

Cambridgeshire County Council – Papworth and Swavesey Division

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caxton and Papworth Ward

County and District Councillors' Monthly Report – September 2025

## **Local Government Reorganisation**

Cambridgeshire County Council has launched a further engagement exercise about their preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation.

The county council's preference is two unitaries: City, South Cambs and East Cambs in the South, and Peterborough, Huntingdonshire and Fenland in the North. They have launched a platform with more information and a further survey. The link is here: [Your Future Councils - Your Voice - Cambridgeshire County Council - Citizen Space](https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/your-future-councils/) (<https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/your-future-councils/>)

Meanwhile, Cambridge City and South Cambs prefer a smaller unitary comprising those two council, with the rest of Cambridgeshire combined in a single, larger authority. Expect supporting materials shortly.

To nobody's very great surprise, it has been revealed that the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government failed to undertake its own analysis of the financial implications of the ongoing local government reorganisation, relying instead on outdated analysis by consultants PwC.

Fresh analysis of those figures shows that replacing the two-tier system with 58 new unitary councils with populations as low as 300,000 could end up costing £850 million over five years and deliver no long-term savings.

## **News from the County Council**

### **Adults & Health**

#### **Cambridge Children's Hospital contractor appointed**

A building contractor has been appointed to Cambridge Children's Hospital, which will be built on the same site that houses Addenbrooke's and Royal Papworth hospitals. Bouygues UK is expected to start within the next 18 months.

The facility will be the first specialist children's hospital in the East of England— the only region in the UK currently without one. The five-storey building will include 108 inpatient beds, sixteen paediatric intensive care beds, forty-two day-case beds, seven operating theatres, imaging and diagnostics, and a hospital school alongside a new research institute.

### **‘Good’ rating for adult social care services**

Cambridgeshire County Council’s adult social care services have been rated as ‘Good’ by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), with its assessment finding that early support and flexible options are helping people stay independent longer.

Assessment began in November 2024, with a site visit in early April. It found that people who draw on the council’s care felt supported, listened to and offered choices, with care being co-ordinated in a planned way considering people’s interests and what was important to them.

A range of successes and areas of good practice were highlighted in the report, including:

- Prevention and Reablement success: Quick assessments and goal-focused care are enabling people to stay at home and thrive.
- Strong provider relationships: Staff build trust and offer tailored care packages, supported by robust quality assessments.
- Leadership that listens: A stable leadership team is driving cultural change and boosting morale.
- Wellbeing at work: Staff feel supported through flexible working, wellbeing initiatives, and caring leadership.

The report also includes a number of areas for improvement, including:

- Direct payments: The number of people receiving direct payments is significantly below the national average. This needs to be increased to give people more choice and control over their care.
- Equity and inclusion: The council needs to improve its use of demographic data to understand the needs of under-represented groups in Cambridgeshire.
- Unpaid carers: The council should build on the work of its All Age Carers Strategy 2022-2026 to ensure unpaid carers have consistently good experiences.
- Transitions and continuity of care: The council should work to improve transitions from children’s services to adults’ services for young people, ensuring this is timely and well-coordinated.

## **Children & Young People**

### **Improvements in support for care leavers**

The County Council has improved the support and stability it provides for care leavers in Cambridgeshire, according to a recent Ofsted report.

Ofsted carried out a focused visit in July, looking at the council’s arrangements for care leavers. They concluded that arrangements have strengthened since their last visit in 2024, though there is still work to be done.

Inspectors commented that:

- ‘Leaders are ambitious to support care leavers into employment, further education and training opportunities [...] The local authority is trailblazing the use of bursaries for care leavers over 19, supporting care leavers to remain longer in further education or giving care leavers who wish to return to employment, education or training, these opportunities.’

- ‘Care leavers now have stronger and more purposeful relationships with their personal advisors and investment in additional staffing in the service is helping to reduce staff turnover and workloads.’
- ‘Most care leavers live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs and increasing numbers are supported to remain living with their current carers through effective Staying Put arrangements.’
- ‘Political and corporate leaders and care leavers have co-produced a convincing and aspirational pledge which sets out their commitment to help care leavers fulfil their full potential.’

The summary also identifies four areas for improvement:

- The quality and impact of front-line manager’s supervision to promote and provide reflective practice for personal advisors
- The quality and impact of front-line managers oversight to ensure purposeful and considered case direction
- The quality and consistency of pathway planning
- The range and accessibility of suitable accommodation to meet care leavers needs.

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50285468>

### **Could you be a foster carer?**

Cambridgeshire Fostering Service is looking for compassionate individuals and families across Cambridgeshire to become foster carers. By offering a stable, loving home, you can make a life-changing difference for children and young people who are unable to live with their families. Fostering doesn't have to be a long-term commitment—the council also needs carers for short-term fostering and respite care.

Find out more:

0800 052 0078

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/fostering-and-adoption](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/fostering-and-adoption)

Facebook [www.facebook.com/CCCFosteringService/](https://www.facebook.com/CCCFosteringService/)

Instagram [www.instagram.com/cambsfostering/](https://www.instagram.com/cambsfostering/)

## **Highways & Transport**

### **Firm action to reduce disruption on Cambridgeshire roads**

Cambridgeshire County Council is taking firm action to reduce disruption on the county’s roads, issuing fines totalling £483,000 to utility companies and developers for non-compliant and over-running roadworks during 2024–25.

In total, the council processed more than 32,000 street and roadwork permits last year, regulating when and how works can take place on the highway. £185,000 was issued through Fixed Penalty Notices for 1,655 offences, including works that lacked a valid permit or breached the conditions of their permit. A further £298,000 was recovered from 201 works that overran, resulting in 1,191 extra days of disruption for road users and residents.

51 utility companies are entitled to work on Cambridgeshire’s roads—and when that work is deemed an emergency, they can legally start work even before notifying the council.

However, as the highways authority, the council does have powers to challenge how long emergency and urgent works remain in place. In 2024-25:

- Over 1,460 emergency permits were challenged for requesting excessive duration – more than 25% of all emergency permits.
- 254 immediate permit applications were rejected where they did not meet the legal criteria for emergency status.

One option the council is currently exploring is a lane rental scheme, which would allow the council to charge companies for the time that roadworks occupy the highway—with higher charges for works on the busiest streets at the busiest times. The council currently talking to other authorities about their experiences of lane rental.

### **New highways system to go live in September**

The County Council's new Asset Management system Aurora goes live on Monday 22 September. The current system will be taken offline on Thursday 18 September, and residents will not be able to log issues or defects online between 18 and 22 September.

Under the new system:

- Customer reports will be automatically directed to the correct officer or team, ensuring they are handled by the right person first time.
- All Highways Maintenance Officers will now be equipped with tablets, allowing them to inspect defects, raise work orders, and update customers directly while on-site.
- New workflows automatically escalate reports that are not progressed within agreed service level timescales, helping to prevent delays and improve response times.
- Performance dashboards will ensure no cases are overlooked.
- Officers can send updates directly from the system, meaning residents receive regular progress updates on their reports.
- Reports can be managed dynamically by officers in the field, and loaded into inspection routes so they can be reviewed at the same time.
- The system will task officers with inspecting completed work and identifying any defects. If defects are identified these will be flagged to contractors and corrected.

### **Road works programme**

A reminder that the council's road works programme can be found at:

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/road-improvements](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/road-improvements)

## **Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**

There is still time to give your thoughts on the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The consultation is live now until 11 September 2025. You can complete the online survey [here](https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lhrs/consultation/): <https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lhrs/consultation/>

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new system of spatial strategies intended to reverse biodiversity loss in England and deliver wider environmental benefits. Across the country, 48 local strategies are in development or delivery. Your local knowledge is essential to inform and improve the LNRS for our region. This is your chance to shape how we protect and restore nature across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Whether you're a resident, landowner, farmer, or nature lover - your voice matters.

### **News from the District Council**

#### **New Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Website**

The Shared Waste Service is launching a new website for managing bins, recycling, and waste services across Greater Cambridge, serving both residential and business users. You can use this website to (for example) report missed bin collections and arrange pickups of bulky items.

From Tuesday 2 September, you can choose between the new website and existing council waste webpages (there will be a button at the top of the page to switch between the two). From 16 September, all 'Bins and Recycling' links on council websites will redirect to the new website. For domestic customers, the new site will be accessible directly at [www.greatercambridgewaste.org](http://www.greatercambridgewaste.org). The current commercial waste website will move to [www.greatercambridgewaste.org/business](http://www.greatercambridgewaste.org/business).

From 16 September, the new website will become the single platform for all waste-related services. The Waste Service encourages residents and businesses to begin using the new site from 2 September and share their feedback via the links provided on the site during the initial launch period.

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the new website's functionality or user experience, email them to [engage@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:engage@scambs.gov.uk). A member of the team will review all feedback.

## **£300,000 Available to Support Community Services in South Cambridgeshire**

A £300,000 annual funding programme launched on 8 September, aimed at empowering local groups that deliver vital services to South Cambridgeshire residents. The Service Support Grants funding has significantly increased from the previous £167,400 a year budget, underscoring South Cambridgeshire District Council's commitment to community wellbeing, tackling inequality and reducing social isolation.

The enhanced funding acknowledges a growing pressure faced by the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, particularly in response to the ongoing cost of living crisis. From mental health support for young people to advice services for vulnerable residents, and from neighbourhood schemes to community transport, the funding aims to reach those most in need and to help build inclusive, resilient communities.

Service Support Grants have supported local organisations for several years. For the next round of funding, £300,000 a year for three years will be distributed among eligible recipients. The boost aims to alleviate financial pressures on community groups while expanding the scheme to benefit a greater number of organisations.

The grants will be delivered in six key areas to be shared among groups which support a wide range of activities including the following, with example allocations:

- Mental health and wellbeing - £50,000 a year
- Advice services - £120,000 a year
- Independent living - £50,000 a year
- Support for the voluntary and community sector - £20,000 a year
- Cost-of-living support - £30,000 a year
- PLACE-based Initiatives - £30,000 a year

Applications opened on Monday 8 September, with a deadline of 5pm on Friday 31 October. Funding runs from April 2026 to March 2029.

Any voluntary, community or social enterprise organisation delivering services for South Cambridgeshire residents can apply. Applications from consortia are also welcome, provided one lead agency is identified. The final funding allocations, and how it will be split between themes, will be decided once bids have been submitted and considered by councillors.

Apply [online](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/grants-and-funding) here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/grants-and-funding>

For assistance, contact the Partnerships Team at [partnerships@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:partnerships@scambs.gov.uk) or call 01954 713070.

## Local Climate Action Conference

South Cambridgeshire District Council's third Local Climate Action Conference will take place next month. If you'd like to join us on the day, please RSVP using this form: <https://forms.office.com/e/DKWNNDkxfF>

The event is open to parish councillors, community groups, charities, and anyone interested in tackling climate change and enhancing biodiversity. You will also have the opportunity to provide input into the forthcoming SCDC Climate and Nature Strategy 2026-2030.

Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

**When:** Friday 17 October 2025, 12-5 pm

**Where:** Storey's Field Centre, Eddington Ave, Cambridge CB3 1AA (// Aims.Tune.Fines.)

Preliminary Agenda:

Arrival from 11:30 am

11:30 Arrival / Registration

12:00 Opening remarks – Cllr Natalie Warren-Green

Keynote speakers:

12:30 Ian Walters, Duxford Parish Council

Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan for Duxford Parish

12:45 The Wildlife Trust BCN

Managing nature reserves in a changing climate – The Wildlife Trust BCN show how ground-breaking butterfly research with the University of Cambridge is changing the way we manage our nature reserves

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch & Networking

Catered by Cambridge Sustainable Food

14:00 – 15:30 SCDC Climate and Nature Strategy Workshop. Share your thoughts on the seven themes of the forthcoming Climate and Nature Strategy

15:30 – 15:45 Coffee Break

15:45 Case Study – Grantchester's transition to renewable heating. Josh Newman, Grantchester HeatLink

16:15 Panel Discussion – Retrofits, community energy, and more. Working together to accelerate the energy transition

Chaired by Siobhan Mellon, Cambridge Carbon Footprint

Panellists:

Fran Sutton, Home Energy Officer – Cambridge Carbon Footprint

Madeleine Foster, Retrofit Project Officer – South Cambridgeshire District Council

Yovieta Andrew, Community Energy Development Officer – Cambridgeshire County Council  
Chris Pointon, Cambridge Climate Leaders & Cambridge Retrofit Partnership

Conference Exhibitors: Wildlife Trust BCN, RSPB, Cambridge Conservation Volunteers,  
Cambridgeshire Regenerative Trust, The Liberation Cycle & More!

## Licensing

Two topics were discussed at the Licensing committee meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> September:

- Stricter regulation of ice cream vans. Currently ice cream vans come under the same regulations as other street traders. It is proposed to implement a set of regulations specifically for ice cream vans, which would include limits on hours of operation, volume of chimes and permitted locations. The draft proposed regulations will be sent to parishes for comment.
- Extending the period in which South Cambs licensed taxi drivers can continue to use vehicles that are not zero or low emission (mainly Euro 6 compliant) from 2028 to 2030. This was agreed given the uncertainty of which licensing authority will be responsible for taxis after 2028 and the possibility of revised net zero targets under a future government.

## South Cambs District Council Social Housing Updates

South Cambridgeshire District Council has secured an additional £8.2 million government grant to retrofit its social housing stock with energy saving measures. These updates will cut carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty by making homes warmer and cheaper to heat. Total funding has now increased to £19 million to support energy efficiency upgrades for 610 homes across South Cambridgeshire. The remaining £10.8 million funding is being provided through the Council's Housing Revenue Account, which is supported by rental income from tenants. Eligible tenants will be contacted by the Council when the contractors are ready to begin work at their property.

In the last year, South Cambs has delivered 58 new council homes for affordable rent, 10 for shared ownership, and 11 for temporary accommodation. In addition, the Housing Team achieved a 62% success rate in interventions that prevented homelessness for 278 individuals and families in 2024/25.

## Elections 2026

District elections for South Cambridgeshire District Council are currently due to take place on Thursday 7 May 2026, when all seats on the district council will be up for election. Any parish elections will take place on the same day.

We will be in touch in the new year to share more information about these elections and provide further details on nominations and anything else you might need to know. If there are any updates or changes to the 2026 scheduled elections, we will let you know.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please get in touch with the elections team by emailing [elections@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:elections@scambs.gov.uk)

Peter Sandford and Chris Poulton

7 September 2025

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