

District and County Councillors' Report – December 2022

'Making Connections' Consultation

A 'Sustainable Travel Zone' road user charge has been put forward by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (the body currently implementing the upgrades to the A1307) for private vehicles between 7am and 7pm on weekdays. The plans are part of a package to improve public transport, reduce congestion in the city and help the environment through lower emissions.

A £5 congestion charge to drive into and around Cambridge is being considered as part of a 'once in a generation' plan to shake up how people travel during the working week.

These proposals are now being publicly consulted on and it is vitally important that as many people as possible respond directly to this consultation with their views. It will be one of the largest decisions that will affect the way that we travel in and out of Cambridge for generations to come.

The consultation, plus all the related documents, can be seen here - <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/making-connections-2022> - it is important to read the documents, as there is a lot of misinformation and personal opinion in the media, so please do use the information available to come to your own views.

A1307 Update

The majority of the work here is complete but the remaining schemes to be implemented are:

- The completion of the new footpath between Hildersham and Dalehead Foods – due spring 2023
- The new roundabout on the A1307 at the end of Bartlow Road, Linton – due Spring 2023
- The remodelling of the highly dangerous Dean Road junction, again, on the A1307 – due Spring 2023
- The implementation of the 'Greenway', the non-motorised user route between Linton and Cambridge. The route of this, through Abington, is still TBD with the likelihood the preferred route will be via Pampisford Road and not through the village centre.

Cost of Living support & Community Chest

SCDC's Community Chest fund provides grants to voluntary and community sector groups, charities and public sector bodies wishing to further improve quality of life locally. Criteria have been expanded to allow bids that include contributions for any project that has a positive impact for communities related to the cost-of-living crisis. Parish Councils of any size can also now place grant bids. A ringfenced total sum of £20,000 has been made available for these new Community Chest grant applications, provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System, to ensure support is co-ordinated effectively and directed at those in need locally this winter - <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/grants/community-chest-grants/>

South Cambs District Council also have a cost of living 'Go Fund Me' page that are taking donations that they will use to purchase items needed to assist those that need support over the winter months -

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<https://www.scams.gov.uk/emergency-go-fund-me-page-will-help-residents-struggling-in-the-cost-of-living-crisis/>

Help for Households campaign – social tariffs

The government has worked with a range of Internet Service Providers (IPs) and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to deliver low-cost broadband and phone service packages, called social tariffs, for those on low incomes. Social tariffs are available for people claiming Universal Credit, Pension Credit and some other benefits, with some providers offering deals from £15 a month.

Warm Home Discount scheme reopened

The Warm Home Discount scheme will provide a discount of £150 off electricity bills for three million low-income households this winter. Most households will receive the discount automatically. The government has launched a new online tool, to make it easier for the public to check if they are eligible for the discount. The online tool will guide customers through the eligibility criteria in England and Wales, asking questions about electricity supply, the benefits they receive and characteristics of their property. All customers will receive a letter between this month (November) and mid-January 2023 confirming their eligibility and the payment will be made automatically through energy suppliers by March 2023. The government is also writing to customers who may be eligible, advising them to use the tool linked below to check eligibility, as well as to use the helpline for particularly complex cases. <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>

Linton Warm Hubs

Cambridgeshire ACRE and South Cambs District Council are working with communities all across the district to open Warm Hubs to help people struggling with fuel cost or just wanting an opportunity to get together. There are now 20 up and running with another 7 on the way. Linton has opened its first two Warm Hubs, these are:

- St Marys Church - Thursday 11am – 2pm
- Linton Free Church – Tuesday 1pm – 4pm

Ukraine – new hosts for guests needed

Cambridge City and South Cambs have between them about 500 hosts for Ukraine guests. With the war in Ukraine continuing, the six-month hosting arrangements have needed to be renewed, though not all hosts are in a position to do so. Anyone who might be able to provide a spare room for a guest from Ukraine is asked to get in touch with SCDC. We need new homes for about 200 people. For this reason the councils have launched the GOT A SPARE ROOM campaign. If you are interested all you have to do is text ROOM to 88802. <https://www.scams.gov.uk/support-for-ukraine-it-all-starts-with-a-spare-room/>

Electric Vehicle Charging

The District Council has introduced a grant of up to £5,000 per application for electric vehicle charging points on community/public buildings within the district. It's a great opportunity for us to expand our electric charging network and make our area more accessible for those wanting to travel here via electric vehicle.

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/climate-emergency-and-nature/grants-funding-and-community-support/electric-vehicle-charge-point-grant/>

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Housing Issues

If you rent a home in the private sector, we would urge you to seek help from the District Council if mould or associated issues are not resolved by your landlord. In South Cambridgeshire, the District Council has a role in ensuring that homes in the private sector and the Council's own properties do not contain health hazards. Most properties within the private rented sector in the district are in good condition, but the Council's Environmental Health team will investigate any complaints. Private Sector and Housing Association tenants can make a complaint about the condition of their home by emailing env.health@scambs.gov.uk. The Council has the power to take the appropriate enforcement action if there are issues that need to be resolved. This action could include writing to the landlord to ensure the issue is resolved, but the Council can also serve a legal notice to instruct works to be carried out.

The District Council manages around 5,500 Council homes and takes reports of mould in any of them extremely seriously. Do not hesitate to contact Henry or John if you have an unresolved issue in your Council house.

6 Free Trees

For the third year running South Cambs is offering free trees to parish councils across the district to help provide homes and food for wildlife and combat climate change. The Six Free Trees campaign has seen 390 trees planted across South Cambridgeshire since it was launched in 2019. Parish Councils have until 21 December 2022 to apply.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/free-trees-for-a-cleaner-greener-south-cambridgeshire/>

CCC business planning for 2023-24

The County Council faces a budget gap of about £29 Million due to inflation. At the time of writing, much work has been done to close that gap ahead of the February budget meeting, but a £13 Million gap remains to be filled. Detailed papers on service areas will go to December committees at the County Council.

Festive Greetings

We both wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a trouble-free, warm and peaceful New Year 2023.

Contact Information

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