

Cambourne Town Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council report: Tuesday 7th March 2023

Councillor Stephen Drew
Councillor Helene Leeming

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This is our ninth report to the town council since being elected as district councillors in May 2022.

1) Cambourne High Street development plans

There is nothing new to report in relation to the High Street development plans for last month.

2) Speedwatch

More volunteers have been recruited following the volunteer event at the end of January. We are now in the process of working with the police to arrange in person training, equipment hire and police road reviews.

3) West Cambourne access

The following article was placed in the Cambourne Crier by Cllrs Drew and Leeming in the February edition:

“Danger for West Cambourne residents

There are now over 100 new Cambourne residents in West Cambourne. However, they currently have no safe route to travel between their homes and the rest of the town unless they use their cars. District councillors Helene Leeming and Stephen Drew have spoken to many West Cambourne residents who explain their concerns about allowing their children to walk or cycle along the A1198 where there is no footpath, no street lighting and a 60mph speed limit. Residents using mobility vehicles have been forced to travel along the road to access services in the rest of the town.

Discussions have been held with South Cambridgeshire District Council’s planning service who have taken up the cause of West Cambourne residents in discussions with the developers, Taylor Wimpey and Vistry. However, despite the evidence of the problems being clearly communicated to the developers, at present there is no assurance that anything will be done until the “autumn” of 2023.

This is not something that can wait that long, and every day residents of West Cambourne are both inconvenienced and unnecessarily put in danger if they have no alternative but to walk or cycle down the A1198. The developers need to act immediately. If you are a resident of West Cambourne and can provide more evidence of the problems please contact Councillor Leeming (Cllr.Leeming@councillor.online) or Councillor Drew (Cllr.Drew@councillor.online)."

This led to 12 emails from residents who provided testimony and photographs regarding their experiences of travelling between their homes and the rest of Cambourne. We were contacted by a representative of the residents of West Cambourne and invited to meet with them on Sunday 26th February. We spent a couple of hours with the residents discussing the problems they face and touring West Cambourne to see the problems in more details. Cllr Leeming visited the show homes for Taylor Wimpey and Vistry with a group of residents to discuss the problems with representatives of the developers, asking them to contact their managing directors about this.

The report which has been shared with town councillors and forms part of the item on transport issues in Cambourne was initially shared with the following people, with guidance that it could be shared with anyone else as recipients choose.

- James Shuttleworth: Managing Director Vistry Homes (East)
- Bryn Maidman: Managing Director Taylor Wimpey Homes (East)
- Stephen Kelly: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Joe O'Dwyer: Chair Cambourne Town Council
- John Vickery: Clerk Cambourne Town Council
- Prafull Sharma: Residents' representative West Cambourne

A meeting was held on Thursday 2nd March at The Hub to discuss what actions the developers are going to take to support residents of West Cambourne. A plan to introduce a free bus service linking West Cambourne to various key sites in Cambourne will be introduced from the start of the summer term at schools on Monday 17th April. The main "spine road" through the centre of West Cambourne connecting to Sheepfold Lane is planned to be open from 1st September. At that point the bus service will cease. An open event will be held in the last week of March in one of the showhomes on West Cambourne where the developers will meet with residents in order to share information and build relationships for the future.

Cllrs Drew and Leeming will continue to work with residents of West Cambourne to ensure they are able to fully integrated with the rest of their community.

4) Chemist services in Cambourne

Cllr Leeming has flagged the ongoing problems with the pharmacy with District officers who in turn have raised the issue with the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System and Public Health. The communities team is looking at ways to support Cambourne residents while there is a handover between pharmacy practices.

5) Bus stop benches

In the Cambourne Community Forum, Cllr Leeming volunteered to support the residents of Upland Place to establish benches to be placed at the two bus stops on School Lane near Monkfield school. The County Council have been approached to get permission as a first step. Once this has been established, Cllr Leeming will work with the UP residents to apply for community funding for the scheme

6) Hope CIC

Cllr Leeming has worked with the town clerk to find a suitable space for Hope CIC to store their stock when the cricket pavilion is no longer available from April.

7) Cambourne transport summit

Cllrs Leeming and Drew have held various meetings with the leaders of South Cambridgeshire District Council (Councillor Bridget Smith and Councillor Brian Milnes), as well as senior officers (Liz Watts - CEO and Anne Ainsworth - COO) to discuss the issues surrounding the ongoing requirements for improved safe travel routes within Cambourne in order to deliver Active Travel.

“Following on from discussions concerning the current barriers to improved active travel in Cambourne, Cambs DC would like to convene an Active Travel Summit to take place in March 2023. Invitees include local members, County Council Active Travel Team, Taylor Wimpey, Cambourne TC, CCC Highways, Shared Planning Service, CPCA.

The initial purpose will be to identify key barriers to active travel and to ascertain which organisation is responsible for remediation or delivery. We will also explore the planned timescales for Active Travel improvements that are already scheduled for delivery within Cambourne.

Where there is no body clearly responsible, SCDC will, as a matter of urgency, seek to identify new funding sources in order to achieve early delivery of solutions by the relevant parties.

Key areas already identified include the bridleway parallel to Sheepfold Lane, cycle routes on Swansley Lane, the roundabout, interim active travel cycleway out from the West Cambourne development, resurfacing of the cycleway running along the south side of the Business Park and Uplands Place.”

Invitations to this summit will be extended to all members of Cambourne Town Council, the three district councillors for the town as well as the county councillor. Representative officers from South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council will be in attendance. The developers of West Cambourne, Taylor Wimpey and Vistry, will be invited. The aim will be to identify where there are issues of road or path safety and access in the town that need action based on the knowledge and experience of all stakeholders and agree a plan of action to resolve issues that need action as well as agree actions to deal with how to improve the lives of residents in the town.

8) EastWest Rail

Although there is no new information regarding the proposed EastWest Rail development, Cllrs Leeming and Drew will be attending the next meeting of the “EWR Co Cambourne & Surrounding Areas Local Representatives Group” on Wednesday 22nd March.

“Although we do not have further updates, we are keen to continue to meet with you as scheduled to enable us to collaborate and discuss matters of importance to you and your constituents as well as to improve your understanding of the EWR project.”

9) A428 Development Cluster Forums

The next A428 Development Cluster Forum: Cambourne / A428 Development Cluster Forum: Bourne Airfield are taking place on Wednesday 8th March from 6pm.

Community forums are free, open, public meetings bringing together residents, planners, developers and other stakeholders to discuss and share information about new development. All interested residents are invited to join.

This forums are held back-to-back so that you can attend one or both forums. Agendas with estimated timings will be provided around a week prior to the event.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/community-forums/a428-development-cluster-cambourne/>

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/community-forums/a428-development-cluster-bourn-airfield/>

10) South Cambridgeshire District Council support for residents with the cost of living crisis

Plans for a further cost of living support package for residents, worth more than £200,000, have been published by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The proposals include a roadshow of cost of living talks, support to transform some Warm Hubs into Community Wellbeing Hubs, increasing awareness of Council Tax support, more free energy saving appliances and the creation of a South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Food Network.

The proposals build-on a package of almost £400,000 of support which was agreed by the Council in November last year. Just over half of that initial funding came from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS) to support community-based programmes tackling prevention and community engagement.

These new support plans announced by the Council look to set out what could happen next. The ICS have indicated that they will provide further grant funding that the Council will bid for, to continue projects for the next financial year, which will continue to focus on prevention of poor health resulting from financial hardship and living in cold homes. All the additional initial work can be funded using available earmarked Council reserves.

The roadshow of cost of living talks, organised in partnership with parish councils, would see a rolling programme of events that are designed to highlight support available to the most vulnerable. This would improve reach and uptake of grants and other support services that many don't know are available to them.

25 Warm Hubs have been running across South Cambridgeshire this winter, with more than 2,000 visits recorded up to the start of February. Run by Cambridgeshire ACRE, they are free cosy spaces which residents of all ages can visit to socialise, work, and catch up with friends. Some could evolve into Community Wellbeing Hubs, offering more services.

A large-scale Council Tax communications campaign is being proposed, to increase the number of eligible people who are aware of, and subsequently claim, financial help towards their Council Tax bill. More deprived areas would be targeted with communications, to help inform people of their potential eligibility.

There are also plans to expand South Cambridgeshire District Council's scheme to provide free energy saving appliances to those residents who are only just about managing, next winter. So far this winter, more than 300 South Cambridgeshire residents have been provided with either a slow cooker, electric blanket, or both by the Council.

Finally, funds are also being proposed to help create a South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Food Network. The idea would be to link-up all the existing foodbanks in the district, creating a network of support for each other – with the overriding aim of distributing food that would otherwise end-up being thrown away. The network would also look to create links with local farmers to donate excess food that is not suitable for supermarkets, encourage communities to grow fresh vegetables for the most vulnerable, and promote healthy eating and more plant-based diets. This network would be a key part of the emerging South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Food Strategy, which is being developed by the District Council and set to be discussed by its Climate and Environment Advisory Group in April.

South Cambridgeshire District Council's Lead Cabinet Member for Communities, Cllr Bill Handley, said: "More than five months after we declared a cost of living crisis, most people continue to suffer in one way or another as a result of rising costs that show no sign of coming down. People on what you would consider good incomes are being impacted – as well as those who were already under financial pressure. We want to help prevent more residents being pushed deeper into hardship and poverty. So, our aim with this fresh package of support would be to continue the momentum that we have built-up this winter, which has received overwhelmingly positive feedback. This is now about looking at the next steps that we as a District Council can take to ensure we are targeting the right support at those who we know need it most. Our aim is to progress some of the initial support mechanisms that we established – such as our Warm Hubs – into longer term, self-sustaining community assistance, as well as exploring exciting new ways to help such as plans to create a South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Food Network."

11) South Cambridgeshire Hall green energy developments

The ambitious work to deliver increased sustainability to South Cambridgeshire Hall has been completed:

- a ground source heat pump to generate renewable heat and reduce the amount of gas used on the site by at least 80 per cent
- the installation of a solar carport to generate more than 20 per cent of the electricity used at South Cambridgeshire Hall
- LED lights to save around 15 percent of the electricity used in the building
- a new building energy management system to better regulate heating, cooling and air conditioning systems and cut energy use
- improvements to the building's chilling system to cut down on the amount of electricity it uses
- a more energy efficient fan system to move air around inside the building
- 20 electric vehicle charging points to incentivise staff and visitors to look at travelling via cleaner cars.

The work is funded from the Council's 'Renewables Reserve' which derives from Business Rates paid by renewable energy sites in the district and earmarked for investment in energy efficiency projects. This fund also pays for local community projects to reduce carbon emissions through the Council's Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme.

As the electricity grid continues to decarbonise due to new renewable energy generation schemes coming online nationwide, the carbon footprint of the Cambourne building is expected to reduce to 25 per cent of current levels by 2030 and 10 percent of current levels by 2050. This is an annual reduction of over 350,000 kg of CO₂ per year to approximately 182,000 kg. Along with the benefits in reducing carbon emissions and cutting energy costs, there will also be a reduction in maintenance costs making overall savings in taxpayers' money. The entire project is guaranteed to pay for itself within 16 years of operation.

The project makes considerable in-roads into the Council's stated aims of its Zero Carbon Strategy to halve carbon emissions in the District by 2030 and reduce them to zero by 2050, including delivering the reduction in carbon footprint it has committed to in its own estate and enabling it to be an exemplar to encourage communities in the District to follow its lead.

12) Policing South Cambridgeshire

The dates for our quarterly online South Cambs meetings throughout 2023 are now live. The meetings for South Cambridgeshire are:

- Tuesday 2nd May at 7pm
- Tuesday 8th August at 7pm
- Tuesday 7th November at 7pm

Thank you to everyone who has participated in a meeting so far. We hope to meet many more of you at one of the forthcoming meetings where you will get the opportunity to:

Meet your neighbourhood policing officers.

Help set the local policing priorities for the area each quarter.

If you wish to attend, please register online: <https://orlo.uk/VQrIE>