Supplementary Report of Councillor Carla Hofman and Councillor John Williams to Parish Councils for December 2025.

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 pleaser email us at cllr.williamsjg@scambs,gov.uk or cllr.hofman@scambs.gov.uk

Also, look out for the Parish Clerks e-Bulletin from South Cambridgeshire District Council

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service named national Planning Authority of the Year

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning has been crowned Planning Authority of the Year by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). This nationwide recognition celebrates the service's outstanding commitment to delivering high-quality planning for local communities, supporting sustainable growth, and shaping places where people can thrive.

The award follows a year of significant achievements for Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (GCSP) – which is a partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District councils. It comes after GCSP was crowned Planning Authority of the Year - East of England at the local RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence earlier this year.

The national RTPI award follows a compelling nomination that showcased the service's transformative work across Greater Cambridge, including its approaches to biodiversity, youth engagement, and digital innovation. Among other councils nominated were the City of Edinburgh Council and the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Three councils back case for two new unitaries: Greater Cambridge with North Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Three Cambridgeshire councils have now backed the creation of a new unitary Council for Greater Cambridge and another for North Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – with local leaders saying they offer financial security, deliver up to £43 million savings a year and respect local identities. At an extraordinary South Cambridgeshire District Council meeting it was agreed to submit their preference to Government which is known locally as 'option B' which has South Cambridgeshire and the City joining to form a new council with the County council services in those districts. This option was supported by East Cambridgeshire which felt it would be better placed with its mainly rural neighbours Fenland and Huntingdonshire, together with Peterborough an existing unitary council.

This comes after the Government asked all two-tier council areas like Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to simplify local government by replacing the current complex system of seven councils with fewer, stronger councils. Each new council would provide all local services – from housing and planning to social care – under one roof. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create councils that are easier to deal with, financially secure, and better able to deliver services people rely on.

The Government plans to go out to public consultation on the options submitted to it – four in all – in the new year, with the Secretary of State coming to a decision before the summer. There will then be elections to the chosen shadow unitary councils in May 2027 and a period of handover until the new councils come into effect in 2028, when South Cambridgeshire District Council will cease to exist. In the end the number of councillors will be considerably reduced, which is causing concern. For example, in Fulbourn and Fen Ditton we one county and three district councillors and this would be halved to two, to do all current district and county responsibilities.

South Cambridgeshire welcomes almost 1,000 Ukrainians under Homes for Ukraine scheme

South Cambridgeshire has welcomed almost 1,000 Ukrainians fleeing the war, thanks to the generosity of local communities and support provided by the District Council.

The Government launched the Homes for Ukraine scheme in 2022 to enable UK residents to offer accommodation to people escaping the conflict in Ukraine. The District Council responded rapidly to ensure that residents who were keen to support those fleeing the war in Ukraine could offer a place to stay as promptly as possible. This initial work included hundreds of DBS checks, in-person visits to check accommodation was suitable, ensuring payments were made to both guests and hosts, and much more.

Recognising that guests want to live more independently where they could – the Council established dedicated support for those who wanted to find their own accommodation early in the scheme. This included involvement from Homes for Ukraine guests who have in-turn helped other guests.

Councillors have said that South Cambridgeshire residents responded with extraordinary kindness, making the district one of the leading areas nationally for participation.

Council campaign secures free school meals for more families

More than 80 extra children in South Cambridgeshire are now receiving free school meals, thanks to a pioneering initiative between two councils. The campaign uses smart technology used by South Cambridgeshire District Council and innovative data-sharing between it and Cambridgeshire County Council to identify families eligible for support - but not currently claiming it.

The additional free school meals are expected to be worth more than £314,000 to the 66 families over the lifetime of their claims – if they claim from now until their children reach the end of year 11. Additionally, it is expected to be worth more than £1 million to local schools in government funding in the process.

Communal Room in St Vigors Road Fulbourn converted to sheltered bungalow

An unused communal room in a sheltered housing scheme has been transformed into a wheelchair-friendly sheltered bungalow thanks to a renovation project by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The former communal space at St Vigors Close, Fulbourn - once overlooked and unused by residents - has been given a new lease of life through an 18-month transformation.

The property has been turned into a vibrant two-bedroom bungalow with features to ensure it is fit for the future, including full wheelchair accessibility throughout, a level access wet room and an open plan living and kitchen area suitable for wheelchair users. There is also a redesigned frontage with off street level access parking.

The project was made possible following extensive negotiations by the Council to revise lease agreements and create workable planning solutions after it was found the sheltered scheme communal room building was not being used, and the residents had no interest in keeping it.

The 18 Shopper Bus is back serving Six Mile Bottom

The Tuesday only bus from Teversham to Newmarket had stopped serving Six Mile Bottom without permission. Having got nowhere with the officers of the Combined Authority which contracts the route, we complained to the Traffic Commissioner because the bus operator A2B was breaking its licence to operator the route. Within days it got sorted and A2B is being investigated by the Traffic Commissioner.

Local Housing Nominations for Teversham and Fen Ditton for Springstead Village and Marleigh for South Cambs residents

We found out that local nominations on the housing waiting list for South Cambridgeshire allocated affordable homes in the Springstead Village and Marleigh housing developments were not being given preference over others living in the district, whereas those living in the City close to the developments were being given preference for the City council allocated homes. This has now been corrected. The developments in Fulbourn are not affected, with nominations with a local connection being given preference as per the long held South Cambs policy.

Carla & John