

LONGSTANTON WARD DISTRICT COUNCELLOR REPORT NOVEMBER 2023

LONGSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL (4TH DECEMBER 2023)

OAKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL (11TH DECEMBER 2023)

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL (19TH DECEMBER 2023)

CLLR NATALIE WARREN-GREEN

Climate Action Conference

Last month I reported that SCDC was hosting a Climate Action Conference in Cottenham in November, coinciding with COP28, celebrating net zero action locally. I didn't make it to this myself, but the feedback is that it was well received by the 80+ people who attended. I don't know if anyone from the LPC, OPC or NTC attended, but for anyone interested, especially local environmental action groups, this video is a 4 minute overview of some of the innovative initiatives SCDC is supporting including Repair Cafes and Active Travel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE6EOhzwVmo>

In addition, the presentations from the Conference itself can be found at:

<https://linktr.ee/zerocarboncommunities>

The Zero Carbon Communities grants have provided over £500,000 in funding locally since it was launched four years ago. Designed to equip community groups to take climate action at a local level, the grants have helped upgrade community buildings, educate people about their carbon footprint, and help nature recover in the district. The conference was so well received that I suspect it will be repeated with different but related content in the future.

4-day week and the government's Best Value Notice

There was an extraordinary council meeting about the 4-Day week held at SCDC on 20th November. I couldn't attend in person as I was still Covid positive. However, I did attend online on the Teams link. A decision was made to provide the Government with the data required by them to assess the trial. Details of the data being gathered and copies of the correspondence from Government can be found at:

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/four-day-working-week-trial>.

Homes for Ukraine: Appeal for support with Landlord Incentive scheme

In a previous report, you may remember that I drew your attention to a new scheme - the 'Homes for Ukraine Landlord Incentive Scheme'. In the scheme, landlords who provide properties in South Cambridgeshire to Homes for Ukraine guests and who are resident in South Cambridgeshire qualify for a financial incentive. These incentives differ depending on the size of the property, and whether they are provided at market rent or at the local housing allowance rate. Under the standard arrangements the landlord must provide a minimum tenancy of 6 months from the outset but if they offer 12 months initially, then they become eligible to receive double the amount for a 6-month tenancy. After the initial term expires, landlords can receive a further payment if they offer to renew the tenancy.

Anyone who is interested in joining the scheme can find out more by emailing the team on HFULiaison@Scams.gov.uk or calling them on 01954 713411.

The following table gives details of the initial payments:

Number of bedrooms	Market rent incentive	LHA rate incentive
1 Bedroom	£1,140	£2,280
2 Bedroom	£1,300	£2,600
3 Bedroom	£1,350	£2,750
4 Bedroom	£1,410	£2,820

Continuation of 'thank you' payments for Homes for Ukraine Sponsors

We have been advised that the government is to extend for third year (nationally) the 'thank you' payments for Homes for Ukraine sponsors. The payments will remain at £500 per month to reflect the ongoing generosity of hosts in supporting those who have fled the war. A further £120 million is also being granted nationally to invest in homelessness prevention, which includes support for Ukrainian households who can no longer remain in sponsorship.

Council's social housing maintenance

Just over a year ago SCDC entered into a completely new contract with Mears for the repair and maintenance of the council's social housing portfolio. A year on, a full contract review has been conducted. This shows that performance over the previous contract has improved significantly across the piece. There were, initially, some problems in a number of areas but Mears have put in additional measures to improve their performance, including operative upskilling and additional contractor support from central teams and subcontractors. Overall tenant satisfaction is high, with 93% of residents reporting satisfaction with the service they have received. Complaint numbers have been low and when they have been received, they have been fully investigated. The council will continue to monitor Mears' performance closely to try to drive standards higher still. If anyone would like to read the full report (19 pages) please let your Clerk know and I will email it to them for distribution. Alternatively, you can watch a 7 minute video which is a summary of main findings:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JbGKtRugmPA>

COUNCILS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND KEY 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>

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

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.

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@scambs.gov.uk

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

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