

# DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

## LONGSTANTON WARD

COVERING LONGSTANTON, NORTHSTOWE, OAKINGTON & WESTWICK

APRIL 2022

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### HOMES FOR UKRAINE LOCAL FACEBOOK GROUP

We have set up a local Homes for Ukraine Longstanton, Oakington and Westwick and Northstowe group to connect people wanting to offer accommodation or other support to refugees arriving in our communities

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/949660319048515/?tsid=0.9309156706487934&source=result>

There is now updated information on the SCDC website for individuals and communities supporting refugees arriving from Ukraine, including sources of mental health support, information on benefits, housing, education and support with finding employment.

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/community.../support-for-ukraine/>

They will also be sending out an e-newsletter with updates. The e-newsletter will likely be sent once per week initially. To sign up email: [duty.communities@scams.gov.uk](mailto:duty.communities@scams.gov.uk)

This email can also be used to contact the council with any general questions or enquiries about supporting refugees from Ukraine.

SCDC will be carrying out DBS and accommodation checks for prospective hosts. Officers have had to set up all these new processes very quickly and still with limited guidance from central government, so adjustments and changes are still being made.

For enquiries about DBS checks please email [dbs.scams@scams.gov.uk](mailto:dbs.scams@scams.gov.uk)

### PROPOSED 5G MAST REFUSAL OF APPLICATION

Proposed 5G Mast- refusal of application for prior approval. The planning authority has refused the application for prior approval for a 5G mast on the boundary of Longstanton and Northstowe. The applicants now have the option of appealing to the Secretary of State or submitting a full planning application.

The planning notice stated that:

*The siting and appearance of the mast would cause a substantial adverse effect on the character of the area, which is a prominent multimodal gateway between the settlements of Longstanton and Northstowe. The submitted analysis of alternative sites is incomplete and therefore, suggests a reasonable probability that the technical requirements of the mast could be met in a less sensitive location. The proposed development therefore conflicts with Policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018, Policies NS/2, NS/12 and NS/22 of the Northstowe Area Action Plan 2007 and the National Planning Policy Framework.*

Full details can be found by visiting [www.greatercambridgeplanning.org](http://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org) and searching for 22/00199/PRIOR

#### LONGSTANTON BROOK BEHIND PRENTICE CLOSE

Our South Cambs watercourses officer has been out to view these and see that two trees have fallen down after the recent storms. Normally this would be with the landowners to deal with but as there are quite a few branches in the water, SCDC will send some people down to tidy up and deal with the trees - this will be done in the next couple of weeks. One of the trees is large and the main trunk may have to be left there until at least Autumn to allow for a heavy excavator into the field to remove it if necessary. However overall, the watercourse is flowing normally.

#### STREETLIGHT ON OVER ROAD

Streetlight on Over Road, at the junction of Stevensons Road in Longstanton:

Unfortunately this streetlight is not working. We're working on a solution to get it fixed but unfortunately it's not straightforward.

Whilst Over Road itself is adopted highways, the streetlight itself was installed without permission by the developer, Cofton Limited, who did the infrastructure for this part of Home Farm. As you may be aware they went into administration and their assets were taken over by Taylor Wimpey. Therefore the County Council will not fix something that is not considered their asset. Similarly Taylor Wimpey do not consider it to be land they own (rightly, to be fair) and does not form part of their legal agreement, they merely bought the land parcel.

Taylor Wimpey have offered to remove the streetlight entirely although they note that this would technically be illegal as it's not their asset. We don't believe this is a good solution for us locally.

We are now pursuing the adoption of this streetlight by the County Council team and it's currently with one of the managers. We will be pursuing this to try get this streetlight adopted but unfortunately, it's not a simple matter of getting a contractor to come and fix the light.

#### CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC FROM TILIA HOMES SITE IN COTTENHAM

We have written to the site agent for the new construction site in Cottenham regarding the routing of HCV traffic. Unfortunately, as we reported before, no condition had been placed on the outline planning application for traffic routing (outline planning for this site was given in 2017, before we were elected. I do not believe Oakington Parish Council was a consultee). We were unable to influence this at

the reserved matters planning stage. The site agent seems amenable in response to our request that traffic be routed via the B1049 and is liaising with the site manager and contractors. We will continue to follow up on this.

## DISTRICT WIDE NEWS

### BIN COLLECTIONS

Covid is still making it very challenging to provide all bin collections. As we write over 40 of the workforce of 150 are away. Despite this it is the council's intention to continue the green bin collection but if your bin is not collected at the normal time, please leave it out and we will be picking it up as soon as we can. The teams have been arranging extra weekend catch up collections.

Collection dates will of course be changed over the Easter period so please do check the SCDC website for details of updated collection dates.

### EXTRA GRANTS FOR LOCAL BUSINESS

Businesses in South Cambridgeshire which have been adversely affected by the pandemic, but unable to access COVID-19 support linked to their business rates, may be eligible for the latest financial support.

South Cambridgeshire District Council is now welcoming applications for its discretionary COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF).

The Government funding is to provide additional business rates relief to support rate-paying businesses affected by the pandemic between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. It is for businesses which weren't eligible for previous support linked to business rates, who can prove they have been adversely affected by the pandemic and have been unable to adequately adapt to that impact.

Eligibility criteria will apply, and the scheme will not cover ratepayers who were eligible for Extended Retail Discount (covering Retail, Hospitality and Leisure), those who were eligible for Nursery Discount, or businesses where the premises was unoccupied. Premises that were temporarily closed due to government advice on COVID-19 may still apply.

Full details and eligibility criteria, along with an application form, can be found here.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/CARF>

### COUNCIL TAX REBATE SCHEME.

The government's council tax rebate scheme goes live on 1st April. FAQs will be on the district council website. It is aimed at homes in council tax bands A-D. The amount of £150 is not repayable and will not show up on your Council Tax bill.

### ZERO CARBON AWARD

South Cambridgeshire District Council has been recognised for its work to tackle climate change, with a Silver accolade at the 2022 Public Sector Transformation Awards. The Council's Green to our Core programme is supported by its Zero Carbon Strategy and Doubling Nature Strategy. Highlights of the Council's approach include Greening South Cambridgeshire Hall with a £1.8M energy efficiency retrofit to include a ground source heat pump, solar carport, upgraded lighting and other elements. We were one of the first Councils to adopt a fully electric refuse collection vehicle with more on the way, and we are developing a solar farm to power the lorries. We've upgraded 1,800 streetlights with low energy bulbs and awarded £314,415 to 51 different community groups to support carbon reduction projects including setting up E-Bike schemes, installing infra-red heating panels in community buildings, holding sustainable food festivals, tree planting, energy efficient lighting and waste reduction.

#### FITNESS AND WELLBEING GRANTS

South Cambridgeshire District Council is urging instructors to apply for up to £300 to lead fitness and wellbeing activities in their communities. Anyone who leads an existing group or who wants to set up a new initiative in the district, such as leading a walking group in their local park or running a weekly yoga class in a village hall, could be eligible for the small grant. Providers running multiple groups can also apply to fund multiple programmes. Activities could range from walking football/rugby/netball to chair-based exercise classes, diabetes walking groups, yoga for the over 60s, baby yoga classes or more. The grant, which is funded by Cambridgeshire County Council, is to help deliver physical activity programmes provided by the District Council in partnership with Living Sport. It is designed to cover costs such as venue hire for up to six weeks, with new participants being entitled to four free sessions. Once the free sessions are complete, participants would be expected to begin paying a small fee to continue participation, meaning that the initiative should become a sustainable source of income for the instructor.

#### BETTER CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

The Councils are urging residents and community groups to use a new personalised advice service which will identify free tools and funding to tackle local problems and create safer communities in South Cambridgeshire. Residents and community groups can complete a short online form outlining the initiative they want to set up or the problem they want to solve, and Council staff will offer tailored solutions. More on [www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)

#### ZERO CARBON COMMUNITIES' GRANTS

South Cambridgeshire's community groups can now bid for a share of more than £120,000 from the District Council's popular Zero Carbon Communities Grant scheme. The scheme has so far provided £310,000 to 51 grassroots projects that work to tackle climate change in South Cambridgeshire. The deadline to apply for the latest round of grants is Wednesday 1 June 2022. Full eligibility criteria and ideas for projects are available at [www.scambs.gov.uk/zerocarbongrant](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/zerocarbongrant)

The money for Zero Carbon Communities grants comes from business rates from renewable energy sites, like solar farms, in South Cambridgeshire that the Council retains and earmarks for use in green initiatives like this.

## COUNCILS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND KEY GOVERNMENT FUNDED ORGANISATIONS

If you have a problem or concern do not worry too much about who can solve it just ask the question and we will endeavour to signpost to the right person. The organisational structure of Cambridgeshire is complex, but it is important to identify where responsibility lies.

<p><b>County Council</b></p> <p>Responsibilities: Education, Transport, Highways, Heritage, Social care, Libraries, Trading standards, Waste management, Maintaining their estate.</p> <p>Some of these services are shared between Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council but any concerns should be directed to the county council.</p>
<p><b>District Council</b></p> <p>Responsibilities: Council tax payments and benefits, Household bin collections, Housing and housing benefits, Council leisure facilities, Environmental health, Residential planning.</p>
<p><b>Parish/ Town Council</b></p> <p>Responsibilities: Looking after community buildings, Open spaces, Allotments, Play Areas, Bus shelters.</p>
<p><b>Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)</b></p> <p>'The local delivery body for a City Deal with central Government worth up to £500 million over 15 years, to vital improvements in infrastructure (decarbonising transport), supporting and accelerating the creation of 44,000 new jobs, 33,500 new homes and 420 additional apprenticeships.'</p> <p>Partnership between Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, University of Cambridge.</p>
<p><b>The Combined Authority, Cambridge and Peterborough, our elected Mayor</b></p> <p>'A combined authority (CA) is a legal body set up using national legislation that enables a group of two or more councils to collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries.'</p> <p>What our mayor does – Business support, skills, housing, transport, environment, international, digital connectivity, resilience, research, and strategy. New homes.</p>
<p><b>Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridge, and Peterborough</b></p> <p>To support and challenge the Chief Constable to provide effective and efficient policing services for the area.</p>
<p><b>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority</b></p> <p>The Fire Authority is the governing body responsible for delivering a fire and rescue service to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It is made up of Cambridgeshire County Councillors and Peterborough City Councillors.</p>

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

**Monthly email newsletter** - with updates on local news as well as wider district issues which will impact us all. To sign up please go to: [https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/email\\_signup\\_longstanton](https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/email_signup_longstanton)

(Note to help us manage GDPR it is easier for us to host from the LibDems webpage, but we absolutely promise this link will NOT subscribe you to LibDem news)

For all the latest news & updates so far please go to: [https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/longstanton\\_news](https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/longstanton_news)

For those on social media we have a highly active Facebook group covering the whole ward here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2066298150052161/>

### Contact Details

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about these, or any other matters.

Alex Malyon and Sarah Cheung Johnson

District Councillors for Longstanton, Oakington & Westwick and Northstowe

Firouz Thompson, County Councillor for Longstanton, Oakington & Westwick, Northstowe & Over

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