

LONGSTANTON WARD DISTRICT COUNCELLOR REPORT JANUARY 2023

LONGSTANTON, NORTHSTOWE, OAKINGTON & WESTWICK

CLLR NATALIE WARREN-GREEN

Since the Parish Council meetings in December, the Christmas break has meant that much of my November Report is still valid, and I am repeating some of the news from that to keep it current since the initiatives offer valuable help to our communities during the cost of living crisis, especially in the cold winter months. I hope you find these repeats of useful links useful.

New for this month:

LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

SCDC has just published an update about the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan for which work is still ongoing and an important draft plan consultation is due to be held in autumn 2023. In the meantime, recent work has shown that the additional projected growth is going to lead to a demand for more houses. The planning authorities have no choice but to plan to meet the demand. The government adopts a notorious 'carrot and stick' approach; local authorities that deliver the number of houses that the government demands continue to have local planning control, whereas those that do not, lose the ability to decide what is built and where. This was what happened prior to 2018, which resulted in hundreds of houses being built outside of agreed village limits.

As we have experienced in the Longstanton Ward, lack of water availability impacts on planning, which means that for the plan consideration is being taken about how best to transfer water across areas and where to build reservoirs in the Fens. These are medium to long-term solutions and the problem needs to be resolved more quickly than that. High-level discussions are therefore currently being held to determine how the current Local Plan house numbers can be delivered in South Cambs, given the potentially serious consequences for water supply.

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

We have been asked to post a reminder that the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (HIA) offer a range of grants to people with disabilities living in South Cambridgeshire, to help adapt homes. These government grants are aimed at people with disabilities and older people on low incomes or low-income benefits, which helps towards the costs of making changes to their home to allow them to continue living there safely and comfortably. More information is here: hia@cambshia.org.

PLATINUM JUBILEE VILLAGE HALL FUND

Village halls in England can now apply for grants to improve and modernise their facilities through the Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund. Grants are available from £7,500 to £75,000, and up to a maximum of 20 per cent of eligible project costs to support infrastructure improvements, the refurbishment of facilities, such as kitchens and toilets, and measures to improve energy efficiency. **Please Note: The application window is tight: it opened just before Christmas and will close on 20 January 2023.** <https://tinyurl.com/4hxr2ede>

WARM HUBS

There has been an expansion of [Warm Hubs](#) which are free cosy spaces which residents of all ages can visit to socialise, work, catch up with friends. This link lists the current hubs, Northstowe Hub having been launched on 4th January 2023.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL ZONE

'Making Connections' Consultation – Future bus services, more walking and cycling links, and a Cambridge City Access congestion charge

The consultation on the GCP's plans closed just before Christmas. The public response was very high, and it is going to take some months for the data to be analysed but let's hope that this feedback and analysis leads to a scheme that people can accept and the County Council can vote for.

Repeats for easy access:

COST OF LIVING

Cost of living help and Go Fund Me appeal

The Council has kick-started a scheme to help people cope, this winter, with the cost of living crisis and escalating fuel costs. It has provided £10,000 to supply free electric blankets and slow cookers to people who need them. This initial funding could see around 400 people supported and eligible people have already been identified and they will receive a letter soon advising them how to apply.

Even more could be done with donations from businesses and the public and SCDC has, this week, launched a fundraising page in order to help boost the fund for cost of living support, aiming to raise a further £10,000. The Go Fund Me page is part of a wide range of support worth almost £400,000 being put in place by SCDC to support residents through the coming winter.

The page can be found by clicking the following link <https://www.gofundme.com/f/scdccostofliving>

Community Chest Cost of Living support

SCDC's Community Chest fund provides grants to voluntary and community sector groups, charities

and public sector bodies wishing to further improve quality of life locally. Criteria have been expanded to allow bids that include contributions for any project that has a positive impact for communities related to the cost-of-living crisis. Parish Councils of any size can also now place grant bids. A ringfenced total sum of £20,000 has been made available for these new Community Chest grant applications, provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System, to ensure support is co-ordinated effectively and directed at those in need locally this winter.

UKRAINE

New hosts needed for Ukrainian guests

Our current batch of hosts have done a fantastic job of making Ukraine refugees feel welcome, but we know from our research that around 20% of them cannot continue after the initial six-month period that they signed-up for. We know that many guests have children who have settled into local schools, have found work and built friendships and it is important that we try to find alternative hosts in the same vicinity (or as close as possible to it) in which they have been living in the first six months. We are keen to find them alternative hosts close to where they have been living.

Our 'Spare Room' campaign is to encourage more local people to join our current Homes for Ukraine hosts. This is now appearing on our social media channels, on digital indoor and outdoor signage, in local Sky television ads and in the local press, such as a news item on the BBC Look East bulletin on Tuesday evening. Anyone who can offer help simply needs to text **ROOM** to **88802**.

Our messages on social media can be found at the top of our [Council Facebook page](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Please share and spread these messages so we can encourage more people to get in touch with us to explain what it is like to be a host and to see if it is a good fit for them. You can read more, and watch video stories from current hosts and guests, at www.scambs.gov.uk/support-for-ukraine-it-all-starts-with-a-spare-room

It would be appreciated for any help you are able to give us with spreading the word.



MY WARD ACTIVITY

I continue to balance my Council time between training sessions at SCDC, council meetings, and getting closer to understanding the concerns of the ward communities so that I can develop actionable insight. I have been to induction briefings about SCDC Financial Management, the Local Plan, Housing, Planning, Waste and Environment. I have joined the Combined Authority Skills Committee, and I have also become better informed about the current position with EWR developments, and what can be done to raise the agenda of Groundwater to resolve issues in the Ward.

To address issues about bin collections across the ward when it snowed in December, I found myself working hard on social media to keep residents updated about when their bins will be collected and the process! The Facebook pages Oaky Folk, Longstanton, Oakington & Northstowe, and Northstowe Life, have been invaluable for the purpose of keeping many people informed.

Longstanton

- Resident case related to planning, situational damage, and noise issues
- Agreeing with SCDC officers and the Chair of LEGG a meeting date of 26 January to address Ground Water concerns
- Enjoying the warmth of community spirit on the Green when the Christmas tree lights were switched on!

Northstowe

- Attendance at the December Delivery Group meeting:
 - The Pavilion – work has begun on site. Scheduled for completion in Summer 2023.
 - The Interim Community Building – The intention is to submit a planning application for either February or March 2023 Committee.
 - The permanent Community Building – Working towards developing a full technical design to consult with the community in early 2023.
 - The Enterprise Zone – survey responses continue to be assessed.
 - The Phase 2 Civic Hub – Preferred developer likely to be announced in January.
- Attendance at the Town Council. Confirmation that NTC will not be involved in any potential discussions on EWR if the Minister visits the area as Northstowe is out of scope for a station.
- Enjoying the high energy of the Festival of Lights.

Oakington & Westwick

- Attending TAG meeting to hear concerns about EWR in particular and subsequently being informed by the Parish Council that should a visit by the Minister be arranged by SCDC they are willing to partake in a meeting
- Visiting Chess Café, invited to discuss their activities including storytelling, book club and chess!
- Following up on numerous bin concerns and liaising with SCDC to alert officers of issues with collections

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>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> <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>The Combined Authority, Cambridge and Peterborough, our elected Mayor</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>Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridge and Peterborough</p> <p>To support and challenge the Chief Constable to provide effective and efficient policing services for the area.</p>
<p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority</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.

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

Email: cllr.warrengreen@scambs.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 Jan 9th 2022 - Cllr Tom Bygott

Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund

Village halls in England can now apply for grants to improve and modernise their facilities through the Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Fund. Village halls interested in applying for this national scheme can request grants from £7,500 to £75,000, and up to a maximum of 20 per cent of eligible project costs. Capital grants will be allocated to support infrastructure improvements, the refurbishment of facilities, such as kitchens and toilets, and measures to improve energy efficiency. The application window opened just before Christmas and will close on 20 January 2023. It is anticipated by the Government that the successful applicants will be able to draw on the funding from April 2023.

More information is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/news/village-halls-to-see-major-revamp-as-platinum-jubilee-fund-opens

Consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a document produced by central government as guidance for local authorities in making planning decisions. Its most recent version was published last July: www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

On 22 December, the Government launched a consultation to seek views on its latest proposed changes to the NPPF. Some of the suggested changes would strengthen the position of neighbourhood plans and also allow local authorities to impose time limits for development consent where developers are involved in 'lank banking' - the practice of increasing the value of their companies by seeking ever more new permissions while not building or delaying the progress on existing permissions. It also contains some suggestions from the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission

www.gov.uk/government/groups/building-better-building-beautiful-commission

The consultation closes on 2nd March: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy

New funding for defibrillators

On 29 December, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) announced £1 million of funding to increase the number of automated external defibrillators in communities – providing an estimated 1,000 new defibrillators in community spaces in England. DHSC will invest the funding through an independent partner who will manage grant applications from bidding organisations. Those selected will be asked to match the funding they receive fully or partially, potentially doubling the number of new defibrillators created by the fund. Applicants will also be asked to demonstrate that defibrillators will be placed in areas where they are most needed. Examples could include town halls, community centres, local shops, post offices and local parks to ensure that defibrillators are evenly spread throughout communities and easily accessible if someone is experiencing cardiac arrest. The independent partner managing the fund will be announced in due course. The fund is non-recurring, meaning DHSC will provide funding for the purchase of defibrillators, but upkeep will be funded by organisations or individuals who receive them. State-funded schools in England that do not already have a defibrillator will receive one from the Department for Education by the end of 2022/23 academic year.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/number-of-defibrillators-to-be-increased-with-new-funding>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/every-school-will-have-a-life-saving-defibrillator-by-2023>

Cllr Tom Bygott

cllr.bygott@scambs.gov.uk

07765 475 513