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# Welcome to the January 2018 Cambridgeshire Matters newsletter

## Happy New Year!

Welcome to the third edition of Cambridgeshire Matters, designed to keep you up-to-date with the County Council's latest news and features relevant to you and your Council. Please do share this e-newsletter with your Councillors and feel free to use any of the features in your own newsletters or social media. We know lots of Parish Councils have a long history of wonderful local newsletters - our Archives team, whilst preparing for their move to Ely, came across a Parish Council magazine from 1895 from Orwell Parish Council's collection.

In November 2017, the annual countywide Parish Council Conference was a chance to look back at the history of Parish Councils and look to the future, with the launch of your 5 year [Local Council Development Plan](https://cambsparishes.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/01_local_council_development_plan.pdf) ([https://cambsparishes.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/01\\_local\\_council\\_development\\_plan.pdf](https://cambsparishes.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/01_local_council_development_plan.pdf)). Thank you to those of you who helped formulate the plan and took the time to attend. We were really pleased to see so many Councillors and Clerks on the day - 165 delegates attended, representing 73 parishes across the county, an increase of 12 on the previous year. The feedback showed that 85% thought it was 'Good' or 'Excellent' and the workshops were particularly well received with lots of ideas being taken back to parishes for action. Many thanks to Cambridgeshire ACRE, as part of Support Cambridgeshire, for organising it on behalf of the Stakeholder Group. The [full conference report](https://cambsparishes.wordpress.com/2017/11/28/local-council-conference-report/) (<https://cambsparishes.wordpress.com/2017/11/28/local-council-conference-report/>) is available to view.

We're working hard on getting the content of this e-newsletter right, so please give us your feedback. Is the newsletter too long? Too short? Not enough relevant features? Let us know your thoughts by emailing [\[email protected\]](#) after reading Cambridgeshire Matters, so we can ensure our newsletter works for you.



## Reminder

The Council's Business Plan is refreshed every year and formally approved by Full Council each February. The 2018/19 budget will be considered on 6 February 2018. This is when the County Council's part of the council tax is set. Follow the proceedings live via our web streaming on [YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqkJNraVXNq2oF5JBx2\\_Afw\)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqkJNraVXNq2oF5JBx2_Afw), or follow along on [Twitter \(https://twitter.com/CambsCC\)](https://twitter.com/CambsCC) with the hashtag [#CCcmgtgs \(https://twitter.com/search?q=%23cccmgtgs&src=hash\)](https://twitter.com/search?q=%23cccmgtgs&src=hash).

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## Community winter gritting volunteers

The Highways Service team would like to give a very big thank you to all the gritting volunteers who have made a difference in the community this year.

If you're thinking about getting back out there or want to become a volunteer for the first time, January is a good time to give it a try - and a great excuse to work off any excess Christmas pudding as it's cheaper than the gym!

[View further information on the scheme and being a gritting volunteer](#)

## Community highways volunteers

Volunteers can also help to improve their local neighbourhood through small scale highway maintenance works. The scheme enables parishes, towns and community groups to undertake certain additional maintenance activities, such as:

- Litter picking
- Cutting back vegetation
- Cleaning signs
- Siding out of footpaths

Please read our [Improving Highways page](#) for further information on this scheme.

## Drought damaged roads

We are currently delivering a large programme of works which was awarded within a joint Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough County Council Tranche 2A Challenge Fund bid, contributed by the Department for Transport (DfT) for the repair of Drought Damage Roads. The Peterborough projects started in December 2017, with Cambridgeshire County Council due to start 22 January 2018.

[Find out if work is happening in your area](#)

## Connecting Cambridgeshire - broadband demand survey



The superfast broadband rollout has now reached more than 95% of the county and is aiming for 99% coverage by 2020.

Residents can use the Connecting Cambridgeshire [postcode checker \(http://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/my-area\)](http://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/my-area) to check the position in their area and find out how to upgrade or improve broadband speeds.

Those who want superfast broadband, but cannot access it yet, are being asked to complete a short online [broadband demand survey \(http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/QINRM/\)](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/QINRM/) before the end of February 2018.

## Collective switching

Cambridgeshire  
Energy Switch



396 households signed up to Cambridgeshire's Energy Switch auction in October 2017 and are now able to make savings on household energy bills. Residents who missed out on the October auction will have another chance in February 2018. [Find out more \(https://bigcommunityswitch.ichoosr.com/Product/index.rails?actionId=647\)](https://bigcommunityswitch.ichoosr.com/Product/index.rails?actionId=647)

## Council budget survey results

From September to December 2017, we consulted on spending plans for the 2018/19 Business Plan. It was decided that the consultation should consist of focus groups, a representative household survey and an online survey. These have now been completed.

Members of the Communities and Partnerships Committee were asked to identify topic areas for the Consultation. The findings for each of these are shown below:

## **Volunteering and community resilience**

16.4% residents surveyed said they regularly gave their time to assisting in their local communities. The most common activities people were involved in were volunteering at schools and with social groups.

## **Quality of life**

People believed that the County Council played a key role in their lives and the lives of their communities, adding to the quality of life in the area.

## **Spending plans**

A number of different proposals were consulted on, including charging for services and greater use of technology. Focus groups members were keen on proposals that had long-term benefits, to this end they were against selling land and assets to address short-term gaps in the budget.

## **Council tax**

There was support from most residents for the Adult Social Care Precept (71.4%), this is increasing Council Tax by 2% to pay for rising adults social care costs.

## **Stay Well campaign**

The logo for the Stay Well campaign features the words "STAY WELL" in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font, stacked above the words "THIS WINTER" in a slightly smaller, bold, blue sans-serif font. The text is all in uppercase.

A big thank you goes out to all Parish Councils who have assisted with distributing the Stay Well Winter Health Packs to vulnerable members of their communities.

The Stay Well campaign supports people in their quest to stay healthy during the winter months. Cold weather can particularly affect those aged over 65, the under 5s or anyone with long-standing health conditions such as breathing or heart problems. Keeping warm is important for protecting health and this campaign provides information and tips that range from how to best heat your house and access to bids to help with heating bills to the importance of hot drinks and food during the winter months.

Stay Well is the first campaign on the new website - [www.bewellcambridgeshire.co.uk](http://www.bewellcambridgeshire.co.uk) (<http://www.bewellcambridgeshire.co.uk>) - where you'll find links to local and national support.

## **Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

Earlier in the autumn of 2017, we launched 'the Hub', an initiative that provides a safe place for some of our most vulnerable young people who are at imminent risk of needing care or are already being looked after. They can receive

support in their families, or stay with us for short or medium term until they return home or move to a family placement or independence. They receive intensive support from a range of specialists.

The aim of the Hub is to bring stability to the lives of these young people and to improve their outcomes, such as lowering their need for long term care, educational attainment and less contact with the criminal justice system.

Currently, the Hub has had placements since its launch in October 2017 and has supported 27 young people in the community. To find out more, please watch the following video.

## The Hub

## Cambridgeshire Insight

### What is Cambridgeshire Insight?

[Cambridgeshire Insight \(http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/\)](http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/) showcases local research and information from a host of partners. The site also acts as a local response to Open Data and users can access a range of local datasets including population estimates, population forecasts and local housing completions.

## How can Cambridgeshire Insight support my parish?

Nobody knows your parish better than you but Cambridgeshire Insight allows you to access and share local data, find and download reports and discover intelligence about your local area. It acts as a valuable planning tool to support strategic planning for growth and development of services in the county but there are opportunities to also support evidence led decisions within your parish. The evidence and data released on Cambridgeshire Insight, such as parish demographic profiles, can help you to develop your parish plans and identify opportunities to improve the lives of your residents.

### Watch this space

The website was conceived in 2010 and has provided a wealth of information for users in this time but it has now reached the end of its development cycle. Based on user feedback, a more interactive and more accessible Cambridgeshire Insight website is in development, and is due to come online in early 2018. The new website will incorporate the added capability of interactive maps and reports for users to explore local geographies. This will enable users to find and compare data for local areas including Parish and Ward level up to District, County and Combined Authority areas across a variety of themes including Population, Economy, Health, Housing and Crime and Community Safety. Details of this site, due for release in early 2018, will be circulated in the next edition of Cambridgeshire Matters.

## New Year boost for Cambridgeshire good causes

Four projects that will help support vulnerable people and reduce demand for council services secured funding from Cambridgeshire County Council at the end of last year.

The Communities and Partnership Committee pledged funding to the first four projects under its new Innovate and Cultivate Fund. These are:

- £5,000 for Ely St John's Primary School to support children with behavioural difficulties
- £10,000 for the Houghton & Wyton TimeBank
- £9,999 for the British Gymnastics Association's Love to Move project that helps older people, many of whom have dementia or Parkinson's disease
- £10,000 for the Hildersham Parish Nurse Plus project

The Innovate and Cultivate Fund is Cambridgeshire County Council's '£1 million fund' to help community organisations, social enterprises and public sector bodies to address the needs of local residents.

If you or someone in your Parish Council has a great idea that would benefit Cambridgeshire residents then it is not too late to apply for funding with a new round of applications invited in the spring. We will also be holding advice surgeries for potential applicants on 8 February 2018. Find out more or apply at <http://www.cambscf.org.uk/icf.html> (<http://www.cambscf.org.uk/icf.html>).



## Changing Lives Programme

Somersham Parish Council has recently benefited from funding from the Innovate and Cultivate Fund.

Their Changing Lives Programme was launched with a Taster Day in September 2017 and has been running a variety of activities over the last 12 weeks. This has included Nordic Walking, chair-based exercise, a creative coffee morning and 'Into the Woods' nature interventions. This has all been done with the support and advice from organisations such as Parkinson's UK, The Alzheimer's Society, The MS Society and the Stroke Association.

Two residents shared their stories with us about how attending the Taster Day changed their lives:

Both Ann and Pearl attended the event, Ann encouraged by a friend and Pearl brought along by her daughter. Ann has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease and Pearl, recently widowed, has been living with Parkinson's Disease for 17 years. They both decided to sign up for the weekly Nordic Walking classes and through contacts made at the Taster Day have been able to access the help they needed. A Team Member from Parkinson's UK was able to support with an application for a Blue Parking Badge and Pearl also received advice on which benefits she could receive from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Pearl's daughter said: "All of these ripples of activity have only come about because of the initial Changing Lives taster day that we attended.

"Thank you for galvanising support and interest from within the community, organising the activities, engaging with the partners and bringing this amazing project to fruition.

"I wanted you to know that it's not just been about "getting out of the house" to go to Nordic Walking, but that it's had a much wider and deeper impact on our lives."

Since then Ann and Pearl, after attending Nordic Walking throughout the past three months, and feeling less isolated and more confident and have both joined the Time Bank. The two ladies are planning on joining up to cook a meal and share it together, and are hoping to make this a regular activity.

*(Names have been changed to protect their identity.)*





## Big Conversation

Thank you to everyone who took part in Greater Cambridge Partnership's Big Conversation which has revealed people want improved public transport and access to more affordable housing.

Thousands of residents, commuters, students and businesses had their say as part of the Big Conversation this autumn – talking about the challenges they face and their aspirations of living and working in one of the UK's fastest growing regions.

The initial headline findings show people's biggest concerns are around transport and housing, with a real appetite among respondents for the authorities to deliver change and improvements that will improve their quality of life as soon as possible.

The Partnership is working to deliver vital improvements to infrastructure, supporting and accelerating the creation thousands of new homes and jobs over the coming years – public feedback during the 'big conversation' will be used to shape future proposals.

The full report is due to be published on 8 January 2018 and will be used to inform the Partnership's investment plans for 2020 onwards.

For more information about Our Big Conversation and the results of the report, please visit [www.greatercambridge.org.uk](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk) (<http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/>).

## The Library Presents...Arts Alive!



The spring season of The Library Presents...Arts Alive begins on 9 February 2018. These professional, exciting performances and workshops are open to all and include music, magic, drama and visual art. They will be taking place in Arbury, Barnwell, Chatteris, Littleport, March, Ramsey, Soham, St Neots, Wisbech and Yaxley.

Audiences who attended 'The Library Presents...' events in the autumn season said: "[It's] brilliant to have creative events on our doorstep" and "[an] enjoyable evening and a relaxing atmosphere".

Tickets are on sale now in libraries and online. Please share this programme with your parishioners.

[View the programme and booking link](#)

## Cambridgeshire's new accessibility checker - come along to one of DisabledGo's work experience days

In 2018, DisabledGo.com will be launching an accessibility checker so that people can find out exactly what they can expect in terms of accessibility in 2,000 places across Cambridgeshire. The access information to places across Cambridgeshire will join over 125,000 other places already covered across the UK on DisabledGo.com, making the website a great tool for planning a day out or trip away.

If you would like to join DisabledGo's team of surveyors to help assess the different places, please come along to a work experience day to find out more:

- [Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Work Experience Day](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MU-R978yPWyonGHRH2ZVBVPKHgGGv0gr/view?usp=sharing) (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MU-R978yPWyonGHRH2ZVBVPKHgGGv0gr/view?usp=sharing) - Thursday 11 January 2018
- [East Cambridgeshire and Fenland Work Experience Day](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dW4KUlggQpDPym7MdkIXg_Z-3Cy7NYrr/view?usp=sharing) (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dW4KUlggQpDPym7MdkIXg\_Z-3Cy7NYrr/view?usp=sharing) - Monday 15 January 2018
- [Huntingdonshire Work Experience Day](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1betvnkPSMnjDKI1BYKcj9rI9HFb3KRJt/view?usp=sharing) (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1betvnkPSMnjDKI1BYKcj9rI9HFb3KRJt/view?usp=sharing) - Thursday 18 January 2018

For more information, please contact:

Rachel Carter

DisabledGo

Email: [\[email protected\]](#)

Telephone: 01438 842 710

## Shared Lives

A new campaign is about to be launched to recruit more Shared Lives carers in Fenland and Huntingdon. A Shared Lives carer is someone who can open up their home to those with a learning disability or an older person needing care and support.

The scheme provides an opportunity for someone to be part of the family and community of a Shared Lives carer who in turn offers friendship, support and care. Whether it is for a few hours a week, a short respite stay or a long-term live-in arrangement, Shared Lives carers can still work while supporting an adult.

For more information, please contact:

Mandy Langley

Countywide Shared Lives Manager

Email: [\[email protected\]](#)

## School energy programme saves £££s

Schools across Cambridgeshire are collectively saving £600,000 per year after joining an innovative energy programme – and more are urged to sign up.

We began a programme of energy efficiency and energy generation projects in schools in 2014 by providing loans or managed service arrangements from its Local Energy Investment Fund. The aim is to help schools plan for the future, upgrade their energy assets and manage their energy bills.

There are now over 40 schools that have signed up to the programme. Twenty-three have already completed their installation and are reaping the benefits of reduced energy costs, and all the sites will have completed their installations by early next year.

Thanks to a package of measures, which include LED lighting upgrades, solar panels for electricity and heat generation, biomass boilers, combined heat and power systems, various improvements to heating systems and controls and various types of insulation, schools have saved an average of 20 per cent on their energy bills.

Sir Harry Smith Community College in Whittlesey has been reaping the rewards of the schools energy programme since the work was completed a year ago saving in excess of £50,000 on energy bills.

Schools have seen a number of benefits from the programme including brighter teaching and learning conditions from upgraded lighting while improvements to boilers, energy management systems and insulation help tackle issues of excessive or insufficient winter heat.

The next phase of the schools programme is now being developed. If you work with a school, or know of a school that could be interested in joining, please email [\[email protected\]](#).

## Calls for Supported Lodgings carers

Our relaunched Supported Lodgings scheme is looking for people with a spare room or annexe who can support a young person leaving care, aged 16-21.

Carers can be from a wide range of backgrounds and walks of life and an allowance of £250 per week is paid to them while they have a young person placed with them. Although the Supported Lodgings scheme requires less intensive support than other types of foster care, carers do, however, need to be able to make time for the young people in their care and show the ability to listen and understand their needs. Carers are also required to offer advice on all aspects of independent living, such as cooking, washing and budgeting.

For more information, please contact:

Cambridgeshire County Council Fostering Service  
Telephone: 0800 052 0078

[Visit our Supported Lodgings webpage](#)

It is a paid caring role with a fixed tax-free allowance of £10,000 per year plus an extra £250 for each person supported each week or part of a week. Please look out for social media content to share across your networks.

## Domestic abuse - the strength in communities

The issue of domestic abuse is often in the media, but it can be hard to relate to national statistics on a local level.

Domestic abuse crosses all boundaries of age, location, status, race, religion and sex – it is present in all communities but communities are also the key to raising awareness.

Many victims don't realise that what is happening to them is domestic abuse even though it can be obvious to friends, colleagues and family. But recognising the signs is only part of it – it's knowing what to do that is important and this is where communities come in.

If you have a role in your community that brings you into contact with people that may be experiencing domestic abuse you can offer support – but it is vital to do this safely. Intervening without some prior knowledge of the complexities of domestic abuse can increase the risk to the victim and their family.

Here are some top tips explaining about how you can offer support in a safe way:

- Try to be direct. Start by saying something like: "I'm worried about you because..." or "I'm concerned about your safety..."
- Do not judge
- Believe what they say - too often people do not believe a victim when they first disclose abuse.
- Reassure them that the abuse is not their fault and focus on support and building up their confidence - acknowledge strengths and remind them that they are coping well with a challenging and stressful situation.
- Abusers often isolate victims from friends and family - helping to develop or keep up outside contacts will help boost self-esteem.
- Be patient. It can take time for someone to recognise they are being abused and even longer to make decisions about what to do. Recognising the problem is an important first step.
- Reassure them that they are not 'weak' - domestic abuse is about asserting power over another person.
- Encourage them to keep a diary of incidents and tell others if they can, and not to retaliate.
- Encourage them to report incidents to a GP or the police, to ensure details are logged.
- Remember that the police may take action on any report of domestic abuse.
- Their safety, both physically and mentally is of utmost importance so don't pressure them into leaving the relationship.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership (Cambs DASV) offers a free [basic awareness online course \(http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/elearning\\_modules/92616\)](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/elearning_modules/92616).

For specialist support in Cambridgeshire, please contact:

- Cambridge Women's Aid - 01223 361 214 - for Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire
- Refuge - 07787 255 821 - for Huntingdonshire, Fenland and Peterborough

You can also visit the [Cambs DASV website \(http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/\)](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/) for more information or downloadable posters to display in your community. [New posters are available online \(http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/posters/305453\)](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/posters/305453) and can be downloaded for free by anyone.

## **New senior appointments in the Place and Economy Directorate**

We are pleased to announce the following appointments to the new Assistant Director positions within our Place and Economy Directorate (formerly Economy, Transport and Environment Directorate (ETE)):

- Assistant Director Highways - Richard Lumley - [\[email protected\]](#)
- Assistant Director Environmental and Commercial - Sass Pledger - [\[email protected\]](#)
- Assistant Director Culture and Community - Christine May - [\[email protected\]](#)

Bob Menzies will be Acting Assistant Director for Infrastructure and Growth until the end of May 2018 and Graham Hughes remains as Executive Director for Place and Economy.

In addition to this, Jeremy Smith and Stuart Walmsley have both been appointed as Group Managers in the Infrastructure and Growth directorate.

These appointments are effective from 1 January 2018.

## **Ring out for peace - appeal for bell ringers to join unique World War One centenary commemoration**

An appeal has gone out to church bell ringers around Britain to join in a major event next year to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War One.

The organisers of Battle's Over, a national and international event marking the armistice, wants to see more than 1,000 churches and cathedrals participate by ringing their bells simultaneously at 7.05pm on the night of 11 November 2018.

The event has four charities linked to it – The Royal Naval Association, Army Benevolent Fund – the Soldiers Charity, RAF Benevolent Fund and the Merchant Navy Association.

More information on Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute 11 November 2018, and how to take part, can be found at

## Secondary school teacher recruitment event - are you training to be a secondary school teacher?

Teach in Cambridgeshire is running an event on 11 January 2018 for people currently training to be secondary school teachers who are thinking about their first teaching role in Cambridgeshire. The event will provide:

- The chance to talk with local senior leaders about their schools and vacancies
- Have a mock interview and receive feedback on your performance
- Get tips from senior leaders about how to maximise your chances when applying for jobs
- A range of workshops to assist you with your career plan and applications

[Find out more and book your place](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/secondary-teacher-recruitment-event-tickets-38804272624) (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/secondary-teacher-recruitment-event-tickets-38804272624>)

## Social work recruitment and development event

Are you a qualified social worker looking to challenge yourself in a new role, or explore a new field?

Come to the Cambridgeshire County Council recruitment event on Saturday 20 January 2018, 10am to 2pm at the George Hotel, Huntingdon, to hear more about career opportunities and attend free workshops which can count towards your continued professional development.

[Further details can be found on our website](#)



## Education Welfare Benefits

Please share the following details with your parishioners:

If you are in receipt of any of the benefits listed below and have children aged 2-19 you may also be eligible to claim, or access, the following Education Welfare Benefits for your child:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit with an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, provided you're not receiving Working Tax Credit, unless on a four week 'run-on' period where WTC is due to end
- Universal Credit

 **Free early learning and childcare for two year olds**

 **Free early learning and childcare for three and four year olds**

 **Free school meals (FSM)**

Thank you for reading the January 2018 issue of Cambridgeshire Matters. We value your input so please do let us know your thoughts on this issue by emailing [\[email protected\]](#) or by clicking on the "Did you find this information useful" buttons at the bottom of the page.

Have you got a story you'd like included in the next issue? Please email it to us at [\[email protected\]](#) and title the email - "Cambridgeshire Matters Content Submission".

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