

Report of Councillor Carla Hofman and Councillor John Williams to Parish Councils for May 2024.

This report contains factual information which we hope will be of use and of interest to the parish council and to the wider community of the parish.

*For queries please email us at cllr.williamsjg@scambs.gov.uk or
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Shared Prosperity Fund – Green space improvement projects

A Shared Prosperity Fund will be launched later this month to give Town and Parish Councils funding to improve green space that would benefit their community.

Applicants will be asked to:

- demonstrate that land is in their control, or immediately available for improvement before March 2025.
- provide a site location map and explanation of the type of improvements they want to implement.
- commit to maintain the site to the necessary standard after the initial works are complete.
- ensure their elected district councillor/s are aware of the application.
- demonstrate the need for improved green space and impact the improvement would have for local people in terms of health and wellbeing.
- demonstrate how local people and volunteers will get involved in the planning, delivery, or maintenance of the green space.
- detail if any other funding, from the Town/Parish Council or third party, will be committed to the delivery of the project (this is not a pre-requisite).

The selected Parish and or Town Councils will be supported by a Landscape Architecture Company that SCDC has procured to assist with the planning and delivery of the projects.

Details will be announced later this month, so watch out for the launch of the project.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning finalist in the Planning Awards 2024 Local authority Planning Team of the Year

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning has been shortlisted for the Planning Awards 2024 for local authority planning team of the year. The work of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning is highlighted on the Planning Awards' website:

“Greater Cambridge Shared Planning is of the largest planning services in the Country, it processes circa 6,000 applications annually and is currently overseeing 13 strategic scale (1,000 home plus) developments. Prioritising continuous improvement, the team actively promotes participation in planning, contributes to creating innovative, sustainable and inclusive services by redesigning processes, harnessing digital experiences, and empowering its 140 staff members. GCSP is involved in utilising the opportunity provided by a world-class economy to lead planning practice and innovation across the profession.”

The Planning Awards Ceremony will take place on Thursday 13 June when the winners will be announced.

Five-year land supply

We have just published on our website a report that includes a new Greater Cambridge housing trajectory and our housing land supply calculations. The housing trajectory shows anticipated delivery of new homes across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire up to 2041. The report also demonstrates that jointly for Greater Cambridge (Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire together) we have 6.5 years of housing land supply for the 2024-2029 period.

National planning policy and guidance sets out the circumstances where planning policies should be considered out of date when making decisions on planning applications, and this includes where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a four or five-year housing land supply (as appropriate). On the basis of our housing land supply calculations for Greater Cambridge, this does not apply to Cambridge or South Cambridgeshire. This is relevant for any planning applications that are being considered.

Go to: <https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/current-plans-and-guidance/monitoring-delivery-in-greater-cambridge/>

Ancient Tree Inventory

We are encouraging Parish Councils and residents to take part in the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory. Old trees are extraordinary. Some of them have lived for thousands of years, linking us with our history and culture. And they have astonishing ecological value too, supporting thousands of species. When it comes to these special trees, the UK is immensely important. We have a phenomenal number of ancient and veteran trees compared with the rest of Europe. There are thousands all across the UK, from the oldest churchyard yews to lone oaks standing in a field. They need protecting and caring for, but first the Woodland Trust need to find out where they are. You can read a guide to old trees and add a tree to the list if you have one in your patch.

Go to: <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/what-we-record-and-why/what-we-record/>

New grant for businesses and community groups

Almost £900,000 in Government funding will be available for business and community capital projects in South Cambridgeshire. The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is designed to support local businesses for things like diversifying or creating jobs, plus a range of community initiatives such as rural travel, volunteering opportunities, digital projects or schemes that create a sense of local pride.

Among the people who can apply are micro to medium sized businesses, social enterprises, sole traders, charities, farmers, rural community groups and higher or further education institutions.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is the lead authority for delivery of the Fund, while the District Council is responsible for grant scheme delivery and allocation.

South Cambridgeshire District Council has a grant funding allocation of £876,101 to spend between 2024 and 2025. This will be split between business and community interventions. Applicants can apply for between £10,000 to £100,000 of funding.

The first application window for the fund will open from 9 April 2024 and will run each quarter until all the grant funds have been successfully allocated.

Some areas in the district are not eligible due to their proximity to Cambridge city centre. These include South Girton, Milton, Orchard Park, Kings Hedges, Fulbourn, Stapleford and Great Shelford.

Find out more by visiting <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/business/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/rural-england-prosperity-fund/> or email sharedprosperityfund@scambs.gov.uk

Water Restoration Fund – reminder

In April, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs launched a Water Restoration Fund (WRF). The WRF will award up to £11 million grant funding to support local groups, farmers and landowners and community-led schemes, to enhance their capacity and capabilities for on-the-ground projects to improve the water environment. This could include activities that improve biodiversity and community access to blue and green spaces in areas where water companies have been issued with fines or penalties. The fund will be open to councils including parish councils, farmers and landowners, National Parks and National Landscapes. More information can be found here. Councils are encouraged to share this information as appropriate.

Announcement:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/crackdown-on-water-firms-sees-millions-invested-into-local-action>

Plan for Water:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-water-our-integrated-plan-for-delivering-clean-and-plentiful-water>

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Carla and John