

Report of Councillor Carla Hofman and Councillor John Williams to Parish Councils for November 2024.

This report contains factual information which we hope will be of use and of interest to the parish council and to the wider community of the parish.

For queries please email us at cllr.williamsjg@scambs.gov.uk or cllr.hofman@scambs.gov.uk

More Capital Funding for Rural Villages

The mayor has given South Cambridgeshire District Council £362,540 to support rural communities to deliver capital projects that deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Called the Net Zero Villages Grant Scheme grants are available between £20,000 - £100,000. The scheme opens on Wednesday 11 December with an application deadline of 5pm Friday 31 January 2025. The grant must be spent by Tuesday 31 March 2026. Due to restrictions place on it by the mayor the scheme is only available to the parishes of Horningsea, Little and Great Wilbraham, Six Mile Bottom and Stow-cum-Quy in the Fen Ditton and Fulbourn Ward. Other villages in the ward are considered by the mayor to be in the urban fringe of Cambridge.

There are 3 categories of projects:

1. Tackling energy use and/or supporting energy efficiency or generation retrofit to community buildings.
2. Enabling access to public transport or access to local services through low carbon transport.
3. Nature based solutions to tackle overheating of community buildings.

Projects must demonstrate and measure the following impacts as relevant to the project:

- Carbon Emission reduction.
- Reduction in energy consumption.
- Reduction in running cost of community facilities.
- Reduce overheating of a building.
- Demonstrator project that can be replicated.
- Number of the community engaged or changes in behaviour.

Projects must demonstrate value for money.

Who can apply?

Applicants must be one of the following:

- A designated Parish Council in South Cambridgeshire.
- A voluntary, community or social enterprise sector organisation, with the applicable asset to be improved being in a designated South Cambridgeshire parish.
- Other public sector bodies applying on behalf of a South Cambridgeshire community in a designated parish.
- Businesses are eligible to apply but the project must relate to a community asset for public benefit in a designated parish.

Nearly a million pounds in Government grants to boost rural life and rejuvenate high streets in South Cambridgeshire

In the final round of Government grants totaling £876,101, seven community and business projects are set to share grants of more than £360,000 to help boost rural life in South Cambridgeshire.

Called the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), it is aimed at supporting rural communities including parish councils and businesses in building long-term resilience. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is the lead authority for the Fund, while South Cambridgeshire District Council is responsible for grant scheme delivery and allocation.

In the latest round, the projects include creating activity space at a community centre, improved accessibility at an arts centre and refurbishment of local tennis courts.

And a new £200,000 Government grant scheme is now available to support projects that boost the high streets across South Cambridgeshire, this time as part of the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The Improving the High Street Grants of between £5,000 to £20,000 per project are available to rural businesses, community groups and parish councils. The scheme aims to improve the look of local high streets, promote rejuvenation, encourage residents to shop locally and attract more local businesses to the area.

The grant can cover a wide range of projects such as renovating shop fronts, street art, new benches, hanging baskets, interactive family fun trails, street cleaning, local maps or new signs.

Once again, the CPCA is the lead authority for distributing the fund, while South Cambridgeshire District Council is responsible for grant scheme delivery and allocation. The first of three application windows is now open until 10 November. The second application window will open on 14 November and close on 15 December. The third and final application window will open on 19 December and close on 19 January next year.

To find out more and apply visit the South Cambridgeshire District Council High Street grant webpage.

Tell us how you want to be involved in the planning process across Greater Cambridge

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire residents are being encouraged to have their say on an important document that outlines how they can become involved in the planning process.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (GCSP), a partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, is consulting on a new 'Statement of Community Involvement' from 18 October to 29 November 2023, and leading councillors are asking local people to help shape it.

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the councils will involve communities in the range of planning related activities it undertakes. Planning affects the lives of everyone who lives, works, and visits Greater Cambridge. For that reason, it is important that people can engage with the Council and its officers in the processes that lead to planning permission, and preparing the plan that sets out future development of the Greater Cambridge area.

The Statement of Community Involvement outlines the types of engagement designed to capture views to inform the preparation of the plan the future of Greater Cambridge, involvement in neighbourhood planning, and the consideration of planning and related applications for new development.

You can find out more information about the Statement of Community Involvement on the GCSP website.

Police and District Council join forces for a taxi enforcement spot-check

Taxi drivers and their vehicles were put under the spotlight during stop checks to ensure they were complying with their licence conditions.

The result was quite shocking. Only two out of 17 drivers and their vehicles had no issues - the rest were sent either an advisory letter or issued with penalty points against their Council issued licence.

The stop checks were carried out in a joint operation by licensing officers from South Cambridgeshire District Council and police officers from Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

The recent taxi checks have revealed that too many vehicles were not meeting the required standards. Ensuring the safety of passengers is our top priority, and these checks play a critical role in maintaining that trust. So South Cambs is working with local operators to make sure all taxis are compliant and safe for every journey in our district.

Local Climate Action Fair 2024

Thanks to the success of the South Cambs inaugural Local Climate Action Fair last year we are holding our second on Tuesday November 19 from 11-3pm in The Hub at Cambourne. It will be followed by a pop-up evening event from 5.30-8pm. All are welcome to come along to share ideas and hear how we can all do our bit to help make South Cambs net zero by 2050. You can read more about it in our [web story](#). To reserve a space please complete our [RSVP](#)

How Council Tax works – new video

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has recently published [a video answering common questions on Council Tax](#). This includes information on how properties are banded and what evidence is needed in a band challenge. Councils are encouraged to share the video via their communication channels. If you have any questions, please contact voamediaenquiries@voa.gov.uk

Reminder- Communities Offer Roadshow

The community roadshow is looking to highlight how the Communities team works collaboratively with parish/town councils and community groups, to meet local ambitions and develop resilient and responsive communities. The roadshow will cover 3 topic areas - Vibrant Communities (including cost-of-living support, community safety and health and wellbeing), Community Action (including grants, climate and environment projects) and Growth. The talks will also involve guest speakers who have developed projects locally with the support of the Communities Team and an opportunity for a Q&A.

We look forward to welcoming you to the roadshow, and below, is a list of the events with the sign-up links alongside. To attend, you must complete the sign-up sheet through Eventbrite.

Date	Location/time	Eventbrite link
Tuesday 12 th November	Linton Village Hall, 7-8pm.	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/linton-community-roadshow-tickets-1030034590187?aff=oddtcreator
Wednesday 20 th November	Melbourn Hub, 6:30-7:30pm	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/melbourn-community-roadshow-tickets-1030026957357?aff=oddtcreator
Thursday 28 th November	Impington Village College, 6-7pm	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/impington-community-roadshow-tickets-1030029725637?aff=oddtcreator

Carla and John