

District Councillor's Report Feb 28th 2023 - Cllr Tom Bygott

Funding to improve walking and cycling routes

On 6 February, the Department for Transport announced £200 million of government funding to help councils make improvements that enable more people to choose active travel. Active Travel England has invited councils in England to apply for the funding. Schemes could include:

- creating more paths in rural areas
- developing safer routes for children to walk to school
- improved safety at junctions for people walking and cycling

Funding will also be used to support people in wheelchairs and mobility scooters by making street designs more inclusive. Projects will be designed in consultation with residents and businesses to ensure schemes are safe and work for local communities. The successful projects will be announced later this year. www.gov.uk/government/news/200-million-to-improve-walking-and-cycling-routes-and-boost-local-economies

St Ives Greenway

The Greater Cambridge Partnership has developed a strategy to create a network of Greenways to connect South Cambridgeshire villages with Cambridge along a series of corridors. These will extend footpaths, cycleways and in some cases bridleways in order to create more sustainable travel. The St Ives Greenway uses the Guided Busway to St Ives as a backbone to which nearby villages can be connected. More information, including a map is available at: www.greatercambridge.org.uk/sustainable-transport-programme/active-travel-projects/greater-cambridge-greenways

The connection to Rampton, along Reynolds' Drove, from the Rampton Drift crossing of the busway to Cuckoo Lane is an eminently sensible route that provides cyclists, especially those accompanied by children, a safe route through the countryside, without the dangers of busy traffic. I would like to see this followed up with a further connection onwards along the New Cut to Broad Lane in Cottenham.

However, a public consultation is currently underway until the 31st March 2023 on a connection between Oakington and Cottenham along the side of the main road, where cyclists and horse riders would rub shoulders with cars and trucks that are travelling at high speed. I am opposing this proposal on the grounds of safety and am proposing an alternative off-road route.

Voter ID and Voter Authority Certificates

From 4 May 2023 voters will need to show photo ID when voting in person in some elections and referenda. Although this shouldn't really be necessary in a town like Northstowe, where there is a good community spirit developing, it is being introduced nationwide to combat fraud that has occurred mainly in urban areas where society has become more anonymous.

There is a list of types of Photo ID at: www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/photo-id-youll-need

One of these is a Voter Authority Certificate, a special type of photo ID enabling an individual to vote in person at elections and referenda but which cannot be used as proof of identification for any other reason. Individuals only need to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate if:

- they do not have other accepted photo ID
- they no longer look like the photo on their ID
- the name on their photo ID is different to their name on the electoral register

More information can be found at: www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

An application can be made using one of these forms:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-voter-authority-certificate-by-post-if-youre-living-in-the-uk

www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-by-post-for-a-voter-authority-certificate-if-youre-living-abroad-in-the-armed-forces-a-crown-servant-or-a-british-council-employee

Changes to battery recycling collections

Adjustments to bin lorries mean that small plastic bags containing used batteries can now simply be left on top of green, black or blue bins for collection by crews on their usual rounds. Previously, residents of both areas were asked to tie a small bag containing used batteries onto the handles of their blue bin. Now, they can simply put used batteries inside a small plastic bag, tie it up, and leave that bag on top of any of their three bins when they put it out for collection.

Most small common household portable batteries can be placed out for collection at the kerbside, including AAA, AA, C, D and button cells. Please do not include mobile phone, laptop batteries or those that are attached to a device. Search online for 'recycle small electrical items' instead.

Residents of flats with shared bins should not leave batteries on these but can take them to one of the many public battery collection points at corner shop chains, supermarkets, chemists and petrol stations as well as those at recycling points and Household Recycling Centres. The website www.recyclenow.com has a list of all locations. The nearest to Northstowe are at the Longstanton Co-op, the Co-op and the One Stop store in Willingham and Tesco at Bar Hill.

Cllr Tom Bygott
cllr.bygott@scams.gov.uk
07765 475 513