

District Councillor report to Parish Council June 2021

Outdoor wellbeing activities

14 - 17 year olds can register for free outdoor activity sessions at Milton Country Park. There are eight sessions which include bush craft, yoga, survival skills, water sports etc, all with an aim of benefitting welfare for the teenagers within this age group. The eight-week course starts on the 6th June. Teenagers are encouraged to sign up to the free course to secure a place. There will be further courses in July and October. I have included the link to register below. The sessions are an hour and a half long and run on Sunday afternoons with small groups of teenagers supported by skilled instructors and trained youth workers. It is hoped the course will help teens tackle things like mild anxiety, low mood, self-esteem and confidence issues; all of which are important given the previous year where many teenagers have been disadvantaged due to restrictions caused by the pandemic. The course has been developed by the Sport Lakes Trust and SCDC and has also had input from a clinical psychologist. I hope Parish Councillors in the Fen Ditton and Fulbourn ward will circulate this information and teenagers from the villages within our ward will benefit from this free service.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/wildminds>

Two Neighbourhood Plans adopted at the last full council meeting

There have been two Neighbourhood Plans adopted at the last full council meeting held in May for the villages of Cottenham and Histon and Impington. Both of these plans will now go on to formulate part of the development plan for Greater Cambridge meaning that both of these two areas planning decisions will be made in accordance with the retrospective neighbourhood plans. Both of these plans were adopted by the District Council unanimously and have been the product of a huge amount of work by Parish Councils, resident groups and individuals within the community. Both plans had been put to the residents who lived within the areas in a referendum. Both plans were successful within the referendums.

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, a partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, has a statutory duty to support any local community preparing a neighbourhood plan. Work is continuing to prepare 16 Neighbourhood Plans for other villages while one is already in place on the former Land Settlement Association Estate at Great Abington. There is only one Neighbourhood Plan being actively worked on within the Fenn Ditton and Fulbourn ward and that is the plan for Fulbourn. The Fulbourn plan is at a stage where it has been out to consultation and that consultation is now being factored into the plan.

Neighbourhood planning is a new way for communities to have a say in the future of the places where they live and work. It gives you the power to produce a plan with real legal weight that directs development in your local area. It helps you:

- choose where you want new homes, shops and offices to be built
- have your say on what those new buildings should look like
- grant planning permission for the new buildings you want to see go ahead

Groups can get tailored advice, support and grants to develop their neighbourhood plans.

There is more information on Neighbourhood Planning on the following website if Parish Councillors in the Fen Ditton and Fulbourn ward want to look into this more closely.

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org>

Zero-carbon grants

The zero-carbon grant scheme is now open for applications. Parish Councils and local groups can bid for cash to spend on projects that reduce carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels. The grants can range from between £1,000 and £15,000. This money comes from business rates from renewable energy sites like solar farms. As your District Councillor and a member of the Environment Committee, I am happy to work with Parish Councillors and residents to put forward applications that meet the criteria set out by SCDC. I am happy to work with Environment officers to get applicants examples of previous schemes and answer detailed questions regarding the scheme. Let's hope many villages put forward successful applications within the Fen Ditton and Fulbourn ward.

Election results

There were four bi-elections held last month on May 6th for seats on the District Council. Two of these seats were Liberal Democrats that had resigned some time before bi-elections could be held and two of these were councillors that stood down due to personal reasons as elections were being held. The four seats that had bi-elections in were Girton ward, Harston and Comberton ward, Melbourn ward and the Milton and Waterbeach ward. All four of these seats were won by the Liberal Democrat party which is in control of SCDC. This means that the Liberal Democrat's already large majority has been increased by 1 as one of those seats was held by an independent councillor. This means the current political split is 31 Liberal Democrat Councillors, 11 Conservative, 2 Labour and 1 Independent at SCDC.

Autonomous vehicles being trialled in Cambridge

Autonomous vehicles are being trialled as part of a government-funded project led by the Greater Cambridge Partnership, Smart Cambridge and engineering firm Aurigo Driverless Technology to look at how autonomous technology could be used on the public transport network.

In February 2018, a consortium made up of Coventry-based engineering firm Aurigo Driverless Technology (the autonomous vehicle division of RDM Group) and Smart Cambridge, a workstream of the Greater Cambridge Partnership, was awarded Government funding from the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CCAV), and Innovate UK, the Government's innovation agency, in support of the £3.2m project to develop trial vehicles.

Aurigo was tasked with developing a number of self-driving shuttles which could potentially be trialled on a southern section of the existing Guided Busway, when ordinary buses

weren't running. The initial out-of-hours trial service was planned to run between the Trumpington Park & Ride site and Cambridge Railway Station via the Cambridge Biomedical Campus site. It could pave the way for a range of autonomous services to provide on-demand public transport for workers at large employment sites – such as the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and West Cambridge – and potentially for people enjoying an evening in the city in the future.

Rachel Maclean, Transport Minister said: “Self-driving vehicles present a number of opportunities for the UK from providing safer, greener and more reliable transport services to creating tens of thousands of well-paid and skilled jobs across the nation. This project is hugely exciting and is an example of how self-driving vehicles could make it easier for people to travel on the UK's future public transport network.”

*Thank you for taking the time to read my report; if you have any questions or want to discuss any of the issues raised email me on graham.cone@councillor.online or ring 07595 361 285 (please leave a voicemail if I am unavailable) **Councillor Graham Cone***