

### **Have your say on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan**

Residents, businesses, and community groups are encouraged to share their views on how the Greater Cambridge area will grow over the next 20 years.

The Local Plan, which will cover both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge, sets out where new homes and workplaces could be built, alongside the utilities, services, green spaces, and community facilities to support them. Once adopted, it will become the official development plan guiding decisions on planning applications.

The consultation will close at 5pm on 30<sup>th</sup> January. The council is holding in-person and online events where residents can find out more and speak to planners. Please visit [the Local Plan dedicated webpage](#) for more information about the consultation and events, or drop me a line.

### **Resident meeting update on Zaheers (The Jester) in Odsey**

This month I held a public meeting to discuss with local residents concerns around the activity at Zaheers (the Jester), and what the next steps will be.

Of course it's a shame that this action was needed in the first place, but I was pleased that a number of residents shared their experiences and concerns with me. As a community, we will need to work together to build up the evidence for further action to be taken. Please do report all problems, whether that be public nuisance or safety on the relevant channel here: [Neighbourhood issues - South Cambs District Council](#) – and please do let me know when you've done so too.

It's not just residents living in Odsey that this affects, it also has an impact on people using the train station and those using that A505 junction.

Since the meeting, I can further report that the appeal has been dismissed in relation to the concreting over the garden and they now have 3 months to remove the concrete. We have also been able to establish that there has been a material change of use and they have been given until 15<sup>th</sup> March 2026 to apply for planning permission for the use and floodlighting. The lean-to that has been put up without permission also needs to be removed.

## **Support for our local pubs**

At this month's full council meeting, we put a motion forward for the council to back our small local businesses by supporting the abolishment of business rates for our local pubs, high street shops and the hospitality sector. There was a lot of debate and back and forth on the motion and amendments from the administration, which eventually ended with the motion being abandoned in the meeting. However, I'd like to stress that backing our local pubs and small businesses remains one of my priorities and I will continue to fight for more support and the Leader and I have agreed to discuss this, and I hope to be able to find a motion we can all agree on. The amendment put forward by the administration promoted a replacement tax called Commercial Land Levy (CLL). This is a red line for myself that we need to lift our high street shops and pubs out of taxes, not replace them with new ones.

## **Standing up for our landowners**

This month, I helped shut down an illegal rave between Steeple and Litlington. With help and thanks to Darryl Preston, our Police and Crime Commissioner, as well as the police who helped move everyone on. Nobody has the right to illegally enter someone else's land and do what they please. That includes not only illegal raves, but hare coursing and any other illegal activity too. I have been in communication with the police since that weekend and have a meeting scheduled at the end of this week to discuss ways to work collectively seeking to ensure that all key stakeholders are assured should future events occur. The most important thing we can all do though is report, report, report. Too often we assume somebody else has told the police but 8, 10, 20 reports is better than zero because we all thought someone else had.

## **Development Corporation Update**

At full council this month, we asked the council to support a mayoral development corporation rather than have the government making important decisions for our local area. With £4million of government funding offered to Cambridge, having the Mayor in charge - whatever party they represent means it's someone who is locally democratically elected and accountable. But the administration voted against this, with the Leader stating that if it was a different Mayor she'd have a different view, which is incredibly disappointing. The development corporation will be potentially running for decades, so to make a decision based on short term politics is not in my view in the best interest of residents.

## **A505 Update**

Last month I wrote to the Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council asking for urgent action on the A505. I requested they hold a meeting with all councillors across the county boundaries, to be updated on the full range of road safety considerations for the A505, including current collision data, findings from the hazardous site review, and the next steps the County Council is considering to improve safety along this route. This week they have replied to me offering to hold the meeting. It's important we work collaboratively to improve safety on this dangerous stretch of road.

## **New England Farm**

The inspector has upheld the council's decision to refuse the application in Tadlow. I'm very pleased with the outcome of this appeal and I'm sure local residents are relieved that the wait is over. It has been arguably harder to resolve than it ought to be, but we have finally got the right result in my book and I have been clear at the council that I expect strong and robust enforcement of the planning inspector's decision to uphold the council's decision to refuse permission. Thanks must go to everyone's perseverance and patience through this process.

## **Weekly food waste collections starting in January**

Weekly collections of food waste will begin in parts of South Cambridgeshire in January – rolling out collections to all households by the end of 2026.

The service will be extended across Greater Cambridge in phases throughout next year. All households will receive a letter with full details a few weeks before the service begins in their area to help ensure they are prepared.

Before their new collections begin, households will receive a new outdoor caddy to put out for collection at the kerbside with their wheelie bins each week, as well as a smaller indoor caddy to collect food waste in the kitchen. The weekly food waste collections will take place on residents' usual bin days.

Households in the first phase of the roll-out which will start in January will receive a letter before Christmas letting them know when to expect delivery of their caddies and the date that their weekly collection service will begin. Some villages within The Mordens ward should have already received their letters.

All households will receive a letter a few weeks before the service begins in their area to help ensure they are prepared. You can check your bin information at [www.greatercambridgewaste.org](http://www.greatercambridgewaste.org) by inputting your postcode.

There are a few households that already have caddies because the council ran a trial in part of The Mordens ward, so I asked officers for advice where residents do in fact already have one as to whether they can use that one or need to return it – with the answer being that residents will have the option to return caddies to a number of drop-off points. You can check the website for your nearest drop-off points.

### **Elections scheduled for May 2026**

You may already be aware, but I wanted to make sure Parish Councils are kept in the loop. Yesterday the government wrote to the Leaders of those district councils due to have elections in May but are undergoing local government reform inviting them to set out their views on the postponement of local elections. South Cambridgeshire District Council was one of these, and therefore the Leader will be writing to the government by the deadline set 15<sup>th</sup> January with the council's viewpoint – either continue to have them in May 2026 or a request to postpone. At this stage, it is unclear whether it'll be the Leader's decision or whether the Leader will consult with full council. My view is that the elections should still go ahead – and I will let the Leader know this too.

### **Grants for community groups and parish councils**

The Improving the High Street grant has been reopened to support projects that boost the heart of communities across South Cambridgeshire. Grants between a minimum of £1,000 and a maximum of £5,000 per project are available to local businesses, charities, community groups and Parish Councils within the district.

The scheme aims to improve the look of our high streets, promote rejuvenation, encourage residents to shop locally and attract more local businesses to the area. The types of project the fund supports are external renovations or improvements to the front elevations of buildings. You can find more information here: [Improving the High Street grant \(open\) - South Cambs District Council](#).

For details on all the grants available for a community project from the council, please visit <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/grants-and-funding>.

### **Final reminder for postal vote renewals**

A last reminder this year that if you completed a postal vote application before October 2023, you will need to renew it by January 2026 at the latest in order to remain a postal voter for the district and parish council elections in May 2026. The easiest way for residents to re-apply is online at [www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote](http://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote), but the council can send paper forms to anyone who needs them. Please email [elections@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:elections@scambs.gov.uk) if you have any questions.

### **Bin collection days over Christmas and throughout January**

A reminder of the bin collection days over Christmas and into the new year. There are a couple of changes over Christmas and New Year for you to be aware of:

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope you enjoy the festive period! If I can be of any assistance, please do get in touch.

**Cllr Heather Williams**

**SCDC The Mordens Ward**

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