

A meeting of Croydon Parish Council was held on Wednesday 15th November 2023 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm.

Apologies: Cllr S Kindersley - car problem, (Mr Wheeler - apologies received on 16th)

Present: Mr Barnes, Ms Newland, Mr Sole, Mr Wenman, Mr Buchanan, Mrs Sole, the Clerk and Cllr Heather Williams.

Minutes: Minutes of the October meeting previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

Declarations of Interest: Mr Sole - Reading Room trustee.

Verbal Report - District Cllr Heather Williams

Cllr Williams reported that she is still experiencing difficulty with her emails, and the tech team has identified a code somewhere that should not be there. While this is being investigated, contact through her Council emails is "patchy."

The four-day week is still very much in the news. The Council has had Best Value measures placed on it by Government, and whilst this is not special measures it is something that happens to very few Councils. SCDC will have to report on a weekly basis, until the end of March 2024. An extraordinary meeting has been called and legal advice has been sought. Full Council was never given a vote on the inception of the four day week and there is a disparity between the four day week worked by blue and white collar workers. A lot of the officers have opted out as they are unable to get their work done in four days. An independent report was apparently "modified" by someone at South Cambs before being made available. There should not be a lowering of standards to get through the work in four days - quality is paramount.

Matters Arising and Village Issues:

Community reports - :

Pilates: There were six people at the Pilates session, which can be booked individually or en bloc. The sessions operate in line with school terms.

Act of Remembrance: Around 15-18 people congregated at the war memorial for the wreath laying on Sunday 12th November. A representative of the British Legion and our Parish Council chairman laid wreaths at the memorial during the short service.

London Luton Airport Flight Paths: The Clerk is still receiving reports of disturbance from the village due to the low flying aircraft. If you are troubled by the freight and passenger aircraft overflying, please continue to complain to - Noise.Enquiries@ltn.aero
Those registered with the Planning Inspectorate will have received an email advising the dates for the next hearings about the proposed massive expansion of Luton Airport. All the details including venues are in the letter from the Inspectors which can be downloaded from this link: [Hearings letter](#)

SpeedWatch and speeding - volunteers: Only two of the original volunteers have responded to the recent circular regarding continued interest in starting a SpeedWatch group. Clerk has not received any further replies. Mr Sole believes that a speed sign could be purchased without evidence of the need for one. Cllr Williams thought that in order to obtain County Council funding towards a sign, evidence would be needed. The Clerk will contact Highways to ascertain how to go about this, and whether it would this could be undertaken as an LHI.

Litter picker signs: Mr Buchanan reported that he will be meeting with the gentleman who previously supplied signs in the next couple of weeks, and would be able to report at the December meeting.

Lower Road: Council still has not received a report from either the Police or the Highways department, which are apparently required before any amendments to the signage or speed limit on the section of Lower Road where a fatal accident occurred.

LHI applications: Applications are now being made to the Local Highways Improvement Scheme, which is open until 12th January 2024. From the CCC web page:-

The County Council is keen to work with local communities to help deliver improvements to their highways and streets, giving local people a real influence over highway improvements within their community. Traffic calming, parking restrictions, speed limit changes and footway and pedestrian crossing improvements are some of the most common improvements and these pages provide detailed information on the improvements available and how these could be funded.

Council would like to either reduce the speed limit on the undulating stretch of Lower Road or erect some permanent bumpy road signs. The "accident" map on the County Council's page shows all accidents in Cambridgeshire from 2017 - 2021, so the fatal at Tadlow does not feature. Without the long-awaited reports, Council does not have any evidence with which to apply. There is also a 30mph road sign in the High Street which is obscured by a telegraph pole, and Council would like to re-site the sign. To apply for a LHI grant there is an 8 page form to complete and several criteria to meet.

Website issues: Sanders and Jay recently resolved the problem with the village website. A detailed explanation of the issues was sent to Council, along with the offer of a biannual maintenance contract, although there was no cost given. Council discussed the issues and the biannual contract. The Clerk has suggested that she speaks to her colleague, who is very much involved in the website, before any decisions are made. She also suggested that only the legally required parts of the website need to be maintained, and perhaps one page entitled "Local Information" which would cover everything else for the village. Mr Buchanan is not familiar with the website, but is happy to have a look at it for Council.

CCC - weed killing: Further to CCC's decision not to weedkill on the roads/kerbs and a visit from the road sweeper, I received the following information from my contact:-

The sweeper would have been from SCDC as they are responsible for sweeping the roads. The operators will not manually pull up any weeds that have not been removed through the actions of the brushes on the vehicle.

As per the message you received last month, CCC is no longer routinely spraying along the kerb lines. This means that weeds will be grow here but as they are predominantly annuals, most will die back over the winter months.

CCC will only remove weeds from the kerb line them if they are deemed to be dangerous i.e. a trip hazard or if they are affecting visibility at a junction. We do not have the resources to remove them on purely cosmetic grounds.

CCC is reviewing its policy because it did not contact any of the local Councils before taking the decision not to spray roadside weeds.

Hit and Run: There was a report of a hit and run accident at the junction of the High Street with Larkins Road/Croydon Hill on the evening of 26th October. The car which "ran" was not identified at the scene, but the registration has been obtained from local information and passed to the victim for them to take any action required.

Meetings calendar 2024: Suggested dates for meetings in the next year were circulated for Councillors' agreement. The December meeting will be held on the second Wednesday, as in previous years.

Follow up information

Gmail address: Clerk is waiting for notification that the last Councillor has created a gmail address.

Gamlingay Division Councillors Report - South Cambridgeshire District Council & Cambridgeshire County Council - November 2023

The Gamlingay Division comprises the Parishes of Abington Pigotts, Arrington, Barrington, Croydon, Gamlingay, Guilden Morden, Litlington, Hatley, Orwell, Shingay-cum-Wendy, Steeple Morden, Tadlow & Wimpole. This report is for all Division Parish Councils but please be aware that it will include items that may have little or no relevance to your particular Parish. Apologies in advance!

Next stage approval for Children's Hospital: Cambridge Children's Hospital, which will be the first specialist children's hospital for the East of England, has been given the green light to proceed to the final stage of its business case development. The hospital, which was awarded planning permission in March 2022, is being built on the Biomedical Campus, and will care for children and young people across the whole of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It will be the first hospital designed to truly

provide mental and physical health care together, delivered by staff who are trained in both. While the hospital will be built in Cambridge it will act as a central hub, working with services all over the East of England to provide care and support for children who may never visit the hospital itself.

Minister's attack on SCDC's Four-Day Week Trial: A pattern of bullying by Minister Lee Rowley on SCDC's Four Day Week trial has seen Mr Rowley now serving a 'Best Value Notice' on the council. Published data shows that since the trial started in January the Council expects to slash its agency cost for temporary workers who were needed to cover permanent roles that the Council could not previously fill - many of which are in planning where there is a national shortage.

Regular data published by the Council shows that performance has been mostly maintained or improved. The University of Cambridge found no areas of significant concern when independently assessing the initial three-month trial. Government issued Best Value Notices up to this point have been reserved for councils who have either dire financial issues or for matters like serious safeguarding failures.

Mr Rowley has ignored all invitations by Council Leader Bridget Smith to visit the council to learn more about the trial, its background and outcomes so far. Since January this year, the four-day week trial has:

- Seen the Council fill 14 out of 23 posts that were previously covered by agency staff - cutting costs to the taxpayer by hundreds of thousands of pounds
- Delivered a reduction in staff turnover by 36%
- Reduced sickness levels by one-third
- Seen staff motivation, mental and physical health boosted
- Led to fewer staff wanting to leave and therefore greater consistency in service delivery
- Reduced complaints
- Seen performance by the Council maintained - including in areas where national recruitment issues exist.

Mr Rowley has not thought his plan through. If the information he has requested from SCDC (on a weekly basis) shows a clear pattern of improvement with happier staff, better results for residents and enhanced savings to the taxpayer (as it has to date) then it will be impossible to stop all Councils taking the same steps - as a clear demonstration of Best Value as required by...the Government!

Corporate Peer Review of the District Council: This took place in the first week of November and indications are that the review will clearly state that the council is in a strong financial position and is a well-managed organisation with an enviable record of delivery - such as being the district with the highest number of visas issued under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The 4 Day Week is helping the council to retain and recruit planners needed to respond to the Government's own vision for this area in terms of growth.

Rail Station ticket office closures: Government has announced a welcome abandonment of this plan.

Healthwatch Primary Care access survey – please share: Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is launching a survey on 1st November 2023 to gather people's experiences of accessing Primary Care services, such as GP services. This survey, which will remain open until 17th December 2023, is being conducted independently by Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with the support of NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.

NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough understand how important local access to health services are, such as your GP Practice, and are keen to hear your experiences, feedback and thoughts on ways in which you currently access local GP services and how these could be improved.

<https://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/form/primary-care-access-survey>

Flooding – District and County Council: Storm Babet hit Cambridgeshire on 20 October, leaving some households with external or even internal flooding to their homes, or without flushing toilets, as well as seeing a number of roads closed. County Council highways officers have been working through the various incidents logged, and the Flood & Water team is pulling together an overall picture of events. If you were affected by flooding, and

have not yet reported it to the County Council, please do so, as it is really important to build up a full picture of what happened.

- You can report flood issues affecting your home or property at cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Flood_reporting (This is not the place to report flooding in an emergency.)
- You can report highways-related flooding (blocked road drains, sewers, gullies, for example) at highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

The District Council does not provide a sandbag service to residents but does have a limited supply of sandbags that can be delivered to domestic properties that are at imminent risk of flooding only, and not as a preventative measure days or hours in advance of potential flooding. This is aimed at our most vulnerable residents and only intended for people who have no friends, family or neighbours who can assist them fast enough or in advance. Bearing this in mind, residents requesting sandbags during normal office hours should call us on 01954 713 000 or email streets@scams.gov.uk - If it is outside of normal office hours and an emergency they can contact our out of hours number for Environmental Health Emergencies on 01253 501 055.

Supermarket vouchers continue: The supermarket voucher scheme will continue to operate for all eligible families in Cambridgeshire with Cambridgeshire County Council running the scheme until the February 2024 half term using the Household Support Fund from the Department for Work & Pensions and additional funding provided by the Council. Eligible families get a £15 voucher via email or text to be used at a choice of ten supermarkets. The voucher scheme has been a huge success since it was introduced and appreciated keenly by families struggling in the current financial climate. A survey revealed that over seventy per cent of families said the vouchers had helped them cope with the rising cost of living.

Care quality initiative: A new initiative to improve the quality of care and support for Cambridgeshire residents has been approved by the council's Adults and Health Committee and is to be launched by the County Council. The new initiative for the adult social care workforce, supported by investment of over £1M, seeks to address problems of recruitment and retention in the sector, support skills development, and drive up the quality of services.

The County Council already requires care providers with whom it contracts to pay the Real Living Wage. The Council will now also seek to embed the new approach to build skills in the workforce into future contracts with care providers. A high-quality Care Certificate will be offered by the Council at low cost to care providers and to care workers themselves.

Climate scorecard: Campaigning organisation Climate Emergency UK once again published a 'scorecard' for each council to measure how it was responding to climate change. As the methodology changes every year it is not possible to compare present against past scores. Cambridgeshire was ranked fifth out of all county councils on this year's scorecard, with a gold star for our work on decarbonising buildings and heating. We scored lower than average on biodiversity, and on waste reduction and food. This is unsurprising, given that Cambridgeshire is the most biodiversity-deprived county in the country, and that the Waterbeach waste facility is out of action while the council and its contractor Thalia seek to resolve compliance issues. <https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/scoring/county/>

County Council budget gap: Cambridgeshire County Council's estimated budget gap for 2024/25 has increased from a predicted £16M to more than £23M - largely due to increases in demand for services and inflationary pressure. Without action being taken this gap will grow, and is predicted to be more than £20M in the following year, and a further £19M and more the year after that. Cambridgeshire is not alone.

The Local Government Association currently reports that councils across the country face an 'inflationary storm' with a predicted £4Bn funding gap over the next two years. A report from the Council's Chief Executive says: "In 2023-24, pressures on our budget have arisen principally due to several very high-cost children's social care placements and a delay in receiving income from a newly constructed solar farm (which requires connection to the electricity grid). In addition, we are seeing that demand for bed-based care for older people is also rising, following a period of reduction in demand and then stability stretching back for some time, to the beginning of the pandemic."

The report also points to wider national and international issues which have an impact on the council's pressures—such as interest rates which the Bank of England has said are likely to remain above five per cent until 2026. This will affect all goods and services the council buys, the cost of borrowing, and pay award costs for council workers as well as for a large externally commissioned workforce which includes staff working in residential care for vulnerable adults and children.

The report highlights how all services in the council have been the subject of a comprehensive exercise to find efficiencies, alongside a number of specific reviews into particularly high cost areas such as home to school transport, children's social care placements, and high levels of historic adult social care debt. Proposals to set the Council's 2024/5 budget will be discussed by councillors in December before a period of scrutiny during January, including an opportunity for residents to comment on the plans.

Council Housing: It has been lovely to hear from local people how happy they or their family members are in the new council homes in Downing Gardens Gamlingay. The last 6 should be released before Christmas. All of the affordable housing on this site is for people with a local connection. Please register on HomeLink via the South Cambs website if you would like to bid for one of these homes.

Footpaths: We are aware that there have been times when the footpath through Downing Gardens has not been fully open. We have reported this to the County Council and also arranged for Morris Homes to be contacted. Please let us or the Parish Council know of any ongoing issues.

Green Grants for Small and Medium Sized Businesses: South Cambridgeshire District Council has teamed up with partners to launch an exciting 18-month project to help local businesses go green. The scheme aims to support local businesses reduce their carbon footprint, adopt more sustainable practices and reduce energy costs through provision of advice and grants from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The 18-month programme aims to support 223 small to medium businesses based in Cambridge, Huntingdon and South Cambridgeshire and will also deliver grant funding of up to £5,000 to 75 of these businesses to help them implement energy efficiency-related improvements. To apply go to:

<https://futurebusinesscentre.co.uk/programmes/green-business-programme/>

East West Rail: The National Audit Office has agreed to Cambridge Approaches' and local MP's requests to review the EWR business case - such as it is. Meanwhile horror stories about the cost and delivery of HS2 fill the papers and we are anxious that - whatever happens with East West Rail - that these are not repeated. You might well be asking why you should care about EWR. Gamlingay and surrounding villages will be majorly impacted by the consequences of the trainline e.g. a new town at Tempsford. You may ask - but there's no plan for a new Town at Tempsford? And that is true from a local Council perspective - but EWR has it firmly in its sights as you can see from the new route selection.

Ukraine: Gamlingay and many other South Cambs villages has been very welcoming to guests fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. Thus far the government has been making 'Thank You' payments to hosts who have offered to share their homes with our guests. However this money is due to expire once guests have been with us for 2 years. South Cambs has therefore written to the minister to ask if host payments will continue for those people who are either not able to return to the Ukraine or to move into private rental accommodation.

RAAC Building materials: 214 schools have now been identified nationally as having RAAC and 15 are yet to report. None are in Cambridgeshire.

SUSTRANS: SUSTRANS, more often known for promoting cycle ways, are involved in a project looking at accessibility of our footpaths and pavements nationally. Knowing how fed up people get about pavement parking in Gamlingay Division villages Bridget has asked them if they were lobbying government to make it illegal. They are, but she also learnt that pavement parking has been legislated against in London since 1974 and is soon to be in Scotland.

C2C Cambourne to Cambridge Busway: Just to clarify that delivery of C2C is on hold until the water issue that is stopping the development of Bourn Airfield progressing is resolved. The C2C busway is a requirement of the Bourn Airfield development which in turn is a key element of our local plan housing delivery, being in the region of 3,500 new homes. However, the Environment Agency has objected to the development with concerns over

water availability and the planning team is working through the possible options so that the EA objection can be lifted - but in any event this is bad news at a time when costs are only going up. (And indeed projects like the Foxton Park and Ride have already been 'paused').

Young People Engagement: South Cambs has been looking into how young people can be more involved in the council's work. We are very happy to arrange visits or for councillors to come and speak to and answer questions from schools, youth clubs etc. We are always pleased to take part - Bridget recalls speaking to a challenging group of Brownies some years ago!

Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023: 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>

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority: The Conservative Leader of Peterborough CC did not survive a Motion of no confidence with the result that the Authority now has leadership from Peterborough First supported by all the non-Conservative groups. This leaves the Combined Authority with only two Conservative Council Leaders on it. What this means for you and me we have yet to see; but it's an extraordinary development, politically.

Waste Recycling in Central Beds: From 1 November 2023, all visitors to Central Beds recycling centres (also known as HWRCs and tidy tips) will be asked to present a valid form of I.D. as proof of residency in Central Bedfordshire. This brings Central Bedfordshire Council in line with many of its neighbouring authorities and means that visitors to sites at Ampthill, Biggleswade, Leighton Buzzard and Thorn Turn (Houghton Regis) will need to bring along valid ID to gain entry to the tidy tip.

Community Chest Grants: A reminder of the funding available for community projects through the Community Chest Grant from South Cambs. As we approach winter there is funding available for cost-of-living related projects, of which over £17,000 remains! The fund can be used for start-up and capital costs and if any community group would like assistance in completing an application, they can email community.chest@scambs.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fund for Nature: The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fund for Nature is now open for applications. This small capital grants scheme offers awards of up to £5,000 for communities who wish to do more for nature where they live. Full details can be found at <https://www.cambscf.org.uk/fund-for-nature> The fund is enabled by monies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's £1m Doubling Nature Fund, which is being managed by Natural Cambridgeshire. The deadline for this first round of projects is 1st November, for projects due to start in Spring 2024. There will be a further call for projects next year. Applicants will need to show how their project will directly contribute to 'Doubling Nature' and make reference to objectives contained within Natural Cambridgeshire's 'Local Nature Recovery Toolkit'. Please do circulate this opportunity to your networks and within your own local community. Questions about the fund can be emailed to the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation at info@cambscf.org.uk or directly to Natural Cambridgeshire at Communities@naturalcambridgeshire.org.uk

Families urged to open a Tax-Free Childcare account: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is reminding families to open a Tax-Free Childcare account to save on their yearly childcare bills. Families can use their Tax-Free Childcare account to pay for any approved childcare including holiday clubs, breakfast and after school clubs, child minders and nurseries. The scheme provides working families, with children up to the age of 11, or 16 if their child has a disability, up to £2,000 a year per child or £4,000 a year if their child is disabled. For every £8 paid into a Tax-Free Childcare account, families automatically receive the government top up of £2. Families can save up to £500 every three months for each child or £1,000 if their child is disabled. Parents are encouraged to go to GOV.UK to register and start saving today. HMRC has produced a Tax-Free Childcare guide for parents, which explains the reasons and benefits for signing up to the scheme.

Your Councillors are always ready to help. Please do not hesitate to contact County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley on 01767 651982 or skindersley@hotmail.com or write to the Manor Barn, East Hatley, SG19 3JA District Councillor Bridget Smith (Gamlingay Ward, SCDC) is on 07729 836449 or Cllr.BridgetSmith@scambs.gov.uk

District Councillor's October Report - Cllr Heather Williams

Four-day working week discussed at Full Council:

At the Full Council meeting on Thursday 5 October, I submitted a motion that would have allowed all councillors a vote on the four-day week. Unfortunately, this was rejected by the administration - who then voted to refer the issue to Cabinet, and passed a motion to end the debate early before all could speak which I am very disappointed about.

I made very clear my opposition to this decision, which showed complete contempt for the majority of residents in South Cambridgeshire. Based on the average wage and contracted hours figures for full-time staff as mentioned during the meeting, £3.3 million will be spent in 12 months on salaries alone for hours not worked - and that's before some of the additional costs incurred by employing people.

By prematurely shutting down debate on the four-day week, we have been denied both the chance to vote and properly debate this important issue.

I am continuing to analyse the facts and figures and will continue to scrutinise the four-day week, which sees residents paying for five days' work but only getting four days' service.

Find your nearest pink bin to recycle electrical goods:

Bright pink bins for electrical waste have resulted in nine times more e-waste being collected for recycling since being introduced last year. Over 49 tonnes of small electrical appliances have been collected for recycling in the pink bins – instead of it all ending up in the black bin. The pink bins are suitable for most small electrical items which have a plug or battery – including phones, toys, kettles, toasters, and many more. Items which cannot be reused are then sent to specialist operators for recycling into new products.

We are encouraging everyone to recycle their old electrical goods – so please see the list below of our nearest pink bins or enter you can enter your postcode [here](#) to find your nearest pink bin.

- Melbourn Village Car Park (Melbourn, SG8 6DZ)
- Morrison's Car Park (Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6FY)

Cost of living support for residents

I appreciate that many are struggling financially at the moment and am pleased the Council is supporting people with this. Electric blankets, slow cookers, hot water bottles and warm clothes are being distributed to residents suffering from fuel poverty.

If you are struggling with the cost of living crisis and require support, or would like to support those who are, please visit the council's website: [Cost of living support - South Cambs District Council \(scambs.gov.uk\)](#). There is help out there so please do not suffer in silence. All information is dealt with in a confidential manner so please encourage people to reach out to myself or the council.

More Community Hubs (updated name for Warm Hubs) are being made available across Cambridgeshire thanks to funding of £200,000 from NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Community Hubs provide a warm, safe, welcoming environment for residents. Please see the list of local Community Hubs to us in South Cambridgeshire with addresses and opening times.

- **Caldecote Community Hub** - Caldecote Pavilion, Furlong Way, Highfields, Caldecote, Cambridge, CB23 7ZH. Opens: Tuesday, 9.30am - 3.30pm
- **Cambourne Community Hub** - Cambourne Community Centre, High Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6GW. Opens: Monday and Friday, 9.30am - 1pm
- **Comberton Community Hub** - Comberton Baptist Church, Green End, Comberton, Cambridge, CB23 7DY. Opens: Monday, 3pm - 5pm
- **Gamlingay Community Hubs** - Gamlingay Baptist Church's Back Room Cafe, Stocks Lane, Gamlingay, Sandy, SG19 3JR. Opens: Monday, 9.30am - 3pm and every third Sunday, 10am - 4pm.
- **Gamlingay Eco Hub Community Centre**, Stocks Lane, Gamlingay, Sandy, SG19 3JR. Opens: Monday - Wednesday, 9am - 4pm; Thursday - Friday 9am - 1pm; and Saturday, 10am - 12pm
- **(Melbourn) MACS Cozy Corner** - Vicarage Close Community Hall, Vicarage Close, Melbourn, Royston, SG8 6DY. Opens: Monday and Thursday, 12pm - 3pm
- **Meldreth Community Hub** - Meldreth Sheltered Housing Building, Elin Way, Meldreth, Royston, SG8 6LX. Opens: Tuesday and Thursday, 12pm - 3pm

Green Grants for Cambs businesses

The Council has teamed up with partner councils and business charity Allia to launch an 18-month project to help smaller local businesses go green. The project aims to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint, reduce energy costs and become more sustainable.

Applications are now open. If you are interested, please consider [applying online now](#). Thank you for reading my report. If I can be of any assistance, please do get in touch.

Cllr Heather Williams
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Correspondence

Electoral Register alterations: Circulated to Councillors for their information.

Highway Events: There were road closures locally for Remembrance Sunday parades in many of the larger villages. December may see road closures in larger villages and towns for Christmas lights' switch-on.

East-West Rail: Further to Cllr Kindersley report, The National Audit Office has agreed to Cambridge Approaches' and local MP's request to review the EWR business case - such as it is.

Reading Room: Mr Sole had declared an interest and did not contribute to this section of the proceedings. The Chair of the Trustees is requesting further funding for the wifi in the Reading Room and also for the new booking system that has been put in place.

- BT - £52.98 every month from May 2024
- Tectonic (Lemon Booking) £ 330.00 May 2024

Council would like to see proof of wifi usage for several months and also asked if a cheaper alternative than BT could be found, to enable a decision to be made. Mr Buchanan has agreed to liaise with the Chair of Trustees, with a view to assisting with best value for the wifi. Council discussed funding for this and agreed that a grant could be given, the amount of which is to be decided.

Delays in the Barton-Haslingfield area: Cambridgeshire County Council is advertising a [permanent traffic regulation order](#) (PR0981) for the Haslingfield Greenway. The proposals at the junction of Barton Road and Grantchester Road include:

- A signalised pedestrian/cycle crossing.
- Conversion of some sections of footway to cycle track.
- The introduction of road humps and speed tables.
- Changes to on-street parking restrictions.

Comments should be submitted to the County Council, as described in [the public notice](#), no later than 23 November 2023.

[Download the detailed design drawings \(PDF\).](#)

CPRE - value of farmland booklet: A comprehensive booklet on the use and misuse by Councils, solar farms and developers of both good and poorer quality land. This could be useful for planning applications in the future.

Thermal imaging: From the email received:- *Cambridge Carbon Footprint is once again delighted to offer to residents, and organisations across Cambridge and South Cambs the opportunity to borrow and learn how to use a thermal imaging camera, for free, to help create more cosy and efficient homes. Learn how to interpret thermal images, to discover draughts, gaps in insulation, heating problems, etc. Having this information is great for deciding on home improvements, and making fixes, both for homeowners and renters. Cameras cannot be borrowed unless on-line training on how to use them has been undertaken and completed..*

Four free training sessions will take place online from 7:00-8:30 pm on: [Wed 1 Nov](#), [Thu 14 Dec](#), [Mon 22 Jan](#), [Thu 29 Feb](#)

We only lend cameras to people already trained. Bookings for cameras will open on 1st Nov, after the training session. Free Loans of 14 cameras will start on Fri 3rd November, till early April:

Each loan: Fri pm to Mon am, or Mon pm to Fri am, from 14 volunteer camera hosts around South Cambs and Cambridge City. See Map.

More information, and Interviews with experts, volunteers and organisers can be organised on request. Contact Fran Sutton: fran@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org 07713841391 or Tom Bragg: tom@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org 01223 844291, 07990 548755

Local Climate Action conference: As COP28 re-focuses on climate issues globally, join them to celebrate the work of organisations in the District who are taking action on a local level.

- Free and open to the public - seats are limited, so sign up now!
- Doors open 09:15 for a 09:30 start.
- Light refreshments provided.
- Some parking onsite, and stop 'Lambs Lane' on the Citi 8 bus route from Cambridge city centre.

Guest speakers are:

- Helen Dye, Natural Cambridgeshire: 'Creating a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridge and Peterborough'.
- Malcolm Bird, Steeple Morden Parish Council: 'Community EV Charging'.
- Chris Parkin, Cambridgeshire County Council: 'Making Sure Communities Benefit from the Energy Transition'.
- Ashley Arbon, Ecologist: 'Tree Planting for Nature Recovery'.
- Alison Giles, Girton Parish Council: 'Girton's Local Nature Recovery Plan'.

The conference is taking place at Cottenham Village College, Lambs Lane CB24 8TA on Tuesday 28th November from 9.30am - 1.00pm

Landlord Incentive Scheme: From South Cambs District Council:-

Homes for Ukraine refugees are finding it increasingly difficult to secure their own independent accommodation as renting privately in South Cambridgeshire is expensive, and the market is very competitive. In response, South Cambridgeshire District Council has launched the Homes for Ukraine Landlord Incentive Scheme. Landlords who offer a minimum 6-month tenancy on a property in South Cambridgeshire to a Homes for Ukraine family will receive a financial incentive. Sign up now:

https://forms.microsoft.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Yr5uzntVNkShnHZ-yizUUR_M1KbWS3JBrj_q8hyWmkZUOExBRU04Q1A3TVBLV1MwMjROQ0lwOFpKRy4u&origin=QRCode

There is also a poster in the notice board which details the financial incentives available.

4 day week survey: Our MP Anthony Browne sent a survey asking for opinions on SCDC's four day week trial.

<https://www.anthonybrowne.org/four-day-week-survey>

Please complete and return, if you haven't already done so.

CCC Older Adults Social Inclusion Grants: From the CCC email:-

The Care Together team are pleased to announce that our new place-based 'OLDER ADULTS SOCIAL INCLUSION GRANTS' are now live!

All documents and the online application form can be found at:

[Care Together - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

Any queries should be directed to the Care together email address:-

Care.together@cambridgeshire.gov.uk to enable us to log all enquiries.

The closing date for applications is Saturday 23rd December 5pm

There are various grants for each district which can be seen on the relevant district Grant Offer documents.

You can apply for any number of the grants.

You must use the relevant application form (indicated under each grant offered) and indicate which grant/grants the application applies to.

Completed Grant applications must be returned to Care.together@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Circulated

SCDC Parish weekly agendas/e-bulletin
Cambridgeshire Matters
Anthony Browne's weekly updates
NHS newsletter
East West Rail - keeping you connected
ACRE Staying Connected event
CCC & SCDC - Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

Any subsequent receipts

Six free trees (whips) or 1 pot grown native tree: SCDC is excited to once again be offering Six Free Trees (or one larger potted tree) to all parish councils in South Cambridgeshire, in partnership with English Woodlands. If there is a suitable site and can commit to planting and upkeep, express your interest and SCDC will get in touch to arrange the order. All trees must be ordered by 22 December 2023.

This is a great opportunity to increase tree cover, promote biodiversity and provide new habitats in the area - not to mention the carbon sequestration benefits of trees! There is a selection of native varieties to choose from including silver birch, wild cherry and English oak.

Hare Coursers: Coursers have cut a fence in Arrington in order to gain access to fields in both Arrington and Croydon. There were also several dead pheasants on the grass verge, which may have been killed by the coursers or their dogs. If you see these people please do not approach them, but call the Police immediately and report the location and any vehicle details you may have. Cllr Williams told the meeting that the betting involved in hare coursing was big business, with huge sums of money changing hands.

Community Hubs (formerly Warm Hubs): Cambs ACRE is hosting a short online briefing session on 28th November at 6.00pm to explain more to interested parties. If you are interested, please contact the Clerk for details of how to attend.

SCDC - Cost of Living Support: South Cambridgeshire residents are being encouraged to ensure they take advantage of all the cost-of-living support they are entitled to this winter. With the weather getting colder and communities spending more on heating, the District Council is beginning a new campaign to urge residents to make full use of assistance available. Research suggests that around 25% of some benefits go unclaimed. The Council is therefore encouraging residents to check they are claiming what they are legitimately entitled to. The campaign also reminds people that local foodbanks - all listed on the Council's website - are there when needed, and you don't need a voucher to use most of them. There is also an appeal for residents to get energy-saving advice and find out about grants for home improvements to cut spending on energy bills during the winter. Read more on the District Council's website. <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/south-cambridgeshire-residents-urged-to-utilise-cost-of-living-support/>

Magpas: A request for core funding was received from Magpas which Councillors considered. It was decided that the following should be sent:-

Croydon Parish is small with a population of 200. Accordingly, our funds are very limited and we do not have money specifically set aside for charitable donations. For this reason we are unable to offer donations to the many charities that approach us for support. We will, of course, publicise any requests at the council meeting and on the notice board if appropriate, so that residents of the Parish may contribute personally if they wish. Exceptional, small donations may be made to Charities that are seen to be directly of benefit to the residents or the environment of Croydon.

Passenger Transport - Cambs and Peterborough: Help is required to promote the Department for Transport's campaign aimed at increasing the number of bus journeys taken by concessionary bus passholders across the country.

To achieve this aim there are a number of promotional materials with the aim of creating awareness of the different types of journey a concessionary bus passholder could use their pass for.

To help support this campaign please arrange for these A4 posters to go up on your parish notice boards or at places you feel would be most appropriate as soon as possible. As you will see from the two posters attached to this email, the aim of the campaign is to show the

different moments that can be enjoyed by bus pass holders when travelling by bus. Posters will be on the notice board.

East-West Rail Drop In events: From the East-West email:- East West Rail Company made their route announcement in May this year. As part of this, they are working on a statutory consultation on the proposed route alignment and would like to invite community groups/societies to a pre-consultation meeting to hear more about the proposal and how it may affect you and your community.

Two drop-in events have been arranged in South Cambridgeshire, which will also provide you with an opportunity to share information about your local group or organisation:

- **Caldecote Village Hall (14 November between 2pm and 7pm)**
- **Harston Village Hall (1 December between 2pm and 7pm)**

You are welcome to take an additional member of your group or organisation. If you can't make it, then you're more than welcome to send someone else in your place. As this is an invite-only event, you are asked to confirm your attendance by completing the RSVP here. This will ensure there are enough refreshments on the day. If you have any questions at all, or any access requirements, then please email: community@eastwestrail.co.uk

SCDC 4-day week and Whistleblowing: Letters from Cllr Lentell and Council Leader Bridget Smith have been received, each of which contradicts the other. Councillors have seen these and they are available for inspection on application to the Clerk. There is too much to copy into the minutes, and the 4-day week has already been widely publicised on the news and in the newspapers.

SCDC Homeless and Rough Sleepers: The Homeless Strategy Consultation is out for consultation until 5th January. This follows a review of homelessness in the district, and from this the priorities for the next Strategy are grouped into two main aims, to provide homeless prevention, early intervention, and support and to provide suitable housing options.

Please take part in our consultation and tell us what you think at

<https://www.scamb.gov.uk/homeless-strategy>

Rough Sleepers Estimate: A similar request for help was made in previous years, in order to provide an estimate of the number of people sleeping rough in the district. Last year the estimate was 5. SCDC will again be trying to achieve a snap shot of the number of people sleeping rough in the district on a typical evening. This year, this will be **overnight between 23rd/24th November 2023**; please notify SCDC if you are aware of anyone sleeping rough in your community on this evening.

For the purpose of the estimates, people sleeping rough are defined as:

"People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes").

A bash is a makeshift shelter structure, often made from tarpaulin or wood."

CCC HAF Scheme: The Christmas Holiday HAF programme is operating again, funded by the Department for Education. Children in receipt of benefit-related free school meals can access a holiday scheme for up to 16 hours and will be offered enriching experiences, a meal and snacks daily. Recently arrived refugee families are also eligible as well as families just about managing financially. Further details are available from Cambridgeshire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme 2023 - Cambridgeshire County Council

The poster will be on the notice board.

SLCC - annual subs: Clerk has received a notice that the annual subscription for her membership to the Society of Local Council Clerks is due at the end of the year. The Clerk asked Council if they would be prepared to fund this at a cost of £76-00, as she has to fill in an on-line form before payment is sent. Councillors agreed they would fund this expenditure, and this will enable the Clerk to complete the form, and a cheque will be raised at the December meeting. The Clerk thanked the Councillors.

East-West Rail: The East West Rail Company made their route announcement in May this year. As part of this, there will be a statutory consultation on the proposed route alignment and would like to invite community groups/societies to a pre-consultation meeting to hear more about the proposal and how it may affect you and your community.

A drop-in event has been arranged in South Cambridgeshire, which will also provide you with an opportunity to share information about your local group or organisation:

Harston Village Hall (1 December between 2pm and 7pm)

As this is an invite-only event, you are asked to confirm your attendance by completing the [RSVP here](#). This will ensure there are enough refreshments on the day. If you have any questions at all, or any access requirements, then please email: community@eastwestrail.co.uk

Finance:

RBL wreath: An invoice for £20-00 for the poppy wreath laid at the war memorial by the Chairman on Sunday 12th November was received. It was proposed by Mr Barnes and seconded by Mr Sole that a cheque for £20-00 should be raised. All in favour.

Village Christmas tree: The Parish Council has been funding the cost of a Christmas tree for the village, which stands outside the Reading Room over the Christmas period. This has been £50-00, but the Clerk suggested that this should perhaps be increased to £60-00, in line with everything else rising in price. Councillors considered this and it was proposed by the Chairman that a cheque for £60-00 should be raised. All in favour. Mr Buchanan will deliver this to the Chair of Trustees.

Bank statement: The bank statement at the start of October was £6157-06 with several cheques being presented, and was £5685-06 at the end of the month.

Change of bank account category: This is still ongoing.

Barclays - confirmation of cheque signatories: Still awaiting confirmation of the third signatory.

Items for next agenda:

Next meeting: Wednesday 13 December 2023 in the Reading Room at 7.30pm

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 8.51pm

Signed Date