

CLLR FIROUZ THOMPSON

AT THE COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Schools across the county have received top marks for promoting and encouraging pupils to walk, scoot or cycle to school through the Modeshift STARS travel planning scheme that Cambridgeshire County Council is signed up to.

In addition to the 37 schools receiving awards this summer, over 70 schools in Cambridgeshire are signed up to the free national accreditation scheme. Those taking part develop a school travel plan using an online portal to encourage more of their students and staff to use sustainable methods of transport to get to school. Schools receive advice and help from the county's Road Safety Education team.

In the most recent round of accreditation, participating schools have been recognised for their efforts with the highest awards available. Barnabas Oley CofE Primary in Great Gransden holds the Platinum and is one of just 66 schools across England to reach this level. Godmanchester Community Academy received national Gold, and **Hatton Park Primary achieved Silver**. Many more schools gained Bronze travel plans this year, reflecting the excellent work done by the dedicated travel champions across the county and the growth of the STARS scheme in Cambridgeshire.

OFSTED Inspection

Ofsted Inspection of Oakington CofE Primary School took place on 26 to 27 September 2023.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Major planning applications update

The decision from the Secretary of State on the Sunnica solar farm application has been delayed. Instead of the expected announcement date of 28 September, the new date is now 7 December.

How do you recycle your household plastics?

To be in with the chance of winning a £50 voucher, take the Pledge2Recycle survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QBCK2XL> and share your thoughts. The survey is being conducted by RECOUP, the UK's leading independent authority and trusted voice on plastics resource efficiency and recycling. Learn more about how you can better recycle your household waste with Pledge2Recycle at <https://pledge2recycle.co.uk>

Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023 fund

Applications are now open for the Sustainable Farming Incentive. The SFI pays farmers for taking actions that support food production, farm productivity and resilience, whilst protecting the environment. More information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-application-dates-for-sustainable-farming-incentive-2023>

Help to insulate your home

If your home has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D to G, and if you are in council tax band A-D (in England) you may qualify for cheaper (or even free) insulation.

The government has launched a £1 billion scheme to help some families insulate their homes. Families in lower council tax bands with less energy-efficient homes will be offered upgrades such as roof, loft or cavity wall insulation.

You can use an online checker for the scheme to find out if you are eligible. The tool will ask a series of questions – including how you heat your home, whether your home has solid or cavity walls, and if you are receiving any benefits. You can be a homeowner, landlord or tenant (either renting privately or from a housing association). If you're a tenant, speak to your landlord before you apply. You'll need their permission before any insulation can be installed. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme>

A separate online checker has also been launched for the Home Upgrade Grant, which will help people in off-gas-grid homes with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D to G. The grant provides energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating to households in England. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-home-upgrade-grant>

If you use the online checkers you will then be referred to either your energy supplier, for support from the Energy Company Obligation programme and Great British Insulation Scheme, or your council for the Home Upgrade Grant.

### **Flood action conference**

Community flood groups, local authorities from across the Great Ouse catchment and surrounding areas, and industry representatives came together on Thursday 21 September for Cambridgeshire County Council's second flood action conference.

Speaking from the conference, Councillor Lorna Dupre recorded a short video about how the council is preparing for climate change, including the importance of protecting our communities from flooding, and the role community flood groups can play:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QanX6Cx5kKE&ab\\_channel=CambridgeshireCountyCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QanX6Cx5kKE&ab_channel=CambridgeshireCountyCouncil)

### **Smart street lamps**

Cambridgeshire is one of six areas to be granted funding to test smart street lamps that can house EV charging hubs and boost wireless coverage including 5G. The County Council has been awarded £220,000 to install 'smart poles' on which to host various smart city infrastructure. Open Radio Access Network Cambridgeshire County Council has also been awarded £6,523,645, plus £2,699,740 of commercial funding—a total funding amount of £9,223,385—to trial new mobile technology to improve mobile connectivity in busy locations where many people are trying to use mobile devices at the same time.

## HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

### Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)

At its Board meeting on 28 September, the Greater Cambridge Partnership decided to stop the further development of the Sustainable Travel Zone (STZ) proposals as part of the Making Connections scheme.

The members discussed the results of last year's consultation, the evidence gathered through the 24,000 responses, the amended proposals from officers and the feedback from the GCP Joint Assembly.

They collectively decided that while the aims of Making Connections to make travelling in and around Cambridge simpler and faster by saving time and money, would have eased congestion, and offered better, fairer, and greener travel choices, the STZ is not able to progress to Full Business Case due to a lack of political consensus.

Officers will now focus on other areas of the City Access programme looking at issues such as resident parking, road hierarchy and freight consolidation. This is in addition to the other infrastructure projects which include: 150km of Greenways, innovative busway schemes from Waterbeach to Cambridge and Cambourne to Cambridge as well as the significant improvements to Milton Road and Newmarket Road.

The debate can be watched again by visiting the [GCP YouTube channel](#).

### Free vehicle checks

A series of free vehicle checking events is being organised around the county throughout October, in support of the national campaign for safer vehicles.

Members of the public are invited to attend a free vehicle check session, where they will be taught how to conduct a simple check on their own vehicle and spot potentially dangerous problems. The check consists of examining tyre condition and tread depth, ensuring correctly working external lights and correct washer fluid levels. To assist members of the public, a free top-up of screen wash will be offered to every participating vehicle, as well as free resources to help with subsequent checking. The events are being delivered by the Vision Zero Road Safety Partnership, of which Cambridgeshire County Council is an active member. The partnership aims to reduce the number of road traffic collisions across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and for zero deaths on the county's roads by 2040.

More information on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CambsRoadSafety](https://www.facebook.com/CambsRoadSafety)

### LEDs in street lights

A programme to replace the lighting in the County Council's street lights with LEDs is hoped to repay itself over six to eight years and reducing the council's energy consumption.

### Roadworks and repairs

The A141 Fenland Way in Chatteris has been resurfaced, with works now completed after starting in August. As part of the council's pledge to create a greener Cambridgeshire, materials used in the project helped to reduce the impact on the environment—in this case cutting carbon emissions by approximately 9.5 tonnes.

The resurfacing of Fenland Way is just one of four major projects under way across the county. Work on the A141 Warboys Bypass is due to finish this month. The last two projects will be in South Cambridgeshire (A10 at Milton) from October to December, and East Cambridgeshire (A1101 Bates Drove in Littleport) in March 2024.

### Pavement parking

The Chair of the Highways and Transport committee at Cambridgeshire County Council is calling for pavement parking action from the Department for Transport.

Cllr Alex Beckett has written to the Department for Transport (DfT) asking for an update on what the current plans are for any changes in legislation and an estimated timescale.

In November 2020, the DfT ran a consultation asking whether a change in existing parking legislation should occur. The County Council responded and said it would like to see a ban on pavement parking being put in place, outside of London, with a new process for exempting areas from the ban without using the current Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process.

Cllr Beckett said: "Parking on the pavement is a persistent problem and an ongoing concern for Cambridgeshire residents. It causes safety issues for everyone; it damages our pavements and prevents access for pedestrians and cyclists. There are many areas across our network where we would want to prevent pavement parking, particularly where a lack of enforcement is abused by anti-social drivers.

"Currently, we must make a TRO, which is expensive and time-consuming. We responded to this consultation almost three years ago, so I have written to the Rt. Hon. Mark Harper MP to ask for an update as we have not seen any action or changes." Districts with Civil Parking Enforcement can enforce against inconsiderate parking. It is likely that civil parking enforcement will soon be in place everywhere in Cambridgeshire except East Cambridgeshire.

### **Cambridgeshire Matters Newsletter**

Cambridgeshire Matters is Cambridgeshire County Council's monthly newsletter which aims to share good news, highlights and updates from across Cambridgeshire to help our network of district, city and community members stay informed.

Find out about the great work that is taking place to support everyone in the county.

[Cambridgeshire Matters - September 2023 \(govdelivery.com\)](https://govdelivery.com)

## Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The long-awaited revision of the Combined Authority's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough was vetoed at the September meeting of the Combined Authority Board.

Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald, leader of Peterborough City Council, exercised his right of veto to scupper the plan—apparently to the complete surprise of his own council Chief Executive, and without speaking in the meeting to explain why. The Plan had already been delayed from the July meeting of the Board, when Cllr Fitzgerald had threatened to veto it.

After the September meeting, Cllr Fitzgerald suggested that his vote had something to do with Combined Authority plans to force congestion charging and low traffic neighbourhoods onto Peterborough. However, this would be impossible even if anyone wished to, as Peterborough City Council is the highways authority for the city and thus responsible for any such decisions.

Meanwhile, the Board decided to approve the extension of 51 bus service contracts to March 2025, and of the Ting 'demand responsive transport' contract in Huntingdonshire to March 2024. These 51 services include the 5A Longstanton-Swavesey. Services recommended for further review include the 15 Over-St Ives.

The Board also agreed to commission a review by an independent auditor of the bus franchising assessment—a step forward towards the aim of improving bus services across Cambridgeshire.

## MEETINGS ATTENDED and COMMUNITY WORK 4 September to 3 October 2023

### Local meetings:

Northstowe Early Years meeting (5 Sept), Northstowe Delivery Group (7 Sept), Oakington & Westwick Parish Council meeting (11 Sept), Heritage meeting (14 Sept), Over Day Centre Opening Evening (14 Sept), Homes England and CCC meeting onsite at Education Campus (19 Sept), Northstowe Early Years (20 Sept), B1050 Cycleway (21 Sept), Northstowe Town Council (26 Sept), NHS/SCDC/CPHT Northstowe meeting (28 Sept), SARW Comms meeting (29 Sept), Cambridgeshire Music/Northstowe Arts (3 Oct).

### Council meetings:

Member briefing - Peat Soil Affected Roads (4 Sept), Highways meeting with Assistant Director (6 Sept), Cambridgeshire Music (8 Sept), Northstowe Networkers meeting (13 Sept), COSMIC Workshop - Understanding Cambridgeshire Skills (14 Sept), Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy Action Plan Workshop (COSMIC & Strategy, Resources and Performance) (14 Sept), National Highways A14 corridor (15 Sept), Cambridgeshire Music Hub Board meeting (22 Sept), Member briefing - Estimating Demand For Education Provision Arising From New Housing Developments (28 Sept), Cambridgeshire Music/Think Communities (2/10)

### Community work:

Community Centre Celebrations (30 Sept)

Parish/Town Council monthly reports, Column write ups within Northstowe News, Longstanton Life (currently on hold) and Oakington & Westwick Journal, Over News is now started back up as an online magazine, Northstowe Town Council Market Working Group – promoting on social media and volunteering, Northstowe Foodies.

### Private case work:

Most Councillors will have private case work that they are dealing with, details of which cannot be shared due to GDPR – current themes are Bar Hill Asylum Seekers, Homelessness, Early Years, ASB, Bullying, Youth, Pot-holes.

## WARD NEWS

### HIGHWAYS

#### New Local Team

Local Highways Officer: Neal Stephens

Local Highways Officer: Aaron Boddington

#### Quarterly Highways meetings

Dates currently in the diary are **Friday 6 October 2023** and Friday 5 January 2024.

#### South Access Road West (SARW)

Hopefully you will all have experienced the drive/cycle/walk of the new road since it has been opened on Friday 29 September. There are still outstanding items to be completed:

- The Wilson's Road bridleway diversion order is in place, but it cannot be completed until the S38/S278 agreement for the dedication of the new Bridleway route and opening of the Wilsons bridge infrastructure is in place. The documentation will also transfer the freehold title of land to CCC. On 24 August, I was informed that Homes England will look to put a Letter of Undertaking in place to maintain the PRoW in advance of the s38 agreement being completed, as the agreement may take a while. This Letter of Undertaking has allowed the road to open, but CCC continue to get the S38 agreement signed with Homes England and the new third party
- Two arrows on the B1050 leading to the new roundabout have been temporarily spray painted, they will need to be burnt off in the near future.

#### County Council agrees way ahead for A14 & Northstowe archaeological finds display

Cambridgeshire County Council has decided a way forward to display archaeological finds from recent digs at Northstowe and the new A14 construction, after a project funded by National Highways and Homes England was put into jeopardy through contractor administration.

A dedicated Heritage Centre for Northstowe and Longstanton, on land leased to the County Council by Homes England, and which aimed to feature finds from both major archaeological digs for Northstowe, the new A14 construction and archive of Longstanton and District Heritage Society, was halted in March after the County Council's main contractor – IsoSpaces - was placed into administration. Since then, the County Council has been working with partners to ensure this setback won't stop the exhibits from being displayed to local people as intended.

Options considered including finding a new contractor, at an estimated cost of £550k, stopping the project altogether and return the leased space, or look at delivering the project in a whole different way.

Having considered these options, particularly the additional costs required if the construction were to continue, the Council has decided to deliver the project in a different way by finding alternative venues to deliver an exhibition and will be considering different accessible venues in parts of the county linked to the areas where the artefacts may have originated. Specific display equipment, which has already been developed for the artefacts, will be used once the venues are identified.

Partners at National Highways and Homes England who have been jointly funding the project remain keen to see the exhibition delivered.

Cllr Lorna Dupre, Chair of the Environment and Green Investment Committee at Cambridgeshire County Council said: "I am delighted that we are taking positive action to agree to deliver this project in a different way, against the odds, to ensure these finds are still visible for the people of Cambridgeshire. "While we were put in this position because the contractor has gone into administration, it is to the great credit to officers from the County Council and our partners that we are now on course to find somewhere else for these exhibits to be displayed. "We are keen to make sure residents throughout Cambridgeshire, but in particular

the local community, school children as well as visitors to our county will be able to see the exhibits and learn about some of the fascinating archaeology of our area.”

#### **LONGSTANTON Incl. B1050 Surface Treatments**

All white lines on School Lane and Hatton’s Road have now been painted.

#### **NORTHSTOWE Education Campus**

As you will be aware work started on site to build the new sixth form, primary school and nursery building and extend NSC in August. These works are progressing and Homes England have put in barriers between the cycle lanes and the road to keep pupils safe from cycling and hopefully encourage more pupils to cycle rather than being driven to school from Longstanton and Northstowe. I attended site on Monday 2 October to observe the traffic flow at drop off time with the new road opening.

The new Northstowe Primary School on this campus, have held a drop in sessions on Monday 2 October for reception children who will be starting in September 2024, they plan to attend the Northstowe Forum on 4 October and hold further drop in sessions after October half term.

Nursery places will be tendered via the county council, current places are for 78 places and opening is likely to be either Sept 2024 or Jan 2025 depending on building progress.

Website for Primary School: <https://northstowe.education/wow-projects/northstowe-primary-school/>

Website for Sixth Form: <https://sixthform.northstowesc.org/>

#### **LONGSTANTON**

- Highways – please refer to the Highways document which will be discussed on 6 October.

#### **NORTHSTOWE**

- UKPN works that were due to close Pathfinder Way for 5 days w/c 11 October, will not be going ahead within this month, it seems that UKPN had not acquired permission from L&Q and had not put in TTRO for the diversion of the B1050 lights. These works are now being questioned and no future date has been discussed.

#### **OAKINGTON AND WESTWICK**

- Transport to Impington Village College for September 2024 – I understand from a letter from a resident that only 2 pupils will not be on the bus and must make their own way to school, the resident has written to myself and Anthony Browne MP for us to consider the local policy and make it fairer. I am awaiting details from the Education team to respond to the resident.
- Little Flames nursery has opened its doors and the take up is still small, if you are able to share their services with friends/family – please do so.
- The fence between Little Flames and the school has been reported by the Head Teacher to be broken, I am liaising with the county team to look to repair.

#### **OVER**

- Highways – please refer to the Highways document which will be discussed on 6 October.



## 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>

## CONTACT DETAILS

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the above, or any other matters.

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

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For those on social media we have highly active Facebook groups:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2066298150052161/> - Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe

<https://www.facebook.com/libdems3rdMay18> - Over & Willingham