

LONGSTANTON WARD DISTRICT COUNCELLOR REPORT OCTOBER 2024

LONGSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL (7TH OCT 2024)

OAKINGTON & WESTWICK PARISH COUNCIL (14TH OCT 2024)

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL (22ND OCT 2024)

CLLR NATALIE WARREN-GREEN

Winter Fuel Payments and Pension Credit

One of the first significant things the government has done since the election is to issue new rules on winter fuel payments which means that only those in receipt of Pension Tax Credits can receive the extra annual winter payment. Pension Credit is worth, on average, £3,900 per year and, apart from the Winter Fuel payment, it also unlocks additional support such as help with Council Tax and a free TV licence for those over 75. The rules on backdating claims mean it is possible for individuals to apply for Pension Credit and have their claim backdated by up to three months (if they were entitled to claim during that time). This means that the latest date to apply for Pension Credit and still qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment is 21 December 2024.

There are many people who are entitled to Pension Tax Credits but do not claim it, so SCDC is working to identify these people and to remind them that they have the opportunity to apply. If you know of anyone who may be in this position, please contact me and I will connect them to the right SCDC officers.

The Department for Work and Pensions has produced a toolkit to support councils to ensure older people understand how they can get Pension Credit.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>

Household Support Fund

Related to the issue mentioned above, it's good to report that the government has announced an extension to the Household Support Fund to help councils support struggling households with bills and essential costs. The £421 million extension gives certainty to SCDC and other councils in England over the winter months (the funding is in place until April 2025) as they work to help those struggling with the cost of energy, food and water. Pensioners and others struggling to heat their homes or afford other essential items over the colder months should contact their council to see what support may be available to them (as above, I can direct them, if necessary). Details on the latest scheme will be communicated more widely in the coming weeks.

Helping older people stay in their homes for longer in South Cambridgeshire

A total of £345,000 has been pledged to [Mobile Warden Schemes](#) in South Cambridgeshire for the next three years to help more elderly people stay living in their own homes for longer.

The pledge comes after the District Council partnered with [Rose Regeneration](#) to undertake an in-depth review of local schemes to understand more about how much it costs to run them and help them become more sustainable in the future. The resulting funding package is affordable and fair for all and will target the funds where they are needed the most. The District Council has traditionally had an annual budget of £21,000 to support schemes but invested around £300,000 to try and increase the coverage of the service in South Cambridgeshire communities by supporting new schemes to develop. The review is important as it has taken into consideration predicted high growth in over 65-year-olds over the next 20 years and recognises that with age comes increased risk of deteriorating health, loneliness, and feelings of isolation. Councillors have backed a new three-year funding scheme that starts from April 2025.

Local Climate Action Conference 2024

SCDC is holding its second Local Climate Action Conference 2024. It is being held from 11-3pm on Tuesday 19 November at The Hub, High Street, Cambourne, CB23 6GW. The event is open to the public and hopes to welcome parish councils, community groups, charities and interested individuals – anyone working to meet the challenges of the climate and nature emergencies. If you wish to attend, please RSVP by Tuesday 5 November 2024 here: <https://tinyurl.com/587j635n6>

Combined Authority Bus Consultation

As we are all aware, our villages suffer from poor bus services, so I make no apology for repeating this information. The Combined Authority is currently running a consultation on proposals for a new framework of services which will run until 20 November 2024. I encourage residents to give the authority their views. Details can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/3m75ysdn>

SCDC is now a White Ribbon organisation

I am delighted to report that SCDC has become White Ribbon Accredited in recognition of its commitment to preventing harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls. It is committed to working towards ending violence against women by becoming accredited and aligning with White Ribbon UK, the leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women. As part of our work towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation, SCDC introduced and strengthened policies and practices to support staff and residents of all genders who experience domestic abuse. This work was praised by assessors as inspiring and exemplary. As part of our White Ribbon action plan, Ambassadors and Champions will continue to raise awareness of the White Ribbon promise to “never use, excuse or remain silent about men’s violence against women”. SCDC has a strong group of male colleagues across numerous departments, White Ribbon Ambassadors, who have pledged to advocate positive attitudes and behaviour within the organisation. Ambassadors and Champions (who are women who work to support the work of White Ribbon) will raise awareness and support our local community groups and partners in their own work to end men’s violence against women.

COUNCILS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND GOVERNMENT FUNDED ORGANISATIONS

If you have a problem or concern do not worry too much about who can solve it just ask the question and we will endeavour to signpost to the right person. The organisational structure of Cambridgeshire is complex, but it is important to identify where responsibility lies.

<p>County Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Education, Transport, Highways, Heritage, Social care, Libraries, Trading standards, - Waste management, Maintaining their estate.</p> <p>Some of these services are shared between Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council but any concerns should be directed to the county council.</p>
<p>District Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Council tax payments and benefits, Household bin collections, Housing and housing benefits, Council leisure facilities, Environmental health, Residential planning.</p>
<p>Parish/ Town Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Looking after community buildings, Open spaces, Allotments, Play Areas, Bus shelters.</p>
<p>Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)</p> <p>'The local delivery body for a City Deal with central Government worth up to £500 million over 15 years, to vital improvements in infrastructure (decarbonising transport), supporting and accelerating the creation of 44,000 new jobs, 33,500 new homes and 420 additional apprenticeships.'</p> <p>Partnership between Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, University of Cambridge.</p>
<p>The Combined Authority, Cambridge and Peterborough, our elected Mayor</p> <p>'A combined authority (CA) is a legal body set up using national legislation that enables a group of two or more councils to collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries.'</p> <p>What our mayor does – Business support, skills, housing, transport, environment, international, digital connectivity, resilience, research, and strategy. New homes.</p>
<p>Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridge and Peterborough</p> <p>To support and challenge the Chief Constable to provide effective and efficient policing services for the area.</p>
<p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority</p> <p>The Fire Authority is the governing body responsible for delivering a fire and rescue service to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It is made up of Cambridgeshire County Councillors and Peterborough City Councillors.</p>

CONTACT DETAILS

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the above, or any other matters.

Cllr Natalie Warren-Green for Longstanton Ward including Longstanton, Northstowe, and Oakington & Westwick

Email: cllr.warrengreen@scamb.gov.uk

For those on social media we have a highly active Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2066298150052161/> - Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe