

Cllr Lorna Dupré

MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2025

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The three options being considered by council leaders for the shape of future councils in Cambridgeshire have now expanded to five, or maybe four—with two new three-council options added to the mix.

Peterborough City Council is now working on the option proposed by its two MPs, with a 'Greater Peterborough'; a 'Greater Cambridge'; and a council covering East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, and what would be left over of Huntingdonshire.

And Huntingdonshire District Council announced at the end of September that it would be working on a proposal for a go-it-alone Huntingdonshire, with East Cambridgeshire joined to Peterborough and Fenland, and with Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire forming its own unitary council.

It is not yet clear (at the time of writing) whether this means Huntingdonshire will not be promoting Option C (which puts East Cambridgeshire in with Fenland and Peterborough), in which case it would not be presented to Government as no-one else is currently promoting that option.

East Cambridgeshire has not yet announced a go-it-alone option of its own, although the Leader of the District Council did say at the Full Council meeting of the District Council in mid-September "If I had my way we'd be a unitary council all of our own and I know that together we would do a brilliant job without fuss". Might East Cambridgeshire follow Huntingdonshire's lead?

Cambridgeshire County Council is building the business case for Option A (East Cambridgeshire with Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire) and launched a survey at <https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/your-future-councils/> which closes on Friday 3 October.

QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY 2025

The results of the County Council's third annual Quality of Life survey have now been published.

1. Happiness is at its highest point since tracking began, but loneliness and mental health struggles remain high

Happiness levels remain high (84 per cent) consistent with the levels seen in previous years. Residents report often feeling lonely (30 per cent) and

struggling with their mental health (28 per cent), with younger age groups more likely to report these concerns.

2. Residents remain concerned about the cost of living and jobs and investment

Concerns about cost of living increases remain high, with 87 per cent of residents reporting that they personally feel concerned. This is continuing to put pressure on residents, with over half of residents reporting taking action this year as a result of cost of living increases. Just under two thirds (62 per cent) of residents report concern over the level of investment and jobs in their local area. This has been steadily increasing year on year.

3. A sense of community and pride of place continues to be strong amongst residents

Consistent with previous years, residents continue to feel safe in (85 per cent) and have a sense of belonging to (76 per cent) their local communities. Around half (48 per cent) of residents are involved in their local community.

4. Residents' views on Cambridgeshire County Council performance are the most positive since tracking began

Residents continue to trust the Council to make decisions (52 per cent) and deliver value for money (47 per cent), higher than Local Government Association (LGA) averages. 50 per cent agree the Council acts on the concerns of local residents, lower than LGA averages but an increase locally compared to 45 per cent in the previous two years of the survey. Half (50 per cent) of residents feel that the Council keeps them well informed about the services and benefits it provides.

5. Usage of several services has increased since 2025 and residents' satisfaction with most CCC services is at its highest point since tracking began

Registration services, library services and waste management have the highest satisfaction ratings. Road and pavement maintenance continues to be the lowest area of satisfaction among service users but satisfaction has increased this year to 28 per cent.

More details of the survey and findings are available online.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/quality-of-life-survey/quality-of-life-survey-2025>

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION

Community digital hubs

Connecting Cambridgeshire is inviting applications from community groups and organisations to enable Digital Hubs across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Connecting Cambridgeshire will be supporting applicants by providing small grants of up to £4,200 to procure connectivity solutions and digital devices to be

used in their spaces by the public, and provide the local community with access to digital skills and confidence.

These hubs aim to ensure holistic digital inclusion support can be delivered locally, through trusted partners, with established relationships within their communities.

The original deadline for applications was Tuesday 30 September, but I'm hoping this can be extended.

<https://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/about/help-to-get-online/digital-hubs/>

Civic and Church Gathering

I was pleased to attend a 'Civic and Church Gathering' hosted by St Mary's Church in Ely on Thursday 25 September.

The event was organised under the umbrella of Movement for Recovery: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. This initiative is bringing together churches from across the East Cambridgeshire District Council area—along with civic and community partners—to explore how we can work together for the good and flourishing of the places we live and serve.

With funding from Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service, Movement for Recovery have been mapping the ways local churches across the region are already contributing to community wellbeing in areas such as mental health and wellbeing, support for families and early years, and tackling food poverty.

In particular the organisers are interested in exploring the ways in which the church can add value to what its civic partners are already doing.

I was able to share the findings of the County Council's Quality of Life Survey and the Poverty Strategy Commission, and look forward to closer working.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme set to continue to 2029

The Holiday Activities and Food programme is set to continue to 2029, providing thousands of children in Cambridgeshire with food and fun during school holidays.

The Government has announced it will continue to fund the programme across England for a further three financial years, meaning that families in Cambridgeshire will continue to benefit from the scheme until March 2029.

Through the programme, local holiday schemes offer free access to fun, enriching activities and nutritious meals for children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals. Running during the Easter, summer, and

Christmas holidays, HAF helps reduce pressure on families by providing safe, engaging environments where children receive a meal while having fun.

Holiday scheme experiences include sports, creative arts, Forest School, playschemes, and outdoor adventures. The programme also supports families by reducing childcare costs, promoting social inclusion, and connecting them with local support services.

Cambridgeshire County Council ran 132 schemes over the summer holiday period, with an estimated 3,300 children participating.

Cambridgeshire Youth Work Conference

Cambridgeshire County Council's Communities Service will be hosting the annual Cambridgeshire Youth Work Conference on Saturday 15 November at Ely Community College.

Through a series of talks, workshops and stalls, the conference will enable local partners and youth practitioners to come together and access specialist resources to support them in their work with young people.

If your community works with young people and would like to raise awareness of the support you provide, then please liz.morris@cambridgeshire.gov.uk and nichola.west@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

Fens 2100+ update

The Fens 2100+ project has issued the following update.

Baseline reports

The final draft of the catchment baseline reports is due mid-July. Once issued there will be a review process undertaken with EA colleagues, IDBs and key stakeholders to ensure they are an accurate reflection of the current system and meet the objectives of Fens 2100+. Following the review process there will be a final period of refinement alongside the development of a system wide report, capturing the key elements from each catchment.

Case for Change

The team continue to develop the Case for Change alongside our partners with the completed first draft due in July. Building upon the evidence highlighted by the Baseline Reports the Case for Change explores the current and potential value of the Fens, sets out our case for continued and enhanced investment in the area and considers how we shift to a system wide approach to asset management. To support this a 10-step action plan

has been developed which will be implemented by the Partnership over the next 2 years to ensure we set ourselves up for success.

Flood Resilience Strategy

The work we have done to date has further highlighted the need for continued investment in our existing, ageing asset base to ensure we manage the inherited system that we currently have. In the autumn we will publish our approach to how we will develop a Flood and Coastal resilient Strategy which will be finalised in 2027. The strategy will include a costed 10-year pipeline of investment priorities with a focus on 'no regret' decisions as well as identifying potential transformational shifts. In addition, it will define a 'target end state' for the system at the end of 5, 10, 15 and 20 years to allow us to monitor success.

The update says that the Environment Agency will be 'publishing [their] first set of key deliverables in the Autumn'.

Anglian Water Waste Water Treatment Plant move de-funded

The move of Anglian Water's waste water treatment plant from north-east Cambridge to Horningsea has had its funding withdrawn by the Government. £80M had already been spent on preparations for the move, and planning permission had already been granted.

The move was intended to make way for a large development of sustainable housing known as 'Hartree'. The decision to de-fund the project means that space will need to be found somewhere else in Greater Cambridge for those homes, and new plans will need to be drawn up for waste water treatment.

New town at Tempsford

The Government has announced its intention to build three new New Towns before the next General Election, in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Leeds. The Bedfordshire site is Tempsford, south of St Neots, earmarked for a new railway station on the proposed alignment of East West Rail.

Community watercourse maintenance grants

Community Watercourse Maintenance Grants of up to £10,000 are designed to support communities where the condition of local watercourses is increasing the risk of flooding. By providing funding directly, the County Council enables local people to take practical action to improve water flow, reduce flood risk, and enhance the surrounding environment.

The grant can be used for vegetation clearance and debris removal, minor repairs to banks or channels, equipment hire or contractor support, volunteer training and safety equipment, and other essential maintenance activities.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/community-flood-action-programme/watercourse-maintenance-grant>

Explore green spaces this autumn

There are many free to access green spaces across Cambridgeshire, providing opportunities to get out on foot and connect with nature.

The Cambs Open Space website shares the top 200 parks in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to explore, as well as an interactive map of parks across the county and upcoming events in green spaces.

The county council also owns eight Local Nature Reserves, all of which are open to the public. They are excellent places to study and learn about wildlife or simply enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of being in nature.

Visit the council's website to access walking routes and top tips.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/active-travel-in-cambridgeshire/getting-started/walking>

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Bus changes for Little Downham, Coveney, and Wardy Hill

The 125 bus service is being retendered by the Combined Authority, and will be renumbered the 10A. The authority claims that 'a short survey was issued to Parish Councils ... in the area in late August', but it's not clear that this actually happened.

The Combined Authority has put the service out to tender with broadly hourly buses during the day, but without the Thursday service from Wardy Hill and Coveney in to Ely. Details of the tender can be found at <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/057001-2025>

The draft timetable for the new service is as follows.

Ely, Market Street	...	07:28	08:14	09:14	10:14	11:14	12:14	13:14	14:14	15:40	16:40	17:40	18:40
Ely, Warwick Drive	...	...	08:19	09:19	10:19	11:19	12:19	13:19	14:19	15:45	16:45	17:45	18:45
Ely, Nene Road	...	...	08:28	09:28	10:28	11:28	12:28	13:28	14:28	15:54	16:54	17:54	18:54
Ely Leisure Village	...	07:33	08:33	09:33	10:33	11:33	12:33	13:33	14:33	15:59	16:59	17:59	18:59
LD Matthew Wren	06:37	07:37	08:37	09:37	10:37	11:37	12:37	13:37	14:37	16:03	17:03	REQ	REQ
LD opp Townsend	06:39	07:39	08:39	09:39	10:39	11:39	12:39	13:39	14:39	16:05	17:05	REQ	REQ
Ely Leisure Village	06:46	07:46	08:46	09:46	10:46	11:46	12:46	13:46	14:46	16:12	17:12	...	...
Ely, Nene Road	06:51	07:51	08:51	09:51	10:51	11:51	12:51	13:51	14:51	16:17	17:17	...	...
Ely, Warwick Drive	07:01	08:01	09:01	10:01	11:01	12:01	13:01	14:01	15:01	16:27	17:27	...	...
Ely, Market Street	07:08	08:08	09:08	10:08	11:08	12:08	13:08	14:08	15:08	16:34	17:34	...	...

(REQ means request stop only)

I believe this is a list of timing points rather than the full list of stops but have asked that question. I've received a comment that this new route appears not to stop at Lawns Crescent.

I have been advised that the Combined Authority will be discussing its 'comms approach' imminently, and that this will 'allow [them] to consider some minor tweaks to the service, if required during the mobilisation period'. On the Coveney and Wardy Hill Thursday service, officers say:

The team are currently assessing the data for current usage from Coveney and Wardy Hill on the Thursday market day to inform any tweaks required to the Tiger on Demand service, to enable passengers to be more confident that the journey is 'fixed'. That is balanced against the current usage of the Tiger on Demand service during those times, and potentially negative consequences for existing users.

I will be continuing to press for a fixed Thursday service for these residents.

I have also raised the issue that the Tiger on Demand service covers Coveney and Wardy Hill but not Sutton, meaning that residents of Coveney and Wardy Hill who are registered at Priors Field in Sutton cannot use the service to access their GP. The response I have received is that

We are currently considering the Tiger on Demand zones via a review that will report back to Transport Committee and CPCA Board in November. Part of that will examine the existing zones and improvement opportunities. We will be carefully balancing increasing zone sizes with potential locations and how current bus routes serve locations to avoid abstraction from existing bus routes. I will ensure this specific case is fed back to that review.

Hundred Foot Bank Pymoor roadworks

A permit has been granted for the closure of two kilometres of Straight Furlong and Hundred Foot Bank for reconstruction, from Monday 13 October to Friday 12 December. The contractor is Octavius, who carried out the reconstruction of Chain Causeway in Sutton and other major road rebuilding schemes in Cambridgeshire last year.

I have asked for details of the access to domestic properties and farms along the route of the works.

B1381 Chain Causeway

I've raised the condition of Chain Causeway Sutton, from Earith Bridge to the first bend, with officers and am waiting for them to come back to me with a plan. I've received a number of concerns, entirely justified, about this.

Brambles and overgrowth

I've reported brambles overgrowing the pavement at Station Road Sutton and School Lane Coveney, and been promised their removal.

Winter Wheeler events

Four free Winter Wheeler events are taking place this autumn, designed to encourage Cambridgeshire residents to stay safe and keep cycling throughout the colder months. Our nearest event is on Thursday 6 November at Ely railway station from 11:00AM to 2:00PM.

Each event will include Dr Bike sessions (free bike checks), a bike light giveaway, bike marking by Cambridgeshire Police, cycle maps and cycling advice, and the opportunity to meet Active Travel Officers for advice and support.

A limited number of spaces are available for Dr Bike sessions. There may be some availability for walk-in appointments subject to late cancellations and no-shows. Bike markings and bike light giveaways do not require a booking.

<https://outlook.office.com/book/DrBikeSessions@cccandpcc.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabled>

(apologies for that hyperlink!)

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

Sutton surgery

Cllr Mark Inskip and I hold our monthly surgery at Joy Bistro 65 High Street Sutton. Forthcoming dates are Monday 6 October and Monday 3 November, 18:30-19:30.

Or catch me on ...

- Wednesday 1 October, 10:00, St Andrew's Hall (Witchford coffee)
- Tuesday 14 October, 10:00, The Glebe Sutton (Timebank coffee)
- Wednesday 22 October, 14:00, Little Downham Village Hall (book café)
- Wednesday 22 October, 10:30-11:30, Coveney Village Hall (coffee morning)
- Wednesday 31 October, 11:00-12:00, Scott Court Sutton (Nellie's)

The above dates may change at short notice subject to late changes to my diary.

I can also be contacted ...

- by email at lorna@lornadupre.org.uk
- on Facebook
- by phone on 07930 337596

Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton division