

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

Comprising Barton, Coton, Comberton, Grantchester, Harlton,
Harston, Haslingfield, Hauxton, and South Trumpington

District Councillors' Monthly Report – April 2026

District Councillor Contact Details

If you have any questions or concerns relating to SCDC services, please contact us using the details below. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues etc.

Michael Atkins:	Cllr.Atkins@scambs.gov.uk	07968 264637
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Lisa Redrup:	Cllr.Redrup@scambs.gov.uk	07855 324580

Cost-of-living information

Visit <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/> for information on: benefits, money and debt advice; help with energy and water bills; help for parents and families; help with food and health costs; help with phone bills; help with making your home warmer; Age UK handy person service and; support if you are in distress.

Community Hubs

Community Hubs offer residents somewhere to socialise, take part in new activities and to receive information on cost-of-living support and how to stay healthy and well. Local Community Hubs include:

Toft Community Hub, High Street, Toft, CB23 2RL.

Opening times: Mondays, 10:30am – 12:30pm

Grantchester Communal Hall, Tabrum Close, Grantchester, Cambridge, CB3 9NW

Opening times: Friday, 10am – 12pm

Find out more at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-and-people/community-hubs>

Tackling period poverty with environmentally friendly menstrual products

South Cambridgeshire District Council is once again providing free environmentally friendly menstrual products for hundreds more residents to help tackle period poverty. Councillors agreed to champion the cause, to ensure dignity for all. A funding pot of almost £10,000 has been agreed for the project, which will offer South Cambridgeshire residents a choice of one of three period product packs - either washable pads, period pants or reusable period cups.

Hey Girls, a UK-wide social enterprise, will be distributing the packs, and [residents can now apply online](#). The scheme will run on a 'first come, first served' basis.

LGA guide to disinformation for local councillors

The Local Government Association has developed [a guide on approaching and countering disinformation in response to interest from councillors seeking support in this area](#). The guide sets out key tangible actions councillors can take to respond effectively themselves while working closely with officers. Further information is available on the LGA's website and you can also find [a similar guide which was produced for officers earlier this year in LGA's Comms Hub](#).

Updates from MHCLG

The Future Homes and Buildings Standards: consultation responses

MHCLG has published the [government responses to the consultation on changes to Parts L and F of the Building Regulations, and to the Part O Call for Evidence](#). The Future Homes and Buildings Standards consultation ran from December 2023 to March 2024. It sought views on changes to the Building Regulations to improve the energy performance and ventilation standards of new homes and buildings. A call for evidence on the overheating standard (Part O) also formed part of the consultation. This document sets out the government's response. Where relevant, the outcomes will now be implemented through a statutory instrument and new approved documents. Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-user-guide-template>

The Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet 2026

It's a six-week countdown until the Renters' Rights Act takes effect and improves the lives of private renters in England. On 20 March, MHCLG published a [Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet 2026](#) designed to give tenants helpful, practical advice on each of the changes and what it means for their tenancy agreement. It simply breaks down the key information that renters need to know – from stronger protections against rent increases to better rights to request pets – and scrapping Section 21 evictions, fixed-term assured tenancies and more. [The Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet 2026 is live on GOV.UK](#). Tenants won't need to do anything but read the information carefully. Landlords and their letting agents must legally give this information to tenants by 31 May to avoid risking a fine. Landlords can give this information to tenants as a hard copy or attached electronically as a PDF to an email. [More detailed instructions on the process are available GOV.UK](#) and the government's [campaign site](#), where landlords can find everything else they need to know for the Act's implementation. The government will soon be publishing a full package of guidance for tenants on the new rights they will have from 1 May 2026, which will be available on GOV.UK. Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate. Press release: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landlords-now-to-fulfil-new-legal-duty-for-renters-rights-act>

Reminder: SCDC ZCC Grants Pre-launch workshops 20th May

From March:

*Ahead of the next round of [Zero Carbon Communities Grants](#), there will be two pre-launch workshops on **Wednesday 20th May**. The daytime one is 12.30-1.30pm and the evening one is 6-7pm. The workshops will provide information and guidance to help you with your application.*

Following the workshops, the application window will run from the 25th May to the 24th July 2026. Funding of £2,000-£15,000 is available to voluntary and community sector groups, charities and parish councils to support communities in South Cambridgeshire to take action on climate change. There may be some adjustments to the grant in the forthcoming round, so even if you are familiar with it or have applied before, we recommend you check for updates and save the date for our pre-launch workshops.

April update:

There has indeed been an adjustment to the grant. In total there is £152,000 available, with the funding evenly split between projects to reduce and store carbon and projects to deliver community engagement and nature-based initiatives. The maximum grant per project has increased from £15,000 to £19,500 to reflect inflation and to help the grant to continue to support impactful climate and nature projects. There is also wider eligibility where there is a clear community benefit, including sports groups and PTAs on school sites.

If you have any questions about the workshops or the grant, please contact ZCC@scamb.gov.uk.

Food waste collections

Food waste collections are being rolled out across the district, with the first set of rounds introduced in January including most homes in Harston and some in Hauxton. In the six weeks since these rounds began, collections from around 17,000 households across South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge have generated 200 tonnes of food waste.

This waste is transported to anaerobic digestion facilities in either Baldock, March or Thetford, where it is converted into a source of energy and a nutrient-rich biofertilizer. So far, the food waste collected is enough to power 1,000 homes for six days.

The next set of food waste collections is due to begin in May and will include the rest of the homes in Harston and Hauxton, and Grantchester.

To find out when you will receive your new caddies and start recycling food waste visit www.greatercambridgewaste.org and enter your postcode in the 'In My Area' section.

Cambridge Growth Company has launched a Mass Rapid Transit Study

The Cambridge Growth Company (CGC) and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority have launched the preparation of a Project level Strategic Outline Business Case for a potential Mass Rapid Transit system for Greater Cambridge. You can [read more in the CGC's news release \(https://thecgc.org.uk/index.php?timelineid=61\)](https://thecgc.org.uk/index.php?timelineid=61).

MHCLG consultation on establishing a Development Corporation for Greater Cambridge – SCDC's response

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) recently launched a consultation on the establishment of a 'Greater Cambridge Development Corporation' and it closed on the 1st April 2026.

It proposes establishing a **government-led urban development corporation in Greater Cambridge** (both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire district) and that:

- Development of the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan would proceed, but that the development corporation would take over plan-making powers either after adoption of the new local plan or before, if the draft local plan is not considered to deliver development at the necessary scale and pace.
- The development corporation would determine planning applications on sites of strategic importance.
- The development corporation would operate for at least 25 years.
- The leaders of Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be invited to join the Board, and would make up a minority of the board.

South Cambridgeshire District Council's response to the consultation is available [here](#). To see the rest of the report on this, please see [agenda item 15 of the March Cabinet meeting](#).

The response objects to the proposal to create a centrally led Urban Development Corporation, while recognizing the need for Government investment in infrastructure in the area (e.g. healthcare, waste-water treatment, water supply, transport) Instead, it argues for investment to be delivered in partnership with elected and accountable local authorities.

The response also asks that if the Development Corporation goes ahead, that the government's plans follow the lead of the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan on climate change and environment, and use the influence of government to ensure the health of the area's vulnerable chalk streams is improved over the life of the Development Corporation.

MHCLG consultation on Local Government Reorganisation – SCDC’s response

The government continues to press ahead with its policy of abolishing county and district councils and combining their functions within larger unitary authorities. A public consultation on the four options put forward closed on the 26th March.

Proposal submitted by Cambridgeshire County Council (Option A):

Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, Huntingdonshire and Fenland District Councils along with County Council functions	
Unitary 2	Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils along with County Council functions	

Proposal submitted by Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (Option B):

Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Huntingdonshire District Councils along with County Council functions	
Unitary 2	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District along with County Council functions	

Proposal submitted by Peterborough City Council and Fenland District Council (Option D):

Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, parts of Huntingdonshire District Councils along with County Council functions	
Unitary 2	Parts of Huntingdonshire District Council, Fenland, and East Cambridgeshire along with County Council functions	
Unitary 3	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District along with County Council functions	

Proposal submitted by Huntingdonshire District Council (Option E):

Unitary 1	Peterborough City, Fenland, East Cambridgeshire District Councils with County Council functions	<p>The map shows the geographical distribution of the three proposed unitary areas in Cambridgeshire. Unitary 1 (green) covers Peterborough UA, Fenland District, and East Cambridgeshire District. Unitary 2 (brown) covers Huntingdonshire District. Unitary 3 (purple) covers South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City.</p>
Unitary 2	Huntingdonshire District Council with County Council functions	
Unitary 3	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District along with County Council functions	

South Cambridgeshire District Council’s response to the consultation is available [here](#). To read the rest of the report on this, please see agenda item 14 of the March Cabinet meeting.

The response supports option B, which would result in a Greater Cambridge unitary made up of the current South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council areas. One of the main reasons is because independent analysis shows option B is the most financially sustainable option of the proposals. You can read more about this at SCDC’s website section on [Local Government Reorganization](#).

Funding to help families struggling with soaring heating oil costs announced

On 16 March, the government announced [over £50 million of funding to help low-income households in rural communities](#). The price of kerosene – the fuel used for heating oil – has been particularly impacted by the conflict in the Middle East and is currently double that of crude oil. Heating oil is different from other sectors in the energy market as it does not have the same consumer protections and is not regulated by Ofgem. The government intends to introduce new consumer protections for heating oil customers and is rapidly exploring new ways to step in and ensure households are better protected.

In England, funding will be distributed by councils via the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), which comes into effect from 1 April, targeting areas with higher rates of oil heating. The CRF replaces the Household Support Fund which ends on the 31 March 2026.

Vulnerable households facing immediate financial difficulties as a result of rising heating oil prices are encouraged to contact their local authority to find out what support may be available to them. SCDC has a webpage with information about energy and water bills at [Fuel, energy and utilities - South Cambs District Council](#).

Funding to cover almost half the cost of installing EV chargers for households and businesses announced

The Department for Transport has announced that [renters, flat owners, homeowners without driveways and businesses will be able to save up to £500 when installing electric vehicle \(EV\) charge points](#), thanks to an over 40% increase in charge point government grant funding. The uplift will cover almost half the cost of a typical charge point installation until March 2027, helping more drivers access cheaper domestic electricity rates at home or work. The following updates will be introduced from 1 April:

People living in rented accommodation, flat owners, residential landlords, households with on-street parking and businesses will all be able to receive higher grants of up to £500 per charge point, rising from the previous discount of £350.

Schools will be eligible for grants of up to £2,000 per socket, building on 3,700 sockets installed to date.

[Read more about the grant changes on GOV.UK](#)

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/changes-to-electric-vehicle-chargepoint-grant-schemes-from-1-april-2026>).

Parish and Town Council Elections: 7 May 2026

The government wrote to the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) in December asking whether the Council would like to request postponement of the district council elections scheduled for May. We can confirm that the Council did not ask the government to postpone May's district council elections. The government made the final decision and SCDC elections will take place on Thursday 7 May, alongside elections for all parish and town councils in South Cambridgeshire.

Anyone wishing to stand for election to a parish or town council will need to submit a nomination paper. The period to submit nomination papers opened on 30 March, and **closes on 9 April at 4pm**. Completed nomination papers must be hand delivered with wet ink signatures to the elections team at South Cambridgeshire Hall between 9.00am and 5.00pm during the nomination period (except on the last day, where the deadline is 4pm). We will not accept nomination papers at weekends or on Easter bank holidays. Nomination papers may not be submitted by post. Please do not post nomination papers as we will have to return them to you.

Where a group of people are all submitting nomination papers together we would encourage you to have one trusted person bring in multiple nomination papers – this will help to make the process smoother for everyone. This person does not need to be a candidate – indeed many parish clerks have previously taken on this responsibility for sitting councillors seeking re-election (we understand that this will not be possible in all circumstances). We would also encourage you to email elections@scamb.gov.uk to book an appointment for the submission of nomination papers. We will accept walk-ins but you may have to wait to be seen.

Please be aware that before we formally accept any nomination papers we will undertake an informal check of the paper to identify any issues with it.

At the close of nominations we will publish on our website a statement of the people standing nominated in each area. You will see from this notice which candidates are elected unopposed, and where there will be contested polls.

Over the course of the election period a number of notices will need to be published in each parish council area. We will issue these notices (by email, to clerks) periodically, with instructions on their display. You can find further information and download nomination papers on our [Elections 2026 webpage](#). Do not hesitate to contact the elections team if you have any questions.