

LONGSTANTON WARD DISTRICT COUNCELLOR REPORT OCTOBER 2024

LONGSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL (7TH OCT 2024)

OAKINGTON & WESTWICK PARISH COUNCIL (14TH OCT 2024)

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL (22ND OCT 2024)

CLLR NATALIE WARREN-GREEN

Winter Fuel Payments and Pension Credit

One of the first significant things the government has done since the election is to issue new rules on winter fuel payments which means that only those in receipt of Pension Tax Credits can receive the extra annual winter payment. Pension Credit is worth, on average, £3,900 per year and, apart from the Winter Fuel payment, it also unlocks additional support such as help with Council Tax and a free TV licence for those over 75. The rules on backdating claims mean it is possible for individuals to apply for Pension Credit and have their claim backdated by up to three months (if they were entitled to claim during that time). This means that the latest date to apply for Pension Credit and still qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment is 21 December 2024.

There are many people who are entitled to Pension Tax Credits but do not claim it, so SCDC is working to identify these people and to remind them that they have the opportunity to apply. If you know of anyone who may be in this position, please contact me and I will connect them to the right SCDC officers.

The Department for Work and Pensions has produced a toolkit to support councils to ensure older people understand how they can get Pension Credit.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>

Household Support Fund

Related to the issue mentioned above, it's good to report that the government has announced an extension to the Household Support Fund to help councils support struggling households with bills and essential costs. The £421 million extension gives certainty to SCDC and other councils in England over the winter months (the funding is in place until April 2025) as they work to help those struggling with the cost of energy, food and water. Pensioners and others struggling to heat their homes or afford other essential items over the colder months should contact their council to see what support may be available to them (as above, I can direct them, if necessary). Details on the latest scheme will be communicated more widely in the coming weeks.

Helping older people stay in their homes for longer in South Cambridgeshire

A total of £345,000 has been pledged to [Mobile Warden Schemes](#) in South Cambridgeshire for the next three years to help more elderly people stay living in their own homes for longer.

The pledge comes after the District Council partnered with [Rose Regeneration](#) to undertake an in-depth review of local schemes to understand more about how much it costs to run them and help them become more sustainable in the future. The resulting funding package is affordable and fair for all and will target the funds where they are needed the most. The District Council has traditionally had an annual budget of £21,000 to support schemes but invested around £300,000 to try and increase the coverage of the service in South Cambridgeshire communities by supporting new schemes to develop. The review is important as it has taken into consideration predicted high growth in over 65-year-olds over the next 20 years and recognises that with age comes increased risk of deteriorating health, loneliness, and feelings of isolation. Councillors have backed a new three-year funding scheme that starts from April 2025.

Local Climate Action Conference 2024

SCDC is holding its second Local Climate Action Conference 2024. It is being held from 11-3pm on Tuesday 19 November at The Hub, High Street, Cambourne, CB23 6GW. The event is open to the public and hopes to welcome parish councils, community groups, charities and interested individuals – anyone working to meet the challenges of the climate and nature emergencies. If you wish to attend, please RSVP by Tuesday 5 November 2024 here: <https://tinyurl.com/587j635n6>

Combined Authority Bus Consultation

As we are all aware, our villages suffer from poor bus services, so I make no apology for repeating this information. The Combined Authority is currently running a consultation on proposals for a new framework of services which will run until 20 November 2024. I encourage residents to give the authority their views. Details can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/3m75ysdn>

SCDC is now a White Ribbon organisation

I am delighted to report that SCDC has become White Ribbon Accredited in recognition of its commitment to preventing harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls. It is committed to working towards ending violence against women by becoming accredited and aligning with White Ribbon UK, the leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women. As part of our work towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation, SCDC introduced and strengthened policies and practices to support staff and residents of all genders who experience domestic abuse. This work was praised by assessors as inspiring and exemplary. As part of our White Ribbon action plan, Ambassadors and Champions will continue to raise awareness of the White Ribbon promise to “never use, excuse or remain silent about men’s violence against women”. SCDC has a strong group of male colleagues across numerous departments, White Ribbon Ambassadors, who have pledged to advocate positive attitudes and behaviour within the organisation. Ambassadors and Champions (who are women who work to support the work of White Ribbon) will raise awareness and support our local community groups and partners in their own work to end men’s violence against women.

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> <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@scambsgov.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 Oct 14th 2024 - Cllr Tom Bygott

Fight to save the Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital project

The Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital was one of two Cambridge hospitals pledged to be built locally by the previous government, the other being the Cambridge Children's Hospital. The plan for this hospital was for it to bring together clinical and research expertise, allowing for the earlier detection of cancer, more precise treatment and, ultimately, to save more lives. About half the population will receive a cancer diagnosis at some point in their lives and it is one of the top causes of death in the UK, alongside cardiovascular disease and dementia.

Cambridge had been chosen as the site of the new national hospital because of the proximity of two other world leading research hospitals, Addenbrooke's and Royal Papworth, and the cluster of biotech companies and research institutes located nearby.

The current government has been considering whether to scrap plans for the new hospital. A petition has been set up to save the hospital, which has so far received nearly 1,000 signatures. If you would like to sign this petition, it can be found at:

<https://chnng.it/Yrbwh6z9sT>

Civil Parking Enforcement update

We are pleased to see that Civil Parking Enforcement appears to be working in South Cambridgeshire. As in the table below, Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have mostly been recovered – mainly issued to vehicles parked on single or double yellow lines.

Total PCNs issued	Number of PCNs paid to date	Recovery Rate %	Total amount Paid to date	Number of PCNs outstanding	%	PCNs cancelled	Cancellations as a %
555	439	79%	£16,090.00	56	10%	60	11%

It is encouraging that firm action is being taken on uncivil parking. Existing parking restrictions in South Cambs are there for a reason and protect the safety of pedestrians and road users. Everyone is being encouraged to check the signs where they plan to park to prevent being issued with a fine and to protect everybody's safety.

Where parking restrictions already exist, enforcement is important to prevent the growth of lawlessness and the unfairness of most people obeying the law and a small minority choosing not to do so. Our area was one of the last in the country to request the authority to undertake civil parking enforcement. However, we are fortunate to live in an area where free on-street parking is still widely available. The residents of many of our 105 villages have little or no access to public transport and driving is a necessity in these areas. I am opposed to excessive new levels of restrictions being applied.

Unfair level of road funding for South Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for funding roads, including repairs to potholes in our area. When the funding levels for roads in South Cambridgeshire is compared to other district level councils in the County, it is clear that South Cambs is getting a raw deal. We receive about half of what Cambridge City does for its roads in total, and we get about half per kilometre as Fenland does.

In order to stand up for our residents and fight for a better deal for South Cambs, my group proposed the following motion at the SCDC full council meeting on Thursday 3rd October:

“This Council requests the Leader of the Council to write to the Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council to express concern and dismay at how little has been spent on South Cambridgeshire's roads compared to other areas in Cambridgeshire.”

Unfortunately, this motion was hijacked by the ruling group who amended it to become a one A4 page political diatribe, praising their own political group and heaping criticism on their political enemies in the former administration at the County. I had to remind my fellow councillors that we have been elected to serve the needs of residents and stand up for our local community, we haven't been elected to score cheap political points and put the funding of our services at risk by making political attacks on other party groups and other tiers of government.

Councils ask residents to recycle their unused cables this International E-Waste Day

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service is working with Recycle Your Electricals to encourage Cambridgeshire residents to participate in The Great Cable Challenge. The challenge is a nationwide campaign aimed at tackling the millions of cables sitting idle across UK households. The initiative is part of this year's International E-Waste Day taking place on October 14. The aim is to give a second life to the valuable materials contained in cables, such as copper which can be recycled into new items such as wind turbines and new tech like mobile phones, laptops, tablets or smart watches.

The following is a selection of local venues hosting temporary indoor collection bins during October where you can drop off your cables or chargers during opening hours:

- Arbury Court Library
- Willingham Library
- Elsworth Village Shop
- Rock Road Library, Cambridge

In addition there are temporary outdoor banks at:

- Haslingfield Village Hall
- Fowlmere High Street, opposite The Chequers.

You can also recycle cables at permanent outdoor collection banks for small electrical items, plus at Curry's stores, all of which are listed on the locator at www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk

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