

District Councillor's Report for The Mordens Ward SCDC

January 2026

Local Government Reorganisation

Before Christmas, in November's report, I made it clear that my preferred option for local government reorganisation was Option C (South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire), and I laid out my reasons why. The administration voted to support Option B (South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City) and that was submitted to government ahead of November's deadline. Following this, I wrote to the relevant minister to ensure that he had all the business cases, including option C, as ultimately it will be the decision of the government.

I recently received a response from government thanking me for my input and setting out some of their next steps. There will be a consultation starting in February and it will run for seven weeks. Views from councillors, residents, town and parish councils, and local businesses will be welcomed. I would encourage you to take part in the consultation. Further details of this will follow in due course.

Safety concerns on the A505

Many residents, myself included, regularly use the A505 as part of their daily routines. Before Christmas, I wrote to the Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council to request urgent action regarding safety on this route. I asked that a meeting be held with all councillors from across the relevant county boundaries to provide an update on road safety issues along the A505, including current collision data, findings from the hazardous sites review, and the next steps being considered to improve safety. I have now received a response confirming that such a meeting will be arranged, and that will be convened after their review of the older section of the A505 between Royston and Baldock to identify priority locations for further improvements. They are reviewing current collision data and the Hazardous Site assessment along the A505. I will keep pushing this and will keep residents updated - improving safety on this stretch of road will require a collaborative approach, and I welcome the opportunity for all councillors to be fully informed and involved.

Elections to go ahead in May 2026

Council leaders had a deadline of 15th January to request a postponement of district council elections scheduled this May. Ahead of this deadline, I made my views very clear that the elections should go ahead – residents deserve to have their chance to vote on local issues. I would have preferred for a full council meeting to be had so all members could discuss openly and fairly. This meeting did not go ahead, and the Leader informed me that they will not be seeking a postponement following their group meeting. I was pleased to hear this and last week the government confirmed that district council elections will be held this May in South Cambridgeshire.

Here are some important deadlines to be aware of:

- A reminder that you have until 31st January to renew your postal vote.
- The deadline to register to vote is 20th April. If you aren't already registered to vote you can apply on the [government website](#).
- The deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5pm on 21st April. You can apply on the [government website](#).
- The deadline to apply for a proxy vote is 5pm on 28th April. You can apply on the [government website](#).
- You must show photo ID when you vote at the polling stations now. If you do not have photo ID then you can apply for a free voter authority certificate. The deadline to apply for a free voter authority certificate (voter ID) is 5pm on 28th April. You can apply on the [government website](#).

New England Farm

Since the decision of the planning inspector to uphold the council's decision to refuse the application in Tadlow, we are aware of the new mobile homes; however, no separate action will be taken in respect of these being brought to site as they are already covered by the extant enforcement notice, and they are not a new breach of planning control that requires any further action from the Council. The new units and any works on site are subject to the enforcement notice in place and must all be removed by the dates as set out in the enforcement notice.

The landowner must:

- Cease the use of the land for residential use, remove all caravans and mobile homes from the land and remove all domestic items and paraphernalia from the land – by 17th September 2026.
- Remove all earth bunds from the land, fill in the reservoir that has been constructed on the land with inert subsoil and topsoil, the top 300mm of the fill should be comprised of topsoil and remove all hardstanding and surfaced roadways from the land, and restore the land to its former condition and level prior to the unauthorised works taking place – by 17th December 2026.
- Remove all waste and materials resulting from steps 1 to 7 above from the land – by 17th February 2027.

Proposals for a council tax freeze and ending the four-day working week – all whilst saving money

At this month's Scrutiny & Overview meeting, we went through the administration's budget ahead of the full council meeting next month. At this meeting, I also prepared an alternative budget amendment, although the administration refused to engage with the proposals. They will be presented by me at the Full Council meeting next month.

The budget amendments focus on responsible decision-making, long-term planning and fairness for residents, while maintaining a strong and resilient financial position for the council. I accept the political arithmetic and strongly suspect the administration will vote them down, but it has been known that for later in the year that some of the amendments to be actioned anyway – or at least taken into consideration for the future. But I want to demonstrate that by making different choices, the council can protect key priorities, plan ahead for future pressures and maintain financial stability - all without increasing the burden on local households, through a proposed freeze in council tax.

The proposals are fully costed and include measures such as freezing council tax and ending the four-day working week, while still delivering savings. The proposals also include bold measures to restructure the senior leadership team, creating capacity for more frontline staff and improved service delivery, as well as the proposal to install

cameras on to our bin lorries – which drive up and down every single one of our roads, using AI to automatically report potholes helping to tackle the state of our roads.

Here is a link to our budget proposals: [\(Public Pack\)Supplementary Conservative Group Budget Proposal for 2026-2027 - Supplementary Report Agenda Supplement for Scrutiny and Overview Committee, 15/01/2026 17:30](#)

Incomplete audits due to staffing problems

I attended Audit and Corporate Governance this month in my capacity as a committee member. It was alarming to hear of incomplete audit reports with the reason being down to staffing issues and staff sickness. This is particularly concerning given the critical role that timely and robust audits play in ensuring effective oversight, accountability, and public confidence in governance arrangements.

Food waste caddy collections

Weekly food waste collections began in parts of The Morden ward this month and will be rolled out to all households by the end of the year. The service will be introduced across Greater Cambridge in phases.

A reminder that households will receive a letter with full details a few weeks before collections begin in their area. Residents can also check their bin collection information by entering their postcode at www.greatercambridgewaste.org.

Before collections start, households will be provided with a new outdoor caddy for kerbside collection and a smaller indoor caddy for use in the kitchen. Food waste will be collected weekly on residents' usual bin days.

Some households across our villages already have caddies from an earlier trial in parts of The Morden ward. I have asked officers for clarification on whether these can continue to be used, and residents will have the option to return caddies at designated drop-off points if needed. Details of drop-off locations are available on the website.

Reporting local issues

The condition of rural roads remains a concern for many residents. As a district councillor, I regularly hold “Pothole Patrol” sessions across villages. While highways are the responsibility of the county council, I do what I can to support residents. Recently, I met with the county council highways team to highlight problem areas, including potholes and poor road and pavement surfaces.

In addition to highways issues, it is important to report incidents of fly-tipping. Dumped waste has a negative impact on the countryside and is a criminal offence. This month I joined the Envirocrime team in Tadlow at the site of a huge fly-tip site.

Reporting problems makes a difference, and the more reports received, the better. If you are unsure where to go to, please find the links and information on my website here: [Councillor Heather Williams](#)

Consultation on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan

Thank you to all that have taken part in the consultation so far. Just a reminder that the deadline to submit views closes at 5pm on 30th January. 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. If you haven't already, you can view and comment here: [Greater Cambridge Local Plan](#)

Farmers' roundtable

On Friday 30th January, I will be holding a discussion roundtable with local farmers and will be joined by the Police and Crime Commissioner, Darryl Preston, who will be on hand to discuss rural crime concerns, as well as the Shadow Secretary of State for Farming, Robbie Moore MP. Local farmers play a vital role in our communities, and it is important that we continue to work together to support family farms wherever possible. We've done our best to get in touch with as many farmers in the ward as

possible, but please do pass on my contact details if you know of any farmers that may wish to come. I will be able to update you on the meeting in next month's report.

Grants for community groups and parish councils

Local community groups and parish councils may be eligible for a range of council grant schemes. I would encourage groups to explore the funding opportunities available. Further information on grants for community projects can be found at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/grants-and-funding>.

20MPH Funding 2026/27 Applications

Although a county council initiative, I wanted to make you aware that the 2026/27 20mph funding programme is open and will run until Friday 27th March. The process will be open for new applications, as well as providing existing applicants within the long list who weren't successful for funding last year to review, update and reapply if they wish. You can find out more information and make an application here: [20mph Funding - Cambridgeshire County Council](#).

Thank you for reading my report. If I can be of any assistance, please do get in touch.

Cllr Heather Williams

SCDC The Mordens Ward

Tel: 07885 774 775

Email: cllrwilliamsh@scambs.gov.uk

Website: www.cllrheatherwilliams.co.uk

Twitter: @Cllr_H_Williams

Facebook Page: Cllr Heather Williams