
Report: County Councillor (Hardwick div.) District Councillor (Harston & Comberton)

Cllr Michael Atkins

April 2025

Highlights

- Highways capital schemes
 - Local government reorganisation
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Personal update

I am expecting to take a period of paternity leave from mid-April to the start of June. For any queries or issues during this time, please contact District Cllr Lisa Redrup (cllr.redrup@scambs.gov.uk) who has kindly agreed to cover my absence, and/or from May please contact your new County Councillor following the election as I am not standing again.

It has pleasure to be your County Councillor for the last four years and I will work with my successor to hand over any live issues on my return.

Please accept my apologies for the gap since my last report which is not unconnected to the above news!

News from the County

HAF programme

Funding for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme has been extended by the Department for Education into 2025. The programme offers families the opportunity to access funded places and a meal for their child during the main school holidays of Easter, Summer, and Christmas. Any child receiving benefit-related free school meals is eligible for the Easter programme, which will run between 7 and 17 April. Approximately 20,000 HAF eligibility vouchers were sent to Cambridgeshire families on 3 March. Each voucher offers a child sixteen hours of access, for no charge, to a HAF registered holiday scheme. Further information can be found at

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/support-with-the-cost-of-living/holiday-activities-and-food-programme

Council of Sanctuary

Cambridgeshire County Council has received Council of Sanctuary status, reaffirming the council's commitment to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for people seeking sanctuary in Cambridgeshire. The council is amongst one of the first county councils in the UK to receive this national award, which celebrates local authorities that work hard to demonstrate hospitality and a warm welcome to new arrivals in the area. The title was awarded by City of Sanctuary UK, a nationally coordinated network of organisations and services that support refugees and people seeking asylum. Cambridgeshire's wider commitment to being a place of welcome and inclusion.

Highways capital schemes for 25/26

The following highway schemes have been approved from the capital budget for the following year. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of road improvements that will take place, as other work will be funded from the revenue budget and/or alongside the delivery of GCP schemes:

- Toft: preparation for surface treatment works on B1046 (treatment to take place in 26/27); lining refresh on the same
- Barton: surface treatment of Kings Grove,
- Caldecote: vegetation clearance of bridleway to Hardwick Woods
- Comberton: lining refresh of Green end and South Street
- Kingston: lining refresh of Church Lane and Bourn Road

In addition, there is £100k set aside for minor capital schemes across South Cambridgeshire, and the design of a new retaining wall for Bin Brook adjacent to Barton Road

News from GCP, Combined Authority & Gov't

Local Government Reorganisation

As you may be aware, Cambridgeshire is will be subject to a reorganisation of local government over the coming years, to replace the current District/County council(s) with some number of Unitary councils. There are both grounds to think this could bring benefits to residents (such as a more joined-up and efficient service) and significant risks (larger councils may lose connection to local places, restructure likely to be costly and distracting, statutory duties could crowd out existing good work at district level).

The Leaders of Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire, Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire councils signed a joint letter to the Government Minister promising to collaborate and progress proposals for the reorganisation, with work 'at pace' after the May elections.

News from the District

Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Housing Land Supply Report 2025 (5 year land supply)

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning team has published a new report with a revised housing trajectory and our latest housing land supply calculations. This shows that in the five years from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2030, a total of 13,383 homes are anticipated to be built in Greater Cambridge, giving a housing land supply of 5.5 years. This means that planning applications will again be assessed against all the councils' local policies – which include a clear plan for where homes should be built - as well as those set nationally – and our villages will once again enjoy the full protection against unplanned and inappropriate development. The government's revised (and significantly higher) housebuilding requirements meant that our 5-year figure briefly dipped below 5 years, so this is good news indeed.

New SCDC website launches

SCDC's new website is now operating, which has a new, more user-friendly look and feel and is optimised for both desktop and mobile devices so that it's easier for residents to find critical information and services. It which allows residents to get personalised, local information at a glance.

By entering their postcode, residents can get information on bin collection dates for their street, local street cleansing schedules, nearby planning applications, District Councillor details and local events of interest. [Try it on the new homepage.](#)

Green spaces Funding

I was delighted to join local school pupils to assist with the planting of a wildflower meadow in Coton, part of the Green Spaces initiative funded by the Combined Authority and delivered by the District Council, and accompanied by new picnic tables, raised beds and trees. In year two of the project there will be work done on Cambridge Rd, Barton, with tree planting and hedge works to create a noise and pollution barrier for residents.

Contact Details

Councillors and residents are welcome to contact me on any issue which is concerning them:

<p>Cllr Michael I. Atkins matkinslibdem@gmail.com 07968 264637</p>
