

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

Comprising Barton, Coton, Comberton, Grantchester, Harlton,
Harston, Haslingfield, Hauxton, and South Trumpington

District Councillors' Monthly Report – July 2023

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns relating to SCDC services, please contact us using the details below. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues etc.

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Cost of living information

Visit <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/> for information on: where to turn for advice; benefits, money and debt advice; help with energy and water bills; help for parents and families; help with food and health costs; help with phone bills; help with making your home warmer; Age UK handyperson service and; support if you are in distress.

Mobile Food Hub

A new Mobile Food Hub, funded by the Council and run by not-for-profit organisation, Hope CIC, is being launched to further support communities during the cost-of-living crisis. Fresh produce and essential items – some of which will be free and others at below retail price – will be brought directly to villages around South Cambridgeshire to help people with rising food prices. It is the first service of its kind in the district.

The Mobile Food Hub will visit Willingham, Papworth, Linton, Fulbourn, Orchard Park and Duxford, weekly. The villages have been selected based on Census deprivation data, mapped against where current foodbanks and food hubs operate from.

Any resident struggling with increasing costs, including those who live outside of these villages, can access this Mobile Food Hub by turning up on the day. No vouchers or referrals are needed. The van will be easily identifiable via the Mobile Food Hub logo and the Council is encouraging any resident who feels they may benefit from it, whether once or regularly, to make full use of the service.

If you would like to know more or how to volunteer or donate, please visit:

<https://hopeagainst.org/hope-cic-mobile-food-hub>

Cambridgeshire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme 2023

Children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals can access a holiday scheme for up to 64 hours over the summer. The County Council have registered 145 participating schemes, who are offering enriching experiences, a daily meal and physical activity to over 3,000 children and young people. Ukrainian and other refugee families are also eligible to attend as well as families struggling financially.

Details are available at: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/support-with-the-cost-of-living/holiday-activities-and-food-programme/haf-provider-directory>

Comberton and Grantchester Community Hubs

Visit a safe and friendly environment to enjoy free refreshments and social activities, obtain information and advice, and share the company of others. Local Community Hubs include:

- Comberton Baptist Church, Green End, Comberton, Cambridge, CB23 7DY.
Opening times: Monday, 3pm – 5 pm
- Grantchester Communal Hall, Tabrum Close, Grantchester, Cambridge, CB3 9NW
Opening time: Friday, 10am – 12pm

Information on other venues can be found at

<https://www.cambsacres.org.uk/projects/cambridgeshire-community-hubs-network/>

Upcoming EWR events

Following the May announcement from EWR Co. confirming the route of the new East West Railway through this area, several engagement sessions are planned. These include:

- Cambridge Belfry Hotel, Back Lane, Cambourne, CB23 6BW
Tuesday 11th July, 2 pm – 8 pm
- Graduate Cambridge, Granta Place, Mill Lane, CB2 1RT
Monday 17th July, 2 pm – 8 pm

Design work that will affect how great the impacts of the railway are on our area is currently ongoing, including the heights of embankments and viaducts, whether roads and public rights of way remain open, and measures to mitigate the visual and other impacts. These meetings are a chance to continue to let EWR Co. know about your concerns as well as to push for improvements and benefits to village communities, especially those impacted who are unlikely to benefit directly from using the railway line.

More information on the announcement and events is available at: [East West Rail | Route Update Announcement](#).

Haslingfield Greenway – should it go through Grantchester?

A consultation has been launched to focus on the new designs for the Grantchester section of the Haslingfield Greenway. Please share your views to help decide whether the Greenway should go through Grantchester. If you have an opinion on this, please take part.

The consultation runs until midday Friday 28th July 2023.

The documents and online survey are available at:

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/gcp-haslingfield-greenway-2023>.

SCDC grants supporting physical activity

The Council is offering grants worth more than £22,000 to help encourage residents to stay fit and healthy. These include:

- Grants of up to £2,000 (total of £13,000) aimed at supporting residents with chronic health problems that will be available to groups and organisations who provide physical activity programmes for people with health conditions such as Parkinson's, diabetes, or dementia.
- Grants of up to £1,000 (total of £9,000) for sports centres to restart fitness classes that may have stopped during Covid.

Please visit <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/grants/> to apply from July 2023.

The Council is also developing a **free**, 12-week physical activity programme for adults with a BMI of 25 plus, called Exercise4Fun. Once people attend their first class, they also get a 90-day free pass to use at their local leisure centre. This has been made possible with funds from the Public Health 'Healthy Weight' grant from Cambridgeshire County Council.

Homes Upgrade Grants

Cambridgeshire has been awarded £11.5 million over two years to improve energy efficiency in homes which are not on mains gas. More information, including eligibility criteria, is available at: <https://www.actiononenergy.cambs.org/>

River Mel restoration work

A joint initiative between the Wild Trout Trust, Cambridge Water, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Melbourn Parish Council has worked to restore the riverbed of the River Mel, a small chalk stream that supports brown trout and water voles, as well as water crowfoot and starwort. Kingfishers occasionally use the river too.

The river has become degraded through low flows, over-shading, and pressure from people in recent years. The River Mel Restoration Group (RMRG) has carried out a great deal of improvement and restoration work during the last decade but in places have found it challenging to maintain all that they have done.

Following scrub and bramble removal in late winter when birds were not nesting to open-up the river, recent work under the supervision of the Wild Trout Trust in Melbourn has seen the careful restoration of the riverbed using a blend of gravel and chalk. The bed now smoothly rises and falls, helping the river to flow at different rates - which increases the range of habitats.

Cambridge Water's PEBBLE Fund, which was created to encourage and enhance biodiversity in the local environment, funded the purchase of approximately 200 tonnes of gravel. Melbourn Parish Council also provided a generous grant for the work. South Cambridgeshire District Council's Awarded Watercourses team provided equipment, such as excavators and trailers, and staff, to place the mix of stone sensitively along the riverbed. In particular, the use of the Council's trailer allowed the gravel to be brought to site as and when required – avoiding the need for it to be stockpiled at Melbourn Recreation Ground. This also kept large lorries away from local schools.

More information is available at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/teamwork-to-restore-the-river-mel/>