

Councillor Peter McDonald Duxford Division & Ward:
District Councillor for Parishes of Duxford, Hinxton, Ickleton, Babraham, Pampisford.
County Councillor also for Foxton, Fowlmere, Shepreth, Thriplow, Heathfield, Heydon, Chishills,
Whittlesford

Report for Parish Councils – May 2023.

South Cambs District Council

Zero Carbon Communities Grant

The popular Zero Carbon Communities Grant scheme opened for 2023 on 3 April and will receive applications this year until it closes on Friday 2 June. Parish Councils and community groups are invited to apply for a share of the £125,000 funding available for projects to create a cleaner and greener future in our district.

Groups can apply for between £1,000 and £15,000 for projects in two categories:

- Carbon emission reduction or mitigation, e.g. via energy-saving improvements to community buildings, tree-planting initiatives or greener transport facilitation
- Community engagement supporting or encouraging lower-carbon living

This is the fifth round of grants since they were established in May 2019. Since then, more than £400,000 has been allocated to at least 60 different grass roots projects.

Previous projects have included cooking classes that reduce food waste, tree planting, a community e-bike rental scheme, solar panels for village halls and a men's mental health and wellbeing project that runs a mobile library for gardening equipment and tool hire.

The Zero Carbon Communities fund is one of many ways the District Council is working with the community to support a shift to a cleaner and greener future.

Community Group Support

Community groups in South Cambridgeshire have been given a funding boost thanks to grants from the District Council.

Supporting local people with their mental health, helping families with young children, supporting the elderly, tackling poverty and disability transport are among the community groups to share more than £148,000 in grants.

A total of 11 voluntary sector groups have received funding for the coming financial year as part of the Council's Grants to the Voluntary Sector scheme.

The groups receiving grants are:

Home Start Royston & South Cambridgeshire £13,711 - provides early-intervention, volunteer-led home visiting support for vulnerable at-risk families with diverse and often complex issues. The grant will help support the mental wellbeing of 10 families in South Cambridgeshire.

Cambridge Dial-a-Ride £5,000 - provides local transport services to elderly and disabled residents through a membership scheme which is safe, affordable, and accessible to community groups and individuals who have difficulty accessing public transport.

Care Network Cambridgeshire £8,000 – helps communities to involve local people to support each other both individually and through groups and activities. Supports 29 community car schemes and around 900 people across the District.

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Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service £11,400 - provides independent support services to community and voluntary groups in South Cambridgeshire. Also supports and advises parish councils on community related projects and advice on non-statutory governance matters.

Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise £2,000 - a voluntary organisation comprising residents aged 50+ fulfilling various health-related functions including social contact, friendship, support and information. The grant will help produce a bimonthly newsletter of health and general articles with details of local social and fitness groups, circulated by post, email, libraries, GP surgeries and other groups for older people.

Arts and Minds £4,000 - Supporting positive mental health and wellbeing through creativity, with an aim to increase resident engagement in programmes such as the twice monthly creative cafe, weekly choir and pottery workshops.

The Voluntary Network £5,000 – provides very low-cost community transport and befriending service. The grant will help provide Dial A Ride transport, a community car service, recruit new volunteer drivers for the South Cambridgeshire area and a referrals only befriending scheme to help build friendships and support networks.

REACH Community £5,000 - a charity that tackles poverty and recognises that debt, low/no income and homelessness can have a devastating effect. The grant will help provide an outreach adviser to various villages in and around Haverhill.

Disability Huntingdon £6,289 - providing advice, information and advocacy services for people of all ages with disabilities, including children, carers and older people, through outreach where possible.

Royston & District Community Transport £7,000 - providing a very low cost, door to door, demand responsive, transport service to residents of South Cambridgeshire, who for reasons of age or infirmity or social isolation cannot use or have no access to public transport.

Citizens Advice £100,000 - provides free advice to meet the needs of everyone who lives, works, or studies in Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire, with general information, advice and advocacy on rights and responsibilities in areas including debt, benefits, employment, housing, legal and family matters.

The grants are given at the start of each new financial year and the Council makes a pledge to continue that support for the next three years, subject to satisfactory progress reports.

Cabinet–Parish Liaison meeting will focus on transport

All Parish Councils have been invited to a Parish–Cabinet Liaison meeting on 5 June which will focus entirely on transport. The Mayor Dr Nik Johnson will be in attendance, as will a representative from the GCP. There will be updates on bus services, results from the Making Connections consultation and progress on Greenways.

Homes for refugees to increase Council House stock

The Council has been awarded funding to provide 10 additional homes for refugees. This

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is on top of the funding for 30 homes that was announced in December, with funding totalling just over £6m. This, together with Council borrowing, will provide 36 homes for refugees including people from Ukraine, and an additional 4 homes for families from Afghanistan who are currently living in 'bridging hotels'. Under the terms of the funding, the properties will be initially used to house refugees. However, when they are no longer needed for this purpose, the properties will become Council Houses. The longer-term legacy of this project will therefore be an increase in social housing within the District.

Warm Hubs evaluation report published

Over the winter the council commissioned Cambridgeshire ACRE to establish and run Warm Hubs. 25 Warm Hubs ran across South Cambridgeshire, with more than 3,000 visits recorded up to the start of March. Some will now evolve into Community Wellbeing Hubs, offering more services. Cambridgeshire ACRE have just published an Evaluation Report on the project, giving extensive insight into the difference Warm Hubs have made throughout the winter. There is also a shorter infographic-based version.

https://9367003.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/9367003/Warm_Hubs_Evaluation_Summary.pdf?utm_campaign=Warm%20Hubs&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=255065756&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--4-H4KJh0WqnHwjZTAcqiRBC0op2_OCU9VK8GbOcSvj3s7n7eV4-Ttrhc8WshtahlJA7zujGKNd5YnG0mtJy-ZOjmrw&utm_content=255065756&utm_source=hs_email

https://9367003.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/9367003/Warm_Hubs_Evaluation_Report.pdf?utm_campaign=Warm%20Hubs&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=255065756&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9FNKpYXMBuJOEpiwTYBV9vosz4GVULoJvC4J9uHsm-I9EsliOYMazCfArxT7mJKRt6QHnhvNtbFLI-xR3zBSCJvtaYng&utm_content=255065756&utm_source=hs_email

Planning Delegations

Recent meetings here:

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/2765/delegation-meeting-minutes-18th-april-2023.pdf>

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/2748/delegation-meeting-minutes-28th-march-2023.pdf>

Cambridgeshire County Report

No Mow May

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Cambridgeshire County Council will again be supporting bees, butterflies and biodiversity by taking part in 'No Mow May' this month (May).

The council's Highways Maintenance team will pause mowing road verges during May to allow plants like daisies, dandelions, selfheal and clover a chance to thrive.

Letting wildflowers and plants grow freely will provide much needed nectar for pollinators and allow other plants and wildlife to grow and flourish.

'No Mow May' is run by Plantlife, whose mission is to secure a world rich in wild plants and fungi. The organisation encourages garden owners and green space managers to lock up their lawnmower and liberate their lawn for the entire month.

More than 700 species of wildflowers grow on road verges in the UK according to Plantlife – this is almost 45% of the total wildflower species found across the country.

Road safety is a priority for Cambridgeshire County Council, grass cutting will continue in areas where necessary such as junctions or bends. Road signage will also remain clearly visible.

Representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council previously attended a workshop and worked closely with Plantlife to develop its current grass cutting protocol around the highways and verge management policy to support biodiversity. These changes to the way roadside verges are maintained help support wildflowers, bees and plant species to thrive.

Cambridgeshire County Council is committed to tackling climate change and improving the environment having declared both climate and nature emergencies in 2019.

For more information about the 'No Mow May' campaign, visit: <https://www.plantlife.org.uk>.

Flood Resilience

Two Flood Resilience Days to provide advice and support to community flood groups and anyone interested in flooding are being run by Cambridgeshire County Council.

They are being hosted by Cambridgeshire County Council, offering expert advice to households and businesses in the area which have previously experienced flooding or had near misses. A special 'Floodmobile' vehicle, which contains samples of more than 50 practical flood protection measures, will also be on site for visitors to explore.

The events will be attended by Fola Ogunyoye, director of TJAY Consultancy Ltd who has more than 30 years' of expertise in providing flood risk, water and environmental management consultancy services, and Mary Long-Dhonau, a flood resilience campaigner who has spent 20 years supporting communities at risk of flooding.

Staff members from the council's flood risk team will be there on the day to support with any area/site specific queries. Staff from the Environment Agency would also be present on the day to answer any area/site specific queries and talk about the work they do in the areas.

The Flood Resilience Days are part of the Community Flood Action Programme (CFAP), which was set up in April 2021 by Cambridgeshire County Council following severe flooding in December 2020 and the increasing risk of flooding posed by climate change. Since then,

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council officers have worked with communities to develop and train flood groups and build local resilience.

The dates and locations for the events are as follows:

- Saturday, 13 May, 10am-4pm – Houghton Mill, Mill Street, Houghton, Huntingdon, PE28 2AZ. The events are free to attend and do not require prior booking.

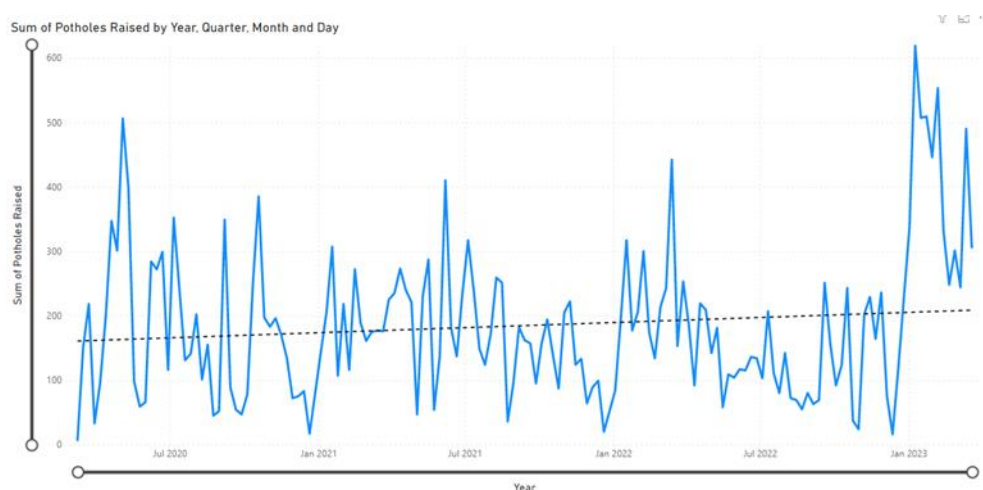
Further information on flooding, including how to report an incident, can be found on the council's website at: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water>.

Residents can check their flood risk by using the online flood maps to check whether they're at risk of flooding at <https://www.gov.uk/check-flooding>

Potholes: Current Status & Solutions

Increased pothole crews. We normally have 2 dragon patchers and ~4 traditional crews.

- We're currently at 8 traditional crews + 3 dragon patchers. From April 17th we have 2 more dragons starting.
- This should help reduce the backlog of ordered potholes and start to be proactive.
- April - Commenced South Area Parishes adjacent to City Area and within City on main roads; commuter and radial routes.
- Late May – Planned patching programme (Delay in start to enable programme to be built up to maximise resource use and secure / mobilise required resources).
- Grip cutting commencing this year should help reduce the deterioration of road edges due to water damage
- We are starting a new sampling process for identifying milestone issues. We will be taking a random sample of repairs and judging their quality as a barometer of all repairs.



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May 7th 2023