

District Councillors 'Report for Dry Drayton Parish Council, January 2024

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On behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) we would like to wish Councillors a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Resource for Community Safety

Please take a look at SCDC's suite of resources to help Parish Councils respond to local issues, including inconsiderate parking, fly tipping, online safety, how to make reports to police, how to safely charge an e-bike/e-scooter battery, and more:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/community-safety/community-safety-resources/>.

Please also check SCDC's partners at the charity, *Change, Grow, Live* who offer harm reduction advice, and support contact details for those using drugs or alcohol,

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/>.

Combined Authority (CPCA), Transport and Buses

The Combined Authority adopted the new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) at the end of November 2023. For more details,, please check the page:

<https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/what-we-deliver/transport/local-transport-plan/>. We recommend you take a look at the local strategy for Greater Cambridge which is referenced on the site and is a downloadable.

The adoption of the LTCP unlocks a series of actions, one of which is the consultation on bus services which you'll find at <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/better-buses/#questionnaire>.

If you'd like to offer an opinion on the CPCA's strategy and budget, please take a look at: <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/yoursayyourfuture/>.

Corporate Peer Review of SCDC

The Peer Review took place in the first week of November and the review results clearly state that the council is in a strong financial position and is a well-managed organisation with an enviable record of delivery - exemplified by being the district with the highest number of visas issued under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The 4 Day Week trial is helping the council to retain and recruit planners needed to respond to the Government's own vision for this area in terms of growth.

Supermarket vouchers continue

The supermarket voucher scheme will continue to operate for all eligible families in Cambridgeshire with Cambridgeshire County Council running the scheme until the February 2024 half term using the Household Support Fund from the Department for Work & Pensions and additional funding provided by the Council. Eligible families get a £15 voucher via email or text to be used at a choice of ten supermarkets. The voucher scheme has been a huge success since it was introduced and appreciated keenly by families struggling in the current financial climate. A survey revealed that over seventy per cent of families said the vouchers had helped them cope with the rising cost of living.

Climate scorecard

Campaigning organisation Climate Emergency UK once again published a 'scorecard' for each County Council to measure how each was responding to climate change. Cambridgeshire was ranked fifth, with a gold star for our work on decarbonising buildings and heating. We scored lower than average on biodiversity, and on waste reduction and food. This was expected, given that Cambridgeshire is the most biodiversity-deprived county, and that the Waterbeach waste facility is out of action while the council and its contractor Thalia seek to resolve compliance issues.

<https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/scoring/county/>

Joint statement from local leaders and the Combined Authority Mayor on Cambridge 2040 announcement

The Rt Hon Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on Cambridge 2040, unveiled updated plans for the Government's 'Cambridge 2040' vision today (19 December 2023). The Government's vision for Cambridge includes proposals for "northwards" of 150,000 new homes around Cambridge as part of a major new expansion of the city.

The leaders of Cambridge City Council, Cllr Mike Davey, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cllr Bridget Smith, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cllr Lucy Nethsingha, and the Combined Authority Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Dr Nik Johnson, said: "Despite working hard to engage constructively with Government officials since the Secretary of State's initial Cambridge 2040 announcement in the summer, it's deeply disappointing that once again Government plans for Cambridge seem to be being negotiated through the press.

"We note in the latest announcement that the number of new homes put forward by Rt Hon Michael Gove MP has come down from 250,000 to 150,000, but this is still substantially more than the over 50,000 homes we have identified as needed in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (to 2040) – a number which will already be incredibly challenging to bring forward. We are ambitious for high quality sustainable, green growth but can't stress enough how vital it is that Government supports us to tackle the issues that will otherwise act as roadblocks to sustainable growth.

"We have written to the Secretary of State a number of times over the past month to stress the importance of committing to sustainable growth, and to reiterate the support that is needed to enable us to plan for the homes set out in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

"This includes prioritising sustainable public transport, community infrastructure such as schools and GPs, and water shortages in this region, which are putting our chalk streams under extreme pressure – an issue which the Greater Cambridge Planning Service warned in January 2023 could delay existing plans for housebuilding if not addressed by Government. We are still waiting for responses to these questions which would detail how Government proposes to support us in delivering a proposed 50,000 or so homes responsibly, let alone 150,000.

"Clarity is also needed as to who is involved in the 'Cambridge Delivery Group', what it will do, and how it will be governed. Devolution works best when local politicians are empowered to lead and deliver sustainable development and we will continue to work hard to represent our residents and ensure that Cambridge and its surrounding villages grow in a sustainable and carefully planned way."

Supporting sustainable growth in Cambridgeshire

Following a visit to Cambridge by the Secretary of State in November, leaders from Cambridgeshire County, Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District councils, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, the Greater Cambridge Partnership,

and local business wrote to urge Government to support sustainable growth in Cambridgeshire. This commitment would involve:

1. Water scarcity: Resolving the area's water supply challenges – including through a commitment to enhancing new supply options, significantly better management of demand and investment in resilience of our rivers and the local environment.
2. Cambridge South East Transport (CSET): Providing £162 million to support a Transport & Works Act application for a scheme that would link the city centre to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and the southern cluster including Babraham.
3. Transport infrastructure: Supporting the Greater Cambridge City Deal and Partnership transport programme which provides a deliverable solution for current growth and a scalable solution to support expanded growth ambitions with future public transport solutions.
4. Local Planning: Supporting the Local Planning Authorities to become a pilot for a new form of plan making and allowing Greater Cambridge to have an up-to-date long term development strategy in place as soon as possible.
5. More genuinely affordable housing: Providing support via Homes England for councils to implement a bespoke housing strategy to tackle the affordability crisis for essential key workers and the specific needs for homes in globally significant sciences and deep tech sectors across Greater Cambridge – in addition to local partners' ongoing work to provide more affordable homes.
6. Match population growth with health and social care investment: Providing funding for a detailed plan to enhance and improve the facilities at the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CUH), along with further enhancements to primary and community based care services and wider health and social care integration, to enable a truly preventative approach within Greater Cambridge.
7. Support specific sites to come forward: Notably the relocation of the Anglian Water sewage treatment works in North East Cambridge and the relocation of Marshalls to Cranfield to unlock development at Cambridge East.

Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) update

Notices of parking illegally will be issued until the end of January. These do not have a fine attached. From 1 February 2024, Cambridgeshire County Council's Civil Parking Enforcement Officers will issue penalty charge notices which include a fine for parking on restrictions such as double yellow lines. Notices will be issued from 1 February which will mean a fine of between £50 and £70, depending on the severity of the offence. For more information visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/cpe

Benefits are expected to include increased compliance with parking restrictions which in turn would improve traffic flow, road safety and lead to a reduction in obstructive and dangerous parking. It will also support economic growth in the district

SCDC Finances

The latest audit is being signed off at a time when the vast majority of council are lagging behind on audits due to issues with the capacity of the auditors. Local authorities are now required to use.

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSPS) is reporting that its spending is close to budget - whereas this time last year it was £250,000 over. This is due almost entirely to the savings made through the four day week trial. GCSPS has recruited into a significant number of planning roles which had been notoriously difficult to fill and had been staffed (at high cost) by agency workers.

Shared Prosperity Fund

SCDC will receive over £1M from the Government's "Shared Prosperity" scheme to allocate as grants to business and community schemes. SCDC is working on the value of the grant awards and the overall objectives to be addressed.

And finally a report on the 2023 Christmas Market:

Christmas market attracts crowds to Cambourne!

Crowds enjoyed a serving of festive cheer when they snapped up the seasonal spirit at SCDC's Christmas Market.

Around 70 stallholders offered 1,500 visitors the chance to browse the bustling bazaar of goodies for sale in the popular event at Cambourne Village College Performance Hall and neighbouring gymnasium on Sunday 12.

Among the winter wonderland of stalls were locally crafted gifts, holiday treats, and festive décor as well as a selection of delicious food from around the world thanks to mobile caterers outside the venue, serving street food as well as hot and cold festive refreshments.

Cllr Peter McDonald, Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development, said: "Once again our Christmas Market was a resounding success enjoyed by hundreds of visitors. It was wonderful to see the local talent and entrepreneurial spirit from a wide variety of traders showcasing their goods for free. It's not only a perfect chance to bring the community together but also an opportunity to support the growth of our local businesses and economies. Seeing the buzz in the room, it felt like more than a market; it was a testament to the collaborative spirit that makes our District truly special and highlights the important role that local businesses play in our high streets and communities."

*Corinne Garvie
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6th January 2024