help identify and overcome health and social barriers to employment, and support individuals with their journey back to work.

Funded by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Health, the voluntary programme is a collaboration between ourselves and Cambridge City Council. People will be supported

towards work, if that's right for them, through meaningful engagement in a nonjudgemental way.

Cllr Henry Batchelor, our Lead Cabinet Member for Communities, said:

“This is a great project which supports residents with health challenges to return to work. By offering tailored resources and opportunities, we're helping people rebuild their confidence, skills, and financial independence, all while improving their overall wellbeing.”

The support is delivered by Cambridge and District Citizens Advice and the Abbey People community interest company, in three pilot locations:

- The Melbourn Community Hub (for all South Cambs residents), Monday, 10am to 1pm
- The Meadows Community Centre (for all South Cambs residents), Arbury Road, Cambridge, Tuesday, 9am to 12 noon
- Abbey People (for Fen Ditton, Marleigh and Teversham residents), 15 Barnwell Road, Cambridge, Thursdays, 10am to 12 noon

A member of the Citizens Advice team explains: “Clients will be given advice and practical help to improve their current situation. This includes a benefits check, help to look at their financial position, assessment for local grants and support to build confidence and wellbeing. Advisers will help bring in other organisations with the aim to help the person get back to work, including creating and updating CVs and looking at education, training, volunteering, and work placements.”

Maria Carvalho, a Link Worker at Abbey People, said:

“Our goal is to empower individuals to find activities that not only contribute to their wellbeing but also support their financial independence.”

Linsey, one of the participants, said: “Having Maria to help and support me find and apply for jobs has been an immense help. We underestimate the power of having regular and consistent support when trying to get back into the workplace, or even to live happier and healthier lives. I cannot recommend it enough.”

### **How to access support**

Citizens Advice can accept clients from across South Cambridgeshire for their sessions at the Melbourn Community Hub and Meadows Community Centre.

To get in touch or self-refer just email [healthemployhub@cambridgecab.org.uk](mailto:healthemployhub@cambridgecab.org.uk)

Residents of Fen Ditton, Marleigh and Teversham can self-refer to Abbey People by visiting [www.abbeypeople.org.uk/abbey-works](http://www.abbeypeople.org.uk/abbey-works) or emailing [maria.carvalho@abbeypeople.org.uk](mailto:maria.carvalho@abbeypeople.org.uk) or by attending one of their Thursday drop-in sessions. Virtual support is also available at other times.

## **Communities: Community Chest grant continues to fund local projects**

The Community Chest is one of our longest running grants and over the years has supported hundreds of projects throughout the district. You may have benefitted from this funding without even knowing it!

To apply for up to £2,000 in funding you will need to either belong to a non-profit group or organisation (including Community Interest Companies) or a South Cambridgeshire Parish or Town Council.

Funding needs to benefit residents in our district, leave a legacy for the community, ensure equality of access as well as help us deliver one or more of the following aims:

- Promote healthy and active communities
- Enable inclusive communities
- Develop skills
- Enhance the natural environment or lead to a sustainable increase in local biodiversity
- Deliver community engagement through the creation or refreshing of a Community-Led Plan
- Provide a benefit to those affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

Examples of organisations who have received funding over the years include:

- Parish and Town Councils and Parish Meetings
- Sports clubs
- Scouts, Guides and Brownies
- Allotments and Gardening Associations
- Craft groups
- Village Halls and Community Centres
- Youth groups
- Eco groups
- History groups

Included in the Community Chest are ring-fenced funds specifically dedicated to projects that help support residents in the cost-of-living crisis, those wanting to take forward a biodiversity idea and groups wanting to produce a Community Led Plan.

Our Lead Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr John Williams, said:

“Funding usually goes towards capital costs such as equipment, materials and the costs needed to make repairs to historic buildings, monuments and memorials. Newly formed groups can also apply for revenue costs. For example, the training of staff or volunteers and hall hire. These elements are often crucial for start-up ventures in the early days.”

So far this financial year the fund has provided grants to 15 not-for-profit organisations and parish councils totalling more than £25,000.

Remaining in the grant fund is:

- £38,131 for general Community Chest Funding
- £43,249 for Community Led Plans
- £7,909 for Biodiversity projects
- £9,324 for cost-of-living projects.

If you would like to find out more about our criteria, details of recently funded projects and how to apply, visit [www.scambs.gov.uk/community-chest-grants](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-chest-grants)

Please share this article with any organisations that are in need of a funding boost. We are more than happy to discuss your project with you before you make an application too – just email [community.chest@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:community.chest@scambs.gov.uk) to set something up.

## Communities: Mobile Warden Schemes

We've pledged £345,000 to support Mobile Warden Schemes in South Cambridgeshire for the next three years.

The schemes provide a low-cost daily service compared to more formal care options, with significant benefits, including:

- enabling older people to remain living at home independently for longer
- avoiding earlier transfer into care and reducing the need for additional care packages

- avoiding unnecessary hospital admission and speeding up hospital discharges
- providing reassurance (if not respite) to carers
- providing daily contact to people who would otherwise live in isolation and/or away from their families.

They can also provide a benefit to scheme wardens and volunteers who may be suffering from loneliness and isolation themselves. The latest three-year funding scheme, which will start in April 2025, ensures funding is in place for existing schemes as well as providing funding for new or expanding schemes so more residents can be reached. Ongoing development work has also set out a longer term plan so schemes will not need to rely so heavily on our funding.

Whether you are a resident looking to find out which villages are covered by a scheme, or looking for funding to set up a new scheme, visit

[www.scams.gov.uk/mobilewarden-scheme](http://www.scams.gov.uk/mobilewarden-scheme)

## Communities: Community Forums coming up in 2025

Our Community Forums are for new neighbourhoods arising from growth in South Cambridgeshire. These bring residents, councils and developers together to raise issues and discuss how developments are moving forward.

The forums are open to all and meet up to four times a year. Various formats are used, including informal drop-in sessions, formal meetings with presentations and online events.

Each meeting has an individual webpage on our website where you can find agendas, confirm meeting dates and register for the contact list.

Visit [www.scams.gov.uk/community-forums](http://www.scams.gov.uk/community-forums) for confirmation of dates and format of meetings.

### **Northstowe**

Round 1: 5 March

Round 2: 4 June

Round 3: 10 September

Round 4: 3 December

### **North East Cambridge**

Round 1: 26 March (online via Microsoft Teams)

Round 2: 9 July (online via Microsoft Teams)

Round 3: 19 November (online via Microsoft Teams)

### **Cambridge East**

Round 1: 12 March

Round 2: 18 June

Round 3: 22 October

### **Waterbeach**

Round 1: 19 March

Round 2: 2 July

Round 3: 5 November

### **North West and West Cambridge**

Round 1: 26 February (online via Microsoft Teams)

Round 2: 12 June

Round 3: 15 October (online via Microsoft Teams)

## **Bourn Airfield and Cambourne Forum**

Round 1: 12 February

Round 2: 25 June

Round 3: 12 November

## **Communities: A commitment to ending violence against women and girls**

We're proud to have recently become White Ribbon Accredited in recognition of our commitment to preventing harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls.

We committed to working towards ending men's violence against women by becoming accredited by White Ribbon UK, the leading charity.

Our White Ribbon UK accreditation works alongside our Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation. As part of our DAHA accreditation, we introduced and strengthened policies and practices to support staff and residents of all genders who experience domestic abuse. This work was praised by assessors as inspiring and exemplary.

As part of our White Ribbon action plan, our Ambassadors and Champions will continue to raise awareness of the White Ribbon promise to "never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women".

We have a strong group of male colleagues across numerous departments, our White Ribbon Ambassadors, who have pledged to advocate positive attitudes and behaviour within our organisation.

Ambassadors and Champions (who are women supporting the work of White Ribbon) will raise awareness and support our local community groups and partners in their own work to end men's violence against women.

District Cllr for Milton and Waterbeach ward, Judith Rippeth has helped lead our efforts in this area, and said:

"We will deliver a comprehensive year on year plan which will transform both our staff culture and our work within the wider community. It is an opportunity to train our staff and to make our workplace and communities a safe place for all."

Cllr John Batchelor, our Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, added:

"Our male ambassadors are volunteers who work with other men to inform them of the impacts of abuse and sexist behaviours among their friends, colleagues and communities. We recognise that not all men are violent, but all men have a role to play in preventing violence towards women."

White Ribbon Day 2024 took place on 25 November. Councillors and our staff came together to mark this day and learn more about how we can address harmful attitudes and behaviours that are sometimes seen as harmless or just jokes, but can perpetuate violence and foster a culture of acceptance around sexism, harassment, and abuse. We also took the opportunity to raise awareness of the Council's support that is available for all victims of abuse.

**[www.scams.gov.uk/domesticabuse-advice](http://www.scams.gov.uk/domesticabuse-advice)**

## **Communities: Our promise to tackle racism and promote equality within our community**

We have pledged a commitment to tackle racism - and promote equality - by signing an anti-racism charter.

The charter, an initiative from UNISON, aims to tackle racism in the public sector on a national

level. It commits organisations and their leaders to having a clear and visible race equality policy, as well as programme of anti-racism initiatives such as training for all staff.

It also includes promoting a diverse workforce, addressing the impact of racism on staff wellbeing, and regularly reviewing strategies to improve racial equality, diversity, and inclusion so the organisation can reflect the communities it serves.

Our Chief Executive Liz Watts, alongside Council Leader Cllr Bridget Smith, officially signed the charter on Tuesday 29 October at South Cambs Hall.

UNISON Eastern Regional Secretary Tim Roberts said:

“It’s great to see South Cambridgeshire District Council making the commitment to tackle racism in the workplace. There’s still a lot of work to do, but signing the charter is a great first step and we look forward to working with other employers across the Eastern Region.”

The signing comes after the Council was accredited by several other initiatives. This includes becoming a White Ribbon organisation (see page 41 for more details on that) in recognition of our commitment to prevent harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls, being confirmed as a Menopause-Friendly employer, and achieving Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation for our commitment to tackling domestic abuse.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Bridget Smith, said:

“The signing of the anti-racism charter demonstrates our dedicated approach to support colleagues. There is no place for discrimination or racism in our community and I’m delighted to be a part of this movement and highlight the Council’s commitment to equality in the public sector. This is a public statement that we will not accept racist behaviours from anyone – be they someone who works for the Council or where we are providing services locally.”

## **Transport: Cambridge South on track and journey towards improved buses continues**

Dr Nik Johnson, Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority of which we are a constituent member, recently toured the building works at Cambridge South rail station, which is set to open next year.

The station will serve the busy Cambridge Biomedical Campus, improving travel for thousands of people and cutting congestion and carbon emissions. Expected to accommodate 1.8 million passengers annually, Cambridge South will play a key role in supporting the growing hub of health and life sciences, which, along with Addenbrooke’s Hospital, is projected to host 27,000 jobs by 2031.

Construction is on track to be completed by late 2025. Securing the station was an early priority for the Combined Authority, which provided initial funding and developed a strategy to fasttrack the project by separating it from East West Rail. In 2022, the Government announced £200 million in funding to build the station.

Cambridge South will offer connections to central London, Stansted Airport, and Birmingham. It will feature step-free access to all four platforms, accessible toilets, parking for 1,000 bicycles, and pedestrian access from both sides, encouraging sustainable travel and reducing carbon footprints in the area. The station will be managed and served by Greater Anglia, with other existing train operators expected to call at the new station.

### **Public voices feed into bus franchising consultation**

The Combined Authority has now closed its bus franchising consultation. Feedback from the 14-week process, which included public and business consultation events, will now be analysed to inform Dr Nik Johnson, Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, on whether to introduce bus franchising as a different way to run buses across the region.



The Combined Authority consultation focused on exploring bus franchising as a potential new model for running services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Throughout the consultation period, the Combined Authority gathered input from the public, businesses, and other stakeholders through events, online, and by post, ensuring a wide range of views were considered.

The final decision is expected by mid-January 2025, although this timeline may change. Once a decision is made, the Combined Authority will publish a full report detailing the consultation findings and the next steps for the region's bus services.