

LONGSTANTON WARD DISTRICT COUNCELLOR REPORT FEBRUARY 2026

LONGSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL (16TH FEB 2026)

OAKINGTON & WESTWICK PARISH COUNCIL (9TH FEB 2026)

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL (24TH FEB 2026)

CLLR NATALIE WARREN-GREEN

2026 launched with pace and thank you all for being so communicative this past month. My case work across the ward has included Local Plan discussions Oakington, Longstanton and Northstowe, supporting heritage repair at St Michaels church Longstanton, liaison with sustainability and environment groups related to cross ward planning, water, and active travel. I have been working with officers at SCDC on the plans for the permanent community centre and potential plans for the opening of first shop in Northstowe, and understanding the timeframe for decision making about the bids for the first parcel of faith land. The health and wellbeing community has included me in their discussions about ramping up activity until the Northstowe GP surgery is launched with the town developments and I look forward to sharing more about these as they evolve.

The updates below from SCDC focus largely on planning and economic development in the Greater Cambridge area. It is clear that the government is determined to press ahead with an agenda for significant growth and to tackle, head-on, the obstacles to it such as water shortages and transportation issues, They have set up the Cambridge Growth Company (CGC) and possibly a "DevCo" to facilitate the growth agenda and I have commented below on a meeting held by SCDC's Scrutiny Committee with the senior staff of CGC. Parish Councils have the opportunity to speak with the CGC's Chair, Peter Freeman on 4th February at SCDC offices, and I hope they will take the opportunity to convey any hopes and concerns to him then.

SCDC breaks record for new Council houses

SCDC has just confirmed that the council has completed 113 new Council homes since 1 April 2025 - the highest annual number achieved surpassing the previous year's record of 91 homes and with over two months of the financial year still to go. Many of these new homes feature renewable energy systems and electric vehicle (EV) charging points.

Low Income Dashboard

SCDC has released a new dashboard which will give a better understanding of the demographics of low-income households in South Cambridgeshire. The dashboard has been built by SCDC officers using anonymised data from the Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) software platform which uses benefits data held by the Council. The main aim of the LIFT software is to identify low-income households and to encourage them to claim benefits to which they are entitled, something it has been doing very successfully for some months. It is hoped that the information contained within this new publicly available dashboard will provide insights and support decision-making across the district. You are invited to try the system and it can be found here: [Low-Income Family Tracker \(LIFT\) Data Dashboard - South Cambs District Council](#). You will see that you can select data by district or by specific wards. If you have questions or comments, please contact data@scambs.gov.uk

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Consultation

The government continues to press ahead with its policy of abolishing county and district councils and combining their functions within larger unitary authorities. A seven week public consultation has been promised for February (though no details yet) and in advance of that, South Cambs District, Cambridge City and East Cambridgeshire District councils have published a video and a news release which set out the position of the three councils, which is to support option B, i.e. two unitary councils, one for North Cambs/Peterborough and another for Cambridge City/South Cambridgeshire. The intention of this content is to engage local people with information about why the three councils believe this is the best option for the area but the public and stakeholders will be reminded that there are other options on the table.

You can watch the video [here](#) and read the news release [here](#). SCDC's [website section on LGR](#) will be updated when we receive new information from Government.

Cambridge Growth Company (CGC)

SCDC's Scrutiny and Overview Committee recently had a (very long) meeting with Peter Freeman and the staff of the Cambridge Growth Company. It is clear that there are very big plans for our area and the feedback from me is that it is still unclear as to how the various bodies (CPCA, GCP, councils and planners) will work together/alongside the CGC. I note that parish councils are soon to have a similar meeting on 4th February and I hope our Parish Councils and Town Council are able to send representatives to this.

Local Plan update - Growth in South Cambs

The councils' annual look at how well its 2018 Local Plans are being delivered – through an Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge Shared Planning - confirms that despite challenges around water and other infrastructure, in the period from April 2024 to March 2025, permission for over 10,000 new homes was granted. 2,265 new homes - of which 700 were affordable homes - and over 60,000 square metres of new employment space - were constructed across Greater Cambridge. I'm sure that Mr Freeman will read this with interest.

Youth Award for Planning

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service Youth Engagement Service (YES) has been honoured with the prestigious Thornton Education Trust (TET) Inspire Future Generations Award for Best Local Authority in Youth Engagement.

The award recognises the service's outstanding commitment to empowering children and young people to shape the future of their communities.

Between 2017 and 2025, through its youth engagement initiatives the YES team has delivered significant and lasting impact:

- Engaged more than 2,050 children and young people in placemaking activities
- Engaged over 770 parents and guardians
- Enabled young voices to influence the design of more than 1,400 new homes
- Ensured youth perspectives shaped 256,000m² of employment space
- Delivered 40 workshops with local primary and secondary schools
- Provided 42 work experience placements within the planning service
- Supported five public art projects involving children and young people

This national recognition marks an important milestone for the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service and reinforces the value of embedding young people's voices in planning and placemaking.

Electric Bin Lorries Powered by Solar Energy

Construction has begun on a pioneering renewable energy solar park to power electric bin lorries for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

The £6.1 million scheme is jointly funded by Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

It will see the installation of a one-megawatt solar system paired with a battery that can store enough energy to keep the waste collection operations running smoothly. This will feed into 36 electric vehicle charging points for use by electric bin lorries and other vehicles at the councils' Waterbeach Depot. The aim is to help future-proof waste and recycling collections locally – a vital frontline service for residents.

The Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network will enable the councils to significantly reduce carbon emissions from their waste fleets. These carbon emissions are currently among the highest contributors to the councils' overall emissions.

By 2027, the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste service between the two councils will have 18 electric bin lorries in operation, supported by clean, renewable energy generated on-site. There are currently four electric bin lorries in use but there is not enough capacity in the local electrical grid to power more without this work. As well as powering electric bin lorries, the project is expected to supply 59% of the depot's total energy needs from renewable sources and achieve over 40% biodiversity net gain through measures such as wildflower planting and new hedgerows to create a haven for local wildlife.

Community Infrastructure Levy Plans

SCDC and Cambridge City Councils are currently considering proposals for the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) strategy for securing contributions from developers for improvements to transport and other infrastructure to accommodate growth. A CIL would also see a proportion of the funds collected - up to 25% where a Neighbourhood Plan is in place - being made available to local communities. Alongside these the councils are also considering the adoption of updated guidance on Section 106 Planning Obligations that accompany major planning application decisions.

Local Authority Elections May 2026

I am pleased to report that elections for SCDC seats will be going ahead as normal on 7th May 2026. I will be seeking re-election and, in the meantime, will not be bringing political matters to local council meetings but I will, naturally, be canvassing across the community.

Postal Voters

If residents previously had a postal vote and wish to continue to have one, they should **reapply now** if they have not already done so. www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote . If you have any questions or wish to cancel your postal vote, please email elections@scambs.gov.uk

Our Member of Parliament

ian.sollom.MP@parliament.uk Ian is active across the constituency, and continues to hold regular surgeries which we will keep you informed of for residents. His office staff answer emails as soon as practically possible. He welcomes correspondence from residents requiring his assistance.

COUNCILS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND 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>County Council</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>District Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Council tax payments and benefits, Household bin collections, Housing and housing benefits, Council leisure facilities, Environmental health, Residential planning.</p>
<p>Parish/ Town Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Looking after community buildings, Open spaces, Allotments, Play Areas, Bus shelters.</p>
<p>Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)</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.'

Partnership between Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, University of Cambridge.

The Combined Authority, Cambridge and Peterborough, our elected Mayor

'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.'

What our mayor does – Business support, skills, housing, transport, environment, international, digital connectivity, resilience, research, and strategy. New homes.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridge and Peterborough

To support and challenge the Chief Constable to provide effective and efficient policing services for the area.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

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.

CONTACT DETAILS

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

Cllr Natalie Warren-Green for Longstanton Ward including Longstanton, Northstowe, and Oakington & Westwick

Email: cllr.warrengreen@scambbs.gov.uk

For those on social media we have a highly active Facebook group:

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

District Councillor's Report Feb 9th 2026 - Cllr Tom Bygott

Government considers creating a Development Corporation

The Government has set out plans for accelerated growth in and around Cambridge, including significant investment in infrastructure, housing and employment land. As part of this agenda, Ministers have indicated that a Development Corporation could be established to take responsibility for planning and delivery in key growth areas, with powers potentially exercised either locally or directly by central government.

A Development Corporation appointed by central government was the vehicle by which Milton Keynes was developed. That was a very different situation because Milton Keynes was largely a greenfield site albeit including some pre-existing villages. Whereas Cambridge is already a large and important city with more than 300,000 residents who would have their longstanding democratic control over planning powers taken away. Like most town planning ideas from the 1960s, the design of Milton Keynes is widely seen to have been a mistake.

At the SCDC Full Council in December, a proposal was brought forward calling on the Council to support the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation, rather than having key planning and development decisions made directly by central government.

With £4 million of Government funding proposed for Cambridge, we believe it is important that decisions about how our area develops are led locally. A Mayor—regardless of political party—is directly elected by residents and accountable to them, which provides local democratic oversight.

The current council leadership did not support this proposal. During the meeting, the Leader of the Council confirmed that her opposition was based on the identity of the current Mayor. As a result, the administration chose not to support a locally led approach, despite the alternative being greater decision-making from Westminster.

We believe that decisions affecting our communities should be made as close to residents as possible, by leaders who are democratically elected and accountable. We would like to see all parties put the interests of local residents first, rather than allowing national party politics to influence decisions about our area.

Support for Our Local Pubs and Small Businesses

Also at the last Full Council meeting, we brought forward a motion calling on the Council to support our small local businesses by backing the abolition of business rates for local pubs, high street shops and businesses across the hospitality sector. These businesses are central to our communities, providing jobs, social spaces and vital local services, yet many continue to face rising costs and financial pressure.

The motion was debated at length, during which the council's controlling group proposed amendments that would have introduced a new charge, known as a Commercial Land Levy (CLL). We were concerned that this would have replaced one tax burden with another, rather than delivering genuine relief for small businesses. As a result of these amendments, the motion was ultimately abandoned during the meeting.

Despite this outcome, my group wants to be clear that supporting our local pubs and small businesses remains a priority. We will continue discussions with the administration and will press for policies that provide meaningful, practical support for our pubs, high streets and hospitality venues.

I believe these businesses are the backbone of our local economy and should be helped to succeed, not faced with additional or substitute taxes. I will continue to stand up for them and oppose measures that would place further financial strain on small, locally run businesses.

Mobile Phone Coverage and the Planned Northstowe Mast

Mobile phone coverage remains uneven across parts of our ward, with Oakington - particularly the area around St Andrew's Church - being a well-known not-spot for some networks. Improving connectivity is important for everyday communication, home working and safety, and progress in this area is therefore welcome.

A new mobile phone mast is planned near the Longstanton Park & Ride site as part of wider infrastructure provision for Northstowe. Its primary role is to improve coverage and capacity within the town itself as the population grows. However, because of its location and orientation, the mast may also offer some incidental benefit to nearby areas. Some residents in Oakington might see a modest improvement in mobile signal once the mast becomes operational, particularly outdoors or on certain networks, but this is not guaranteed.

Modern mobile masts are carefully configured to serve particular areas, in this case Northstowe, and coverage can vary significantly depending on network, handset and whether reception is indoors or outdoors. For that reason, the real-world impact will only become clear once the mast is live.

At that point, feedback from Oakington residents will be helpful. Information about whether reception has improved, and on which networks, can help build a clearer picture of what further steps may be needed to address remaining gaps. This evidence can be valuable when engaging with mobile operators and infrastructure programmes about future improvements.

Local Plan consultation

During the recent consultation on the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan, which closed on Jan 30th, I requested that the proposed green separation between Northstowe and the villages of Oakington and Longstanton should be properly marked on the Local Plan maps to prevent ambiguity and the possibility that they could be further reduced in size in the future. I also submitted two objections where I believe the Local Plan, as drafted, to be unsound.

On employment land, I raised a soundness objection to the concentration of large logistics hubs along the A14 corridor in South Cambridgeshire. Our area already suffers from severe shortages of housing and labour. Adding further labour-intensive logistics uses here risks worsening traffic, increasing long-distance commuting, and placing additional strain on infrastructure and local communities. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are nationally important for research-led and innovation-based economic growth; directing large-scale logistics to this constrained area risks undermining that role. Logistics hubs can be built anywhere that has access to motorways and freight rail lines. Many other parts of the country need to create new jobs to prevent unemployment. We have the opposite problem, a labour shortage and a lack of housing to accommodate potentially up to 3,800 additional new workers.

At Cambridge East, the current airport site, the Plan requires a "contemporary approach to urban design" that "embraces modernity". This wording risks being interpreted as requiring all submitted plans to be Modernist in style. Modernist architecture and town planning were developed during the twentieth century by utopian architects such as Le Corbusier. He believed in raw concrete, high rise towers, the breakup of traditional street patterns, oversized buildings turning their back on the street with large blank walls and fast flowing traffic. Most of our cities are blighted by Modernist architecture, and many of our social problems, vandalism, graffiti, high crime rates and despair can be directly traced to Le Corbusier and the Modernist architectural programme.

While still the official ideology of the architectural and town planning professions, Modernism is now highly unpopular with the general public. Decades of experience show that coherent streets, well-defined public spaces, human-scale development and attractive buildings make for a better quality of life for residents. It is not the place of a Local Plan to enforce one particular architectural ideology, especially one whose mistakes are increasingly evident.

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