

Report of Councillor Carla Hofman and Councillor John Williams to Parish Councils for June 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 cllr.hofman@scambs.gov.uk

Audit Committee update

South Cambridgeshire District Council's Audit & Corporate Governance Committee reviewed and approved its Draft Statement of Accounts 2022/2023, Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023, and its Local Code of Governance on Thursday 16th May.

Our Local Code of Governance sets out the council's framework of policies and controls, mapped to the best practice "seven core principles of good governance". The governance framework is supported by the seven Principles of Public Life.

As part of the review the Committee agreed it would be helpful to share and promote these documents with all Members.

For more information about the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee please see the Annual Report of the Committee which was presented to the Council on the 23rd May.

New National Planning Rules

New national planning rules now in place make it easier for farmers to convert their unused buildings into new homes and shops. Permitted development rights provide more freedoms to develop without applying for planning permission. From today, the government is extending these rights to give farmers greater freedoms to diversify and convert agricultural buildings to commercial uses, as well as up to 10 homes, without needing to submit a planning application. These rules are subject to space and natural light conditions, to ensure homes are suitable.

Grants for Community Food Growing

Grants of up to £500 have been launched by South Cambridgeshire District Council to support communities to grow their own food sustainably as part of the wider cost of living response project.

The Community Growing small grants will enable local groups including parish and town councils to buy equipment and tools that will help to support projects on unused land or existing allotments for items such as rabbit proof fencing, raised beds, seeds and soil. Informal groups of local residents are also able to bid.

To ensure the project will benefit the wider community and not just individuals, applicants must demonstrate how they will promote community food growing and how they intend to share their produce should there be a surplus. This could be through a donation to their nearest foodbank, or a 'help yourself' box placed nearby.

It will also be encouraged for groups to share photos of their produce and any donations to foodbanks to help promote this scheme.

Once applications have been submitted, decisions will be made within two weeks to enable projects to start as soon as possible. The grant will run until 31 March 2025, or until funds are exhausted.

To find out more and apply, please visit the South Cambridgeshire District Council webpage.

Rail and Ale Trail Booklet

In support of local pubs and to encourage sustainable travel, a Rail and Ale trail - which puts a spotlight on using local trains and the walks you can take to the village pubs in South Cambridgeshire - has been published by the District Council alongside the Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership.

The guide features five stations in South Cambridgeshire including Foxton, Shepreth, Meldreth, Shelford and Whittlesford Parkway. The trail highlights 16 village pubs, all within a 35-minute walk from the stations.

The booklet details short, picturesque walks you can take from the railway stations to the local pubs within the area and what is on offer.

The booklet will be available at all the local pubs included in the guide. The booklet can be accessed online via the Council's Visit South Cambs website:

<https://visitsouthcambs.co.uk/activities/rail-ale-trail/>

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning shortlisted for the RTPI 'Planning Authority of the Year – East of England'

On the back of being shortlisted for the Planning Awards 'Local authority planning team of the year' as reported last month, we are very proud to announce that Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service is shortlisted for the RTPI 'Planning Authority of the Year – East of England'. The RTPI East of England Awards for Planning Excellence 2024 showcase and celebrate the best plans, people, and projects. The winners will be announced at a ceremony on 20 June 2024 at Cripps Court Conference Centre in Cambridge.

Carla and John