

# South Cambs Magazine Spring 2025

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## Hello

Welcome to the spring edition of South Cambs Magazine

I'm sure you'll have heard how central government is keen to reorganise local government. Rather than having separate county and district councils providing services - which is currently the case in Cambridgeshire - there is a desire to have single 'unitary' Councils. However, many people are worried about how local this new structure will make local government, and I admit I do share those worries. Nevertheless, we're working with other local councils to look at what might work best for residents. We'll know more as the year progresses and will provide you with more information through South Cambs Magazine as we can.

In the meantime, 2025 is set to be a year to highlight our dedication to the environment and pledge to be greener than ever before. This edition of the magazine therefore explores tips to not only save water but also save you money on your water bill. Keeping a closer eye on water use protects both a precious resource and our local habitats. To find out more turn to page 6.

We have been busy putting together our Corporate Plan for the years ahead. We received 400 responses during last year's consultation into our proposed plan for the future. Those

views helped inform our new goals. You can read more about how we intend to achieve these aspirations by going to page 11.

Elsewhere, our Community Chest fund has helped to support the Liberation Cycle, a lovely new initiative that saves bikes otherwise destined for landfill - and repairs them before giving them away for free to people in need across the region. We gave a grant to this charity to help enable people who may not be able to purchase a bike, a chance to travel in a more sustainable way and connect with others in their community. Read more on Page 15.

I hope you find the magazine enjoyable to read.

Cllr Bridget Smith  
Leader  
South Cambridgeshire District Council

## Contact us

It's easier to contact us online. You can do more online at a time to suit you.

### Chat with SAM, our new AI Assistant

SAM can help you instantly, or signpost you to the relevant team that can help you further. Just click on the speech bubble icon on our website and ask SAM a question.

[www.scams.gov.uk](http://www.scams.gov.uk)

You can also create a My South Cambs account, to see personalised information – such as your Council Tax payments or your Benefits account.

<https://mysouthcambs.scams.gov.uk>

Or you can email us, phone us, write to us, visit our offices, or get in touch using our social media channels.

[scdc@scams.gov.uk](mailto:scdc@scams.gov.uk)

01954 713 000

Our phone line is available 8am to 6.30pm on Wednesdays (until 5.30pm all other weekdays).

South Cambridgeshire District Council, South Cambs Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, CB23 6EA

Our office opening hours are 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. If you come to the office, we'll try our very best to resolve your query there and then. If we can't, our advisors will book you a follow-up appointment when you will be able to speak to someone from our relevant service.

Alternatively, you can book your own appointment at

[www.scams.gov.uk/book-an-appointment](http://www.scams.gov.uk/book-an-appointment)

Facebook, LinkedIn: South Cambridgeshire District Council

X, Instagram: @SouthCambs

Request a large print copy [communications@scams.gov.uk](mailto:communications@scams.gov.uk)

## Summer 2025 Edition

The next issue of South Cambs Magazine will be delivered between Tuesday 27 May and Saturday 7 June. Contact Smart Distribution for delivery enquiries.

[scdc@smartdistribution.co.uk](mailto:scdc@smartdistribution.co.uk) 0800 6444 011

## Putting residents first

**If you phone us we will:**

- resolve your enquiry as quickly as possible

- provide voicemail if the person you need is unavailable
- answer your phone message within three working days.

**If you write to us we will:**

- reply to your letter or email within 10 working days.

**If we write to you we will:**

- write in plain language
- arrange for translation, large type, braille or audio tapes upon request.

**If we visit you we will:**

- carry identification that you can check with a phone call to us
- arrive at the time we say we will, or give you as much notice as possible if we have to change the time.

**If we get it wrong we will:**

- apologise if we have made a mistake or failed to meet our standards
- acknowledge your written complaint within three working days
- reply in full to your complaint within 10 working days.

## Assisted Digital Service Support

We have set up Assisted Digital Service Support to ensure that nobody is excluded from completing an online application or e-form due to difficulty with digital skills or access to a computer. Eligible customers are offered telephone support or face to face support by one of our contact centre advisors. Your local library or Parish Council hub can also help.

[www.scambs.gov.uk/contact-us](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/contact-us)

## South Cambs Magazine

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## News in brief

### Thanks to long-serving Parish Councillor

We would like to congratulate Charles Jones who is retiring in May after serving on Fen Ditton Parish Council since May 1998. Charles has provided valuable dedication, hard work, and commitment to serving the community over the years. Thank you for your valuable service.

Parish councillors work together to help improve their community for the benefit of other

residents. However, this only happens if there are enough people willing to become parish councillors and there is currently a shortage.

If you are interested in becoming one, just contact your local parish council who will be able to tell you more or visit [www.scambs.gov.uk/parish-councilguidance](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/parish-councilguidance)

## **Community Forums**

Our Community Forums are public meetings held in locations around Greater Cambridge that are experiencing major housing growth. It is an opportunity for communities to engage with key stakeholders on major developments. Some of the meetings are held jointly with Cambridge City Council. They are held every three months, and the next round of meetings are listed to the right. Please check our website closer to meeting dates as they are liable to change based on local circumstances.

For full 2025 dates, formats, agendas, Teams meeting links and to submit questions in advance, please visit: [www.scambs.gov.uk/community-forums](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-forums)

Bourn Airfield & Cambourne: 25 June

North West & West Cambridge: 26 February & 12 June

Northstowe: 5 March & 4 June

Cambridge East: 12 March & 18 June

Waterbeach: 19 March & 2 July

North East Cambridge: 26 March & 9 July

## **County Council and Mayoral elections in May 2025**

Elections for a Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be held on 1 May alongside elections for Cambridgeshire County Council. To take part in these elections you must be registered to vote. You are less likely to be registered if you have recently moved house or turned 18. You can find more information about registering to vote on our website at [www.scambs.gov.uk/elections](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/elections)

To vote you will need to bring valid photo ID. A full list of acceptable documents can be found on our website. You can also find more information about how to apply for a voter authority certificate, a special form of ID which you can use for voting.

Remember, if you are going to be away on polling day you can apply online to vote by post or proxy. All the information is on our website.

## **Children's Easter and May holiday sports camps**

Join our popular athletics and netball camps for children in school years three to nine. They are for children of all abilities. Led by qualified coaches, the camps offer a fantastic opportunity for kids to try out a variety of different activities and learn new skills in a safe, inclusive and enjoyable environment.

### **Easter Camps**

- Athletics – 7 & 8 April at Cambridge University Athletics Track
- Netball – 9 & 10 April at Impington Sports Centre

### **May half term Camps**

- Athletics – 27 May at Cambridge University Athletics Track
- Netball – 28 May at Impington Sports Centre

For full details and to book, visit our website at [www.scambs.gov.uk/sportscamps](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/sportscamps)

## Active & Healthy 4 Life

Discover a healthier you with our Active & Healthy 4 Life exercise referral scheme, tailored for individuals managing everyday health conditions. Qualified instructors create personalised gym-based exercise programmes, encouraging twice-weekly attendance and offering advice on complementary activities like walking activities, cycling and swimming. If you're 18 or older and aiming to manage conditions like high blood pressure and cholesterol, diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, asthma, or seeing pre/post operative and mental health support this scheme could be for you.

Simply ask your health professional to complete our website's referral form, then contact your preferred sports centre to schedule an instructor appointment.

Join for £20 per month for four months. Full details, visit [www.scambs.gov.uk/active](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/active) or email [AandH4L@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:AandH4L@scambs.gov.uk)

Bottisham Sports Centre are now taking new referrals. For cardiac rehab classes at Cambourne and Sawston, full details are available at [www.scambs.gov.uk/cardiac](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/cardiac)

## Thank you for recycling cables

In October 2024, we rolled out special bins to some libraries and community hubs as part of The Great Cable Challenge; a national campaign aiming to collect one million cables or chargers for recycling in one month. Cables contain valuable resources like copper, which are needed for industries such as expanding the UK's wind and solar energy generation. Copper production is struggling to meet demand, so clearing out unused cables is an important way to bolster supply. With your help we collected more than 2,000 extra cables which can now be given a second life. Thank you!

Find local cable recycling points at [www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk](http://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk)

## Empowering Care Leavers through work experience with us

In October 2024, we welcomed four care leavers to participate in a work experience placement at South Cambridgeshire Hall. A care leaver is a young person who has been in the care of the local authority and is transitioning to independent living. We aim to support these young adults by providing valuable skills and insights into potential career paths.

The young adults spent time with various teams, including Planning, Communications, Climate and Environment, and Economic Development, gaining a real taste of the range of careers available in local government.

We received overwhelmingly positive feedback, and the participants commented on how the experience boosted their confidence and how much they enjoyed being in a workplace environment. All were pleasantly surprised by the variety of roles available with us. Check our latest vacancies at [www.scambs.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/jobs)

We hope to offer further placement opportunities in 2025, helping more young adults transition smoothly into the workforce and build successful, independent lives.

## Climate and environment: Don't go with the flow!

### Top tips to take control of your water use

How often do you think about water? You may be surprised to know we're using more of it than ever before. According to Cambridge Water, we each use 143 litres a day.

The water that comes out of our taps in South Cambridgeshire is drawn from the natural underground storage which also supplies our rivers and chalk streams and is only replenished by rainfall. High demand for water, especially in times of low rainfall, risks drying out our chalk streams and putting these nationally important habitats at risk. Read more about these precious waterways below.

Although there are plans to relieve stress on water supply in the area, environmental groups warn that to adapt to the pressures of climate change and a growing population, we must all build good habits and reduce our water use at home. You'll be protecting our environment and could save money on your water bill!

### **Top tips for reducing water use**

- Take short showers instead of baths. You can also switch to a water-saving shower head that aerates the flow of water for a better soak!
- If your toilet has a dual flush, remember to use the smaller one. If not, you could install devices like Hippo the Water Saver and reduce your flush by litres.
- Don't leave taps running while you brush your teeth, or while you're soaping your hands. Similarly, turn off the shower while shampooing your hair.
- Use your dish washer on the eco setting and only rinse items that really need it.
- Take advantage of Cambridge Water's GetWaterFit, an interactive online tool that provides advice and lets you order free water-saving products. Visit [www.cambridge-water.co.uk/saving-water](http://www.cambridge-water.co.uk/saving-water)
- If your water supply is not metered, consider applying to have a free smart meter installed. This gives an incentive to use less water and might save you money.
- Collect and recycle rainwater where possible, especially for use in the garden. Invest in a water butt with drain downpipe connectors so you can water plants with rainwater. To install water butts in community buildings, local groups can access our Community Chest Grants.

These tips come from the Cam Valley Forum and Transition Cambridge websites. Transition Cambridge recently completed a 'How We Use Water' survey – you can visit their website to view the results and find more tips on reducing water use. Visit:

[www.camvalleyforum.uk/water-resources](http://www.camvalleyforum.uk/water-resources)

[www.transitioncambridge.org/wiki/WaterSaveWaterTips](http://www.transitioncambridge.org/wiki/WaterSaveWaterTips)

## **Climate and environment: Protect your local chalk streams**

**Chalk streams are rare and valuable water courses that shelter unique plants and animals.**

They are nationally important as around 85% of the world's chalk streams are in England, with many of these in East Anglia. In South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge, we are lucky to have at least 17 main chalk streams, focussed in the area known as the Cam Valley.

Chalk streams emerge from water springs in chalk bedrock, called the chalk aquifer. As water moves through this chalk, it is cleaned naturally, creating beautiful clear streams that support a unique array of wildlife.

Healthy chalk streams are home to iconic species like brown trout, otters, water voles and kingfishers, rare insects like the winterbourne stonefly, and plants like stream water crowfoot.

### **What's the problem?**

Many chalk streams are in poor condition, suffering from several threats.

- Pollution, sewage and erosion can damage water quality, degrading the chalk stream environment for the plants and animals that live there.
- Water is taken from the chalk aquifer to supply homes, farms and businesses. This is called abstraction. When water is taken from the chalk aquifer faster than it naturally restores,

chalk streams can be damaged or can dry up completely. This is called over-abstraction.

- Invasive non-native species like American signal crayfish can also upset the streams' delicate natural balance.

### **How can you help?**

- You can help chalk streams in our area by reducing your water use, to ease the demand on the aquifer. We have put together our top water saving tips on the previous page.
- Get involved in looking after chalk streams and nature in your local area. Contact your local Parish Council to find out if there is a local nature group near you.
- Report pollution in chalk streams and other watercourses to Anglian Water on 03457 145 145 or [anglianwater.co.uk/tell-us](https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/tell-us)
- As spring arrives, it's a good time to visit some chalk streams for yourself.

Here's some of the examples in South Cambridgeshire with public access:

- The River Granta can be found in Babraham, Linton, Great Abington and Hildersham via public footpaths and in village recreation grounds.
- The River Mel near Meldreth and Melbourn has a footpath for much of its length and can be accessed at public playing fields.
- The River Shep has a footpath along the majority of its course and takes in Shepreth village centre.

Cllr Brian Milnes, our Lead Cabinet Member for Environment, said:

"Chalk streams are one of the rarest freshwater ecosystems in the world, with around 85% of them found in the UK. Their rarity makes them vital habitats, supporting diverse wildlife. These streams also play key roles in flood regulation, nutrient cycling and maintaining clean water supplies, making their protection crucial for both biodiversity and the essential services they provide."

## **Climate and environment: Maximise home energy efficiency with Action on Energy**

**Action on Energy is a partnership of local councils that provides communities with advice and support for maximising home energy efficiency.**

The partnership aims to save you money on your energy bills and reduce your carbon emissions through providing funding opportunities and retrofit-focused guidance and resources.

For the last two years we have delivered improvements to homes through the Home Upgrade Grant 2, funded by the UK Government, which is now closed for applications.

We have provided more than 75 properties with a variety of insulation and clean heat installations in South Cambridgeshire alone. These installations aim to make it easier and less expensive to keep homes at a comfortable temperature year round.

We visited several properties as part of an audit for the Home Upgrade Grant 2, and each resident described the improvements as positively impacting their bill savings and comfort.

One resident said:

"Thank you, and to the Action on Energy team, for helping me to acquire the new heating system. It really has changed my life on a day-to-day basis and is appreciated much more than you could ever know."

Following the success of this scheme, we will continue to seek funding opportunities to support further energy efficiency upgrades to homes.

Any updates to funding available can be found on the funding page of the Action on Energy website. The website also has information on energy efficiency, retrofit measures, installation, additional funding schemes, partnership contractors, and other practical guidance.

To learn more about funding schemes, the eligibility criteria for each of them, and all other key information, go to the Action on Energy website [www.actiononenergycambs.org](http://www.actiononenergycambs.org)

Alternatively, contact the Action on Energy team:

Email: [homeenergy@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:homeenergy@scambs.gov.uk) Phone: 07598 069067

## **Your Council: Four-day week consultation**

**Up until the end of the day on Sunday 23 March, you can share your views on the services you've received from us during our four-day week trial.**

An eight-week public consultation got underway at the end of January. It has been designed so residents, businesses, town and parish councils and community or voluntary groups can share views on how they have found Council services since January 2023 – when our trial of a four-day week began. The information gathered during the consultation will help our District Councillors decide on the next steps for the four-day week at the Council.

We announced plans to trial a fourday week – where people deliver 100% of their work, in around 80% of their contracted hours, for 100% of their pay – to help address acute recruitment and retention issues.

Following a detailed and independent review of an initial three-month trial, the trial was extended for a further year and we have continued to work in this way.

The idea of a four-day week at the Council is to improve services by filling hard-to-fill posts permanently, rather than relying on more expensive agency staff, which can also be disruptive. For example, when bin lorry drivers leave, it can disrupt collections when new drivers are learning bin routes or agency drivers cover them as replacements are trained. 11 lorry drivers left the Council in 2022, but only five did in 2023 after bin crews joined the four-day week trial.

We are now eager to hear about residents' experiences of our services during this way of working – which this consultation is allowing us to gather. Residents can also comment on the four-day week generally.

Our Lead Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr John Williams, said:

"We'd really appreciate you taking the time to respond to this consultation. It's always been our plan to give residents, businesses, parish and town councils and community groups the chance to share their views with us. We want to understand your experiences of services you've received during our four-day week arrangements. So, we are very pleased to have now started that process. Our approach is designed to ensure those who have used our services during the four-day week arrangements can quickly and easily share their views - though anyone, anywhere is welcome to submit comments."

To take part in the consultation, visit [www.scambs.gov.uk/4dw](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/4dw)

If you'd prefer to complete a paper survey, email [communications@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:communications@scambs.gov.uk) or call 01954 713 000

The consultation runs until 11:59pm on Sunday 23 March.



## **Your Council: Meet SAM: our New AI Digital Assistant!**

**We are excited to introduce our website's new artificial intelligence (AI) Assistant. SAM (Service AI Assistant Module) is here to make life easier by offering quick answers and helpful information, right when you need it.**

### **What can SAM do for you?**

SAM is designed to help with all sorts of things. Need information about community events? Ways to pay your Council Tax? Have a question about any services that we provide or amenities close by? Just ask SAM!

SAM can help answer common questions, pointing you in the right direction to find information on our website when you need assistance. SAM is available 24/7, so you can get answers at a convenient time for you. It's like having a helpful assistant available anytime, day or night.

### **How does SAM work?**

SAM uses AI to understand what you're asking and give you helpful responses. It's like texting a friend who always knows the answer! Simply type in your question, and SAM will take care of the rest.

### **Why should you try SAM?**

SAM isn't just any chatbot - it's here to make your life easier. If you ever need information or guidance, SAM is just a message away. The more you use SAM, the better it gets at understanding your needs and providing helpful responses.

### **Introducing AI Voice Technology**

We're also pleased to announce a new upgrade to our phone systems. As part of our ongoing commitment to improving service and efficiency, we are introducing AI voice technology for our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.

You may soon notice that calls to our phone lines are answered differently. Instead of hearing a traditional recorded message, you'll experience a more natural-sounding voice powered by advanced AI technology. This is designed to handle your inquiries more effectively and efficiently, ensuring quicker responses and a smoother experience.

This system will help free-up our Contact Centre colleagues, for longer, to support residents with more complex issues over the phone. Whether you are reporting an issue, making a request, or simply seeking information, the AI system will guide you through the process, providing relevant options and information with ease.

### **What's Changed?**

- **Faster and smarter assistance:** AI technology allows for more dynamic interactions, meaning that the system can understand and process your requests quickly and accurately.
- **Seamless navigation:** The system will offer intuitive prompts that adapt based on your needs, making it easier to get to the right department or resolution faster.
- **Improved voice quality:** The AI voice is designed to sound more natural, providing a more pleasant and conversational experience.

### **Your privacy and security**

As always, your privacy and security remain our top priority. The AI system follows strict privacy protocols and ensures your personal information is handled safely and securely.

## **Your Council: Work with like-minded people at South Cambs Connect!**

**Are you looking for space to set-up your business and co-create with like-minded people?**

## Need a spacious setting to network and brainstorm ideas with specific groups from the community?

Designed for people, businesses and communities to expand professional and personal horizons, network, and collaborate, South Cambs Connect is a modern, open workspace designed to provide a creative and dedicated co-working environment.

Located within South Cambridgeshire Hall on Cambourne Business Park, South Cambs Connect is available for use by local entrepreneurs, start-up businesses, and community groups.

The shared workspace has two meeting rooms, a choice of working environments, and an open, flexible engagement space. Open Monday to Friday between 9am to 4pm, it offers a range of facilities including:

- well-maintained modern office surroundings
- spacious ground floor coworking environment
- bookable hot desks
- business engagement space with networking opportunities
- ergonomic office furniture, booths and private spaces
- large car park with EV chargers
- free office Wi-Fi
- breakout space with access to hot drinks and refreshments
- full wheelchair accessibility
- access to business support and advice

South Cambs Connect has been host to a range of organisations during its first six months.

Midlife360 CIC, a Cambridgeshirebased social enterprise helping women in midlife thrive at work, ran a series of in-person workshops which explored the challenges women face when looking for a new job, how to make their CV stand out and how to approach an interview.

Cadre Rocket, a new group for small to medium sized businesses and freelancers in Cambridgeshire, hosted a series of in-person and hybrid networking events that were well received.

The space also launched the Youth Enterprise Market Challenge, to help young people create successful local market ventures.

What users have said about South Cambs Connect:

### **“Blown away by the customer service”**

“When I arrived for the first time, I was blown away by the customer service provided. It felt thoroughly different to hiring an office space anywhere else - the main reason for this difference being the staff. I had several lovely conversations, connecting me with people who could further help develop my business idea.”

### **“Spacious, bright and clean”**

“The space is spacious and bright. It is clean (including the toilet facilities), and the coffee is great and not expensive.”

### **“Brilliant”**

“Beyond my expectation. It’s brilliant. The thing I liked most was the feeling of open space in a working environment.”

Our free trial of this space has been extended to 31 March 2025. To find out how South Cambs Connect can meet your needs and to book the space, visit

[www.scams.gov.uk/south-cambs-connect](http://www.scams.gov.uk/south-cambs-connect)

## **Your Council: Setting a vision for the years ahead**

**Just after your South Cambs Magazine went to print, District Councillors were setting our new priorities and next year's budget.**

It's after we asked you to help shape our plans for the years ahead – to ensure South Cambridgeshire remains one of the best places to live and work in the country. Almost 400 responses were received during our six week consultation. That feedback helped develop our Corporate Plan for the next five years.

Our vision is for a fairer, kinder and greener South Cambridgeshire, where all residents will be equal partners in their communities. We aspire to create a better district to the benefit of everyone in our communities. We recognise the many challenges that face the district and will continue to work to overcome these to help realise its full potential.

### **Healthy and supported communities**

Supporting and engaging with our communities is key to tackling the challenges we face as a district. Our diversity is our strength and helping everyone live freely and independently is essential to promoting healthy and supported communities.

### **Sustainable homes and vibrant places**

A home is more than a roof over your head, it is the foundation on which people build their lives. An affordable home is essential for people to live happy, fulfilling lives. In light of the housing crisis, we are committed to strengthening our communities by delivering sustainable, affordable homes and vibrant places to live.

### **Helping businesses to thrive in South Cambridgeshire**

Already recognised as a nationally significant area for development, helping local businesses thrive is key to the development of our district - bringing new jobs and opportunities into people's communities.

### **Being green to our core**

Being green is at the heart of everything we do. We're tackling the climate and ecological crises head-on, ensuring our district is ready for the challenges of climate change.

### **Financially secure and fit for the future**

We have a duty to provide high quality cost-efficient services. Being open, transparent, and inclusive and letting evidence guide our decisions is critical to putting residents first.

Our Lead Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr John Williams, said:

"We're proud of how we've managed our finances through the years. It continues to be challenging due to increasing demand for our services coupled with reduced funding. It's a fantastic result for residents that independent reports have described us as a financially-sound Council. However, it's important to remember we only retain a very small amount of the Council Tax we collect. Most of it gets passed on to other authorities – and we continue to do all we can to make the most of every pound we receive."

### **Looking back**

As we work to set our aspirations for the years ahead, we've also taken stock of our achievements in recent years. Here's just a tiny snapshot of some of the things we're proud of.

- We have supported numerous markets around the district and now have 14 markets that run regularly throughout the year. This includes our own Christmas Market, which has hosted 240 traders since 2021 and attracts up to 1,500 visitors annually.
- We allocated Government grants to support local businesses, communities and the local economy, including £876,000 from the Rural England Prosperity Fund and £200,000 to help rejuvenate high streets.

- We've delivered nearly 400 new Council homes since April 2020.
- Since late 2022, we have brought 38 empty homes back into use.
- We have reduced emissions from our operations and estate by 22% from 2018/19 levels.
- We've provided funding to help communities respond to the climate and ecological emergencies, including £625,000 through our Zero Carbon Communities grants.
- In late 2024 we launched 'SAM', our artificial intelligence website assistant. In its first 25 days it received 1,152 requests - of which 87% were successfully responded to.
- We've delivered the Temporary Community Centre and Sports Pavilion at Northstowe. Plans have also been approved for Northstowe's Permanent Community Centre and building work starts very soon.
- We have supported 1,785 people with cost-of-living assistance.
- We have supported 937 guests through the Homes for Ukraine scheme - among the highest in the country for a District Council.

### **Balancing the budget**

We charge one of the lowest Council Taxes in the country to provide services to residents and businesses. Most of the Council Tax we collect is passed to Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Police, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service and parish or town councils. Some is also passed to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, to support local buses.

Less than half of our annual budget is funded from local Council Tax. Our other funding sources include some outside of our control, such as Business Rates and grants, whilst funding is also generated from our investments. A £5.09 per year increase in Council Tax for the average band D home was due to be discussed by councillors as we went to print. This would help to ensure essential frontline services continue to be delivered effectively.

This would mean the average band D home charge for South Cambridgeshire District Council would become £175.40 per year. We expect that this would still maintain our position among the lowest 25% of taxing District Councils in the country.

## **Recycling and waste: The blue bin recycling journey**

**The materials you carefully clean, squash or flatten at home, then put into your blue bin, are on a recycling journey**

The first destination for your recycling is a Materials Recycling Facility, or MRF for short, where all your metal cans, glass, paper and plastics are sorted and separated, mainly by machinery like magnets and infra-red sensors.

Materials are then pressed into bales and ready to be traded. UK buyers are prioritised. Last year all materials we sent for recycling, except for 38% of paper and card, were sold on to UK based recyclers. Some materials like paper are transformed into new products at their first destination, being pulped and pressed into reels of paper for newsprint, for example.

Others like metal, are melted down into ingots which are sold again to manufacturers who make anything from aeroplanes to cans.

From March this year, there is a change in the journey your recycling takes. For the last ten years it has been dropped off by our bin lorries at a MRF in Waterbeach. However, that contract expired, and following a procurement process bound by public sector rules, a new company was appointed. The company that runs the Waterbeach site was not successful so there had to be a change.

Importantly, the result of the tender means no changes to what you put into your blue bin. The new contract was awarded to Re-Gen Waste Ltd which has a MRF in Newry, Northern Ireland. Initially, this is where your blue bin recycling will be taken. One of Europe's most advanced MRFs, it runs on 100% renewable energy and has specialist machinery.

Re-Gen has also told us that, in the first half of this year, it will take over a MRF on the mainland. This will then negate the need to transport the recycling to Northern Ireland.

Re-Gen also has more effective sorting which means better recycling options. For example, it is now possible for 95% of glass to be re-melted and used for new bottles and jars, rather than most being used in road construction.

The new contract does involve further haulage by road than previously. But Re-Gen has an extensive haulage operation transporting both unsorted recycling from 16 councils in England to their MRF, as well as sorted materials from their MRF to recycling companies around the UK. They are using empty space in their lorries returning to their MRF to transport our material.

Like our own Greater Cambridge Shared Waste service, Re-Gen is transitioning its fleet of vehicles to more sustainable fuels like Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil and trialling electric trucks within the first year of our contract.

Our Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Cllr Natalie Warren-Green, said:

“Materials collected for recycling are part of a global economy. There are carbon emissions at every stage of waste re-use. With the change of contract, the impacts of transport changes will be monitored and considered in the round with the wider impacts of processes used for recycling your waste metals, plastics, glass, paper and cardboard.”

## **Recycling and waste: Exciting upgrades coming to Milton’s Household Recycling Centre**

**Later this year, construction will begin on a state-of-the-art Household Recycling Centre (HRC) in Milton, designed to make recycling and reuse easier, safer, and more convenient for residents.**

Cambridgeshire County Council’s new facility will be built on the existing site and adjacent land at Butt Lane. With a larger area and a modern design, the upgrades will focus on accessibility, safety, and sustainability.

### **What’s new for residents?**

- A split-level design, eliminating the need to climb steps to dispose of waste.
- A new reuse shop to give items a second life.
- Additional car parking and a cycle parking area.
- A separate gate for safe pedestrian access.
- A layout that improves safety by keeping site users separate from operational vehicles.

Opening hours for the new site will remain the same.

With South Cambridgeshire’s growing population, including plans for 11,000 new homes at nearby Waterbeach, this expanded facility will ensure convenient recycling and waste disposal for years to come.

Cambridgeshire County Council will introduce a new temporary online booking system for Thriplow, Witchford, and Bluntisham sites when the Milton site is temporarily closed.

### **Timeline and temporary changes**

- Construction is due to start in autumn 2025 and will take around nine months.
- A temporary closure of the Milton site is expected but this will be kept as brief as possible. During this period, residents can use nearby centres at Thriplow, Witchford, and Bluntisham.

- To make visits easier, Cambridgeshire County Council will introduce a new temporary online booking system for these three sites only, if the Milton site is closed. This real-time system will reduce queues and wait times, allowing residents to schedule visits at their convenience, including on the same day. For those without internet access, bookings will also be able to be made over the phone.

Cambridgeshire County Council is working closely with the contractor, Barnes Construction, to minimise disruption and the duration the site is closed for.

The new centre will help to contribute towards the County Council's vision of a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire.

For more details on the new HRC and updates on the construction, visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk) and search for 'Milton Household Recycling Centre improvements'

## **Communities: Greener paths ahead: Safer, greener travel for communities on Greenways**

**Getting around South Cambridgeshire is becoming easier, greener, and safer, thanks to Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Greenways projects.**

These routes are designed to help residents, businesses, and visitors walk, cycle, ride and wheel between towns, villages, and Cambridge with less stress and improvements to safety. Here's what's on the horizon for 2025.

The Barton Greenway is set to take a big step forward this year. Works on Barton Road completed last year, which included 1.3km of temporary footpath and ducting for new utilities being laid, mean construction to upgrade and widen the existing path for safer, smoother journeys is expected to begin in March. New features in Barton village, like raised crossings and a 20mph speed limit, will make it safer for everyone – especially schoolchildren heading to Barton Primary School.

In Fulbourn, work on Phase 1 – linking the village to Yarrow Road – is scheduled to start this year. Meanwhile, planning continues for Phases 2 and 3, which will reach Cambridge Railway Station. These routes will mean fewer cars on the roads and safer, quieter school runs for local families. Residents can expect smoother, low-traffic paths connecting them to shops, schools and more.

The Linton Greenway will also see progress. With the first sections already complete, 2025 will bring new design options for an improved footbridge over the A11, making it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to cross, as well as designs for the remaining sections.

In Sawston, plans are moving forward for better-lit paths, upgrades to the DNA route, and safer roads through Stapleford and Great Shelford. Designs should be finalised by spring. These changes will create safer, better connected villages for everyone.

And in Melbourn, the first improvements are already in use, including a newly widened and resurfaced path linking Meldreth Station to Station Road. This year, the focus will be on safer walking and cycling routes through Melbourn and Meldreth and improving links to places like Shepreth, ensuring everyone has a secure way to get to their destination.

Cambridgeshire County Cllr Elisa Meschini, Chair of the GCP, said:

"These projects are about more than infrastructure. They're about building a greener, healthier future for all of us. Upgrades in Comberton, Horningsea, Melbourn and Linton have already made it safer for people to move around the local area – and progress will continue at pace in 2025."

For updates, visit [www.greatercambridge.org.uk](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk)

## **Communities: New charity offers free bikes and workshops to support communities**

**The Liberation Cycle is a new charity that rescues bikes destined for landfill and revamps them before giving them for free to people in need across the region.**

The charity provides free reconditioned bicycles and bike servicing to individuals facing financial hardship or critical illnesses. These bikes, delivered free of charge, often become vital lifelines for accessing community services.

The charity is based in the Community Workshop in Ashwell Road, Steeple Morden, but supports people living across Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

Antonio Mariconda, the founder, set up The Liberation Cycle after being inspired by how bikes helped his immigrant father integrate into his new community and supported him emotionally and physically after losing his wife, Clare, to cancer.

The charity addresses a significant environmental issue, repurposing some of the 15 million bikes discarded annually. Donated bikes from Thalia and Cambridgeshire County Council's Household Recycling Centres form the backbone of this effort.

The charity also runs community workshops under two flagship projects:

- The Regeneration Cycle: Participants dismantle bikes, learn mechanical basics, and contribute to the charity's parts store, fostering skill-building and social interaction.
- The Labour Swap Cycle: Volunteers repair bikes for beneficiaries while gaining advanced mechanical skills to service their own.

With the help of a grant of almost £1,700 from our Community Chest fund, there are plans to hold 192 workshops annually, including sessions for schools, retirees, and families. The Liberation Cycle aims to engage 10 volunteers per session and become the UK's top bike-focused support organisation.

Cllr Henry Batchelor, our Lead Cabinet Member for Communities, said:

"We are proud to support the incredible work of The Liberation Cycle through our grant funding. Their efforts in refurbishing bicycles and providing them to individuals and families who might not otherwise be able to afford one is a testament to their commitment to building a more inclusive, active, and sustainable community. Access to bikes can transform lives, enabling better mobility, health, and opportunities for all.

Beyond providing transportation, the charity empowers individuals, reduces waste, and builds connections. For more information or to get involved, visit [www.liberationcycle.org](http://www.liberationcycle.org).

To find out more about our Community Chest grant scheme, visit [www.scams.gov.uk/community-chest](http://www.scams.gov.uk/community-chest)

## **Communities: More ways to get around**

**A third of UK households own two or more cars or vans, and car numbers on our roads are continuing to increase. Owning an electric car is a greener way to travel, but there are several other cheaper transport options to consider, which are particularly important for those unable to drive.**

Active travel methods such as cycling and walking are not only good for your health but bring with them the bonus of being free. For those travelling further afield, e-bikes are becoming increasingly popular, with many workplaces (including ourselves) encouraging employees, to consider their benefits.

Car-sharing schemes such as 'Liftshare' are worth investigating, particularly when commuting to a regular destination. Simply add your journey to a matching database and filter your search to find the best lift share for you!

Whereas traditional bus services allow you to catch a bus from a designated bus stop at various scheduled times throughout the day, Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) can offer a more flexible option. DRT is a particularly attractive option in rural areas where traditional bus routes may not be viable.

Tiger On Demand is a new DRT service, allowing users to book bus journeys between designated virtual bus stops within specific zones. Operating Monday to Saturday from 6:30am to 7pm, this flexible and affordable service has been designed to fill critical gaps in public transport, making it easier for people to access work, education, healthcare, and social opportunities. Tiger On Demand is available across South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and West Huntingdonshire, offering improved connectivity for rural and underserved areas.

Journeys can be booked through a user-friendly app, by phone, or via an online portal:

App: via the 'Tiger on Demand' app from Google Play or the App Store

Online: [www.tigerondemand.co.uk](http://www.tigerondemand.co.uk)

Phone: 01480 595 440 (call centre open Monday to Saturday from 6:30am to 7:30pm)

Fares:

- Adults: £2 per journey.
- Children (5-16 years) and Tiger Pass Holders: £1 per journey.
- Under 5s and Concessionary and Disability Bus Pass Holders: Free travel.

Up to date bus timetables, information on bus passes and active travel can be found on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority webpage: <https://transport.cambridgeshirepeterboroughca.gov.uk/>

Two trainlines operate in the district:

Govia Thameslink Railway runs from Cambridge to London King's Cross via Foxton, Shepreth and Meldreth and to King's Lynn via Waterbeach.

Greater Anglia runs from Cambridge to London Liverpool Street via Shelford and Whittlesford Parkway.

Community transport in South Cambridgeshire plays a vital role in connecting residents who do not have their own transport and cannot easily access public transport. These services, primarily operated by voluntary and community sector organisations, offer essential mobility solutions, particularly for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and those in isolated rural areas. This brings with it enormous social and economic benefits. This includes combating loneliness and social isolation, helping people remain independent and allowing them to access services.

Community transport includes:

Dial-A-Ride services: Wheelchair-accessible minibuses and cars providing door-to-door transport. Royston and District Community Transport serves Royston and surrounding South Cambridgeshire villages, Huntingdon Association of Community Transport serves the villages towards the Huntingdon side of South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge Dial-a-Ride serves Milton, Sawston, Bar Hill, Girton, Cottenham, Histon and Impington and The Voluntary Network serves Linton, West Wickham, Great Wilbraham, Weston Colville, Carlton, West Wrating, Horseheath, Castle Camps, Weston Green, Abington and Balsham.

Hospital transport: In general, patients are responsible for getting themselves to and from non-urgent NHS appointments. NHS Cambridgeshire funds patient transport in certain circumstances. For example, where the patient's medical condition is such that they require the skills and support of Patient Transport Services staff. Transport is arranged through your GP surgery and is subject to eligibility.



Community car schemes: Run by volunteer drivers coordinated at the village level, these schemes operate across the district and charge passengers a per-mile rate, ensuring affordability. If a scheme does not cover a particular parish, neighbouring schemes may be able to assist, though additional mileage costs might apply. Care Network Cambridgeshire collaborates with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to support the establishment of new community car schemes. Individuals or groups interested in setting up a scheme can reach out to Care Network Cambridgeshire on 01954 211919.

Taxi Card scheme: This is aimed at those aged 65 or over who live in Papworth Everard, Fen Ditton, Horningsea, Teversham, Fulbourn, Girton, Grantchester, Histon, Impington, Oakington, Sawston, Cambourne and Babraham. Journeys need to be mainly for essential purposes such as medical appointments or shopping.

Moped and mobility scooter hire: For example, Shopmobility schemes that can lend manual wheelchairs and powered scooters to members of the public who might have limited mobility when they shop or visit leisure and other facilities within the town.

Cambridge Dial-a-Ride is a non-profit organisation offering accessible transport for individuals aged 16+ in Cambridge and nearby villages who face difficulties using public transport due to disability, infirmity, or age. The service operates on weekdays, providing travel for medical appointments, shopping, social visits, and more, including outings to destinations beyond Cambridge. Minibuses are equipped with lifts for wheelchairs, and drivers assist passengers door-to-door. Membership costs £15 annually, and fares apply for each journey. Journeys must be booked in advance via phone, with flexible pick-up times to accommodate other passengers. For more information call 01223 506335 or email [memberssupport@cambridgedialaride.org.uk](mailto:memberssupport@cambridgedialaride.org.uk)

For further details on Community Transport operators in South Cambridgeshire, including their contact details details, go to [www.scams.gov.uk/community-transport](http://www.scams.gov.uk/community-transport)

## **Communities: Grow together with our Community Growing Grant**

**This spring, we are encouraging you to embrace community spirit and sustainable living through our Community Growing Grant.**

This initiative supports the creation of Community Growing Projects across the district, where groups can come together to cultivate their own vegetable patches.

The idea is simple yet impactful, with communities working together to nurture a shared garden, growing fresh produce that benefits everyone involved. Not only do these projects promote healthy eating and reduce food waste, but they also provide an opportunity to connect with neighbours, enjoy the outdoors and learn gardening skills.

To help bring these projects to life, we are offering grants of up to £500. You could put this towards creating a small allotment, starting a community vegetable patch, or transforming an underused space into a thriving garden.

Applications are open to any community group in South Cambridgeshire with a passion for collaboration and green fingers. So why not gather your neighbours, get your hands dirty, and grow something wonderful together?

For more information on how to apply, visit [www.scams.gov.uk/community-growing-grant](http://www.scams.gov.uk/community-growing-grant) and take the first step toward creating a greener, healthier community this spring.

## **Communities: Court experience day to educate students about risks of knife crime**

The South Cambs Community Safety Partnership, led by our Council colleagues, took groups of year nine students to a local court for Knife Crime Awareness Days during November 2024, and early this year.

Based on a package designed by East Cambridgeshire's Community Safety Partnership, we made use of Ely Magistrate's Court to give students the experience of being in a real courtroom. They role-played a bag search under suspicion of carrying a knife, a police interview, and a subsequent court session.

The day also involved a presentation around the risks of carrying knives – including that the knife could be used against you, as well as the impact that being prosecuted for carrying a knife without a valid reason can have on future job and travel prospects. We also covered how having a knife makes you more likely to injure someone in a way that will do lasting harm to not only them, but also you and your future and the impact on loved ones.

We were joined by Quinton Green from Music Mentoring Arts and Poetry Workshops, who led the students in thinking about their aspirations and having positive future goals to guide their decisions, including how influences of games and social media can desensitise us to violence and lead to fears of knife-carrying being more common than it is.

Police colleagues also joined us and gave the students a question and answer session with insights into their work, as well as a Magistrate to lead us through the court role-play, all to inspire young people towards possible careers in policing, and legal and court roles.

Contact [communitysafety@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@scambs.gov.uk) if you would like more information or support with this topic.

## **Shop local: Business spotlight: Barton**

**Rural charm and emphasis on local businesses can be found across most of South Cambridgeshire's villages.**

In particular, Barton is a magnet for wild walk seekers and unique retail shoppers with the popular Burwash Manor at the forefront of celebrating the joys of independent businesses. Blend all this together and Barton is a destination worth visiting.

Not four miles from Cambridge, the heart of the village has a serene duck pond reflecting seasonal change and with it, adjacent to its green, an illustrated map of local trails enticing walkers and dog owners to explore winding countryside footpaths. A quaint parade of storefronts, the village post office and convenience store are also found in this pleasant spot.

Within walking distance, Burwash Manor becomes the centre of attention. A vibrant, thriving mix of independently owned boutiques and eateries and home to seasonal events, it is a popular destination all year round and open seven days a week. Art Hound Gallery is home to distinctive contemporary prints and portraits demanding perusal before visiting Burwash Larder for a wide selection of fresh delicacies and organic delights. Remaining in the mood for food, in the courtyard's centre, Flock Café serves a variety of home baked treats, light meals and, during warmer months, is great for a coffee outdoors in the sun thanks to available tables and chairs.

Venturing further - yet barely scratching the surface - diverse artisan gifts, flowering bouquets, exclusive clothing and colourful fabrics can be found across Freda & Bert, The Manor Florist, Cuckoo Clothing, and Backstitch – each fascinatingly stocked with something for everyone to enjoy.

The village is also home to two pubs. The White Horse combines a traditional pub interior with a terrific homemade and cooked to order Thai menu. It has both indoor and outdoor seating

and offers rooms, making this an ideal location for overnight stays so close to the city. Back towards the duck pond, The Hoops is a characterful venue offering excellent live music and themed evenings for its locals and regular visitors. With outdoor furniture, there is choice here too for alfresco drinks in warmer seasons.

Elsewhere, Barton has a plethora of additional services and experiences. Maggie's Farm Shop has a glowing array of food, coffee and luxury products; The Retreats offers beauty and wellness packages; and our four-legged friends can enjoy dog-training facility, Positive Paws.

Supporting these businesses not only guarantees a memorable visit but also contributes to the sustainability and allure of this picturesque village. Why not plan a visit and see for yourself?

Cllr Peter McDonald, our Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development, said:

“Small businesses are at the heart of our community and supporting them is vital for keeping our local economy strong, creating jobs, and preserving the unique character of our area. Every pound spent locally helps our villages thrive and continue to be wonderful places to live, work, and visit.

If you are a local business and would like a free listing on our Visit South Cambs website, then please head to the listings section of our website at

[www.visitsouthcambs.co.uk/free-listings](http://www.visitsouthcambs.co.uk/free-listings) or email [visit@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:visit@scambs.gov.uk)

Remember, if you'd like your village featured in a future spotlight, just email [openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:openforbusiness@scambs.gov.uk)

## Shop local: Markets across South Cambs

**Organised by our Economic Development and Investment team, the third annual South Cambridgeshire Christmas Market took place on 7 December at Cambourne Village College.**

Despite bad weather, the joyous event was still enjoyed by 1,000 visitors, welcoming around 100 local businesses – the largest market run we've run to date.

Four hours of free-pitch trading allowed ambitious small businesses to market their wares as the month's festivities began to ramp up. Stallholders trading at the event commented after the market saying it was an “excellent, well-run event”, “an amazing effort”, “this has to be the most organised event I have been to”, and one heartfelt quote went on to say, “from the bottom of my heart a BIG THANK YOU to everyone involved – it is truly appreciated”.

The market was also an opportunity for some of our Youth Engagement participants to gain real-life market experience.

Our team is on hand to support market organisers and traders all year round. Our online toolkit includes advice on setting up a market and a stallholder directory which helps link up organisers and traders. We can also offer advice on location, floorplans, marketing, timings, and more. You can access the toolkit at [www.scambs.gov.uk/south-cambridgeshire-markets](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/south-cambridgeshire-markets)

Dedicated market support is frequently provided by the team to villages across the district. In 2024, Cottenham Market was proudly re-established with our officers assisting the Parish Council to revamp its monthly event at the village hall. Hands-on advice about new traders, local initiatives and advertising methods helps this now buoyant market thrive on the first Sunday of each month. Similarly, practical tips and suggestions were provided to key market stakeholders at Caxton Village Hall, contributing to its first ever market last year where an array of vibrant local traders showcased fresh produce every second Sunday of the month. Both markets display hallmarks of traditional local markets with a direct focus on supporting on-your-doorstep businesses.

Shop and support local businesses using [www.scambs.gov.uk/finda-local-market](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/finda-local-market) to find a market near you.

Our visitor economy website [www.visitsouthcambs.co.uk](http://www.visitsouthcambs.co.uk) also lists markets, including seasonal and pop-up markets, happening in the district, along with a wide variety of other local events, activities and attractions. We also highlight markets happening across the district on the Visit South Cambs social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and X.

Elaine Boyd, one of The Gransden's Farmers Market team, said:

"Thanks for the shout out before last weekend. Our footfall was brilliant and from right across the area."

## **Planning: Award winning Service celebrates a successful year**

**Our Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Youth Engagement Service (YES) were delighted to attend the annual Network CB23 Primary School Careers Convention last year.**

This convention is one of the many outreach projects which the YES team take part in and was an opportunity to encourage over 500 primary school students from the Greater Cambridge region, aged between 10 and 12, to consider pursuing careers in the built and natural environment professions, and to learn about the basics of placemaking and citizenship.

Our YES team gave useful advice on the subjects that they need to study at GCSE, A-Level and university to obtain relevant qualifications to become a town planner, urban designer, architect, landscape architect, arboriculturist, heritage specialist and ecologist. Children also learnt about the basics of placemaking through fun games and quizzes.

The team also ran an in-person survey with over 350 children to understand what they considered important in terms of our priorities. It generated useful qualitative and quantitative data to help plan community facilities for our youth population.

Cllr Dr. Tumi Hawkins, our Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, attended October's convention and said:

"We are pleased that over 500 students have benefitted from our Youth Engagement Service. Throughout 2025, the YES team will continue regular work with schools and colleges in the district to engage local young people and obtain their views on development proposals in Greater Cambridge through our workshops. It aims to ensure that children and young people have genuine input into a development proposal, including the design of buildings, play spaces, public realm and public art."

Meanwhile, in January this year, the YES team proudly received the Social Value Award at the Thornton Education Trust Inspire Future Generations awards ceremony. The YES team were also finalists in six other award categories.

This came after work last summer, when the YES team engaged 60 Year 5 students from Bellbird Primary School in a Public Art Project; 'The Seed'. The partnership included local artist Harry Gray, Abstract Securities Ltd, Bowmer and Kirkland Ltd, Sphere25 and Michael Laird Architects. It enabled students to take part in design workshops comprising a site visit, careers talk on art and architecture, a fun stone carving workshop and a design competition to draw a pattern for 'The Seed' - a 4 metre high Portland stone sculpture.

'The Seed' contains multiple slots - each student had the opportunity to design their own pattern in the form of a little 'stone' seed, which will be inserted into the main sculpture. This project was designed based on the 'YES Social Value Statement' and the 'Greater Cambridge Youth Engagement Framework', ensuring young people have a genuine input into public art and develop confidence to communicate their design ideas to adults.

**Planning: 3C Shared Services Building Control nominated at national awards**

Our 3C Shared Services Building Control service has been nominated as Local Authority Team of the Year in national awards, for the third successive year.

3C Shared Services Building Control is a partnership providing local authority Building Control across Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.

The partnership received awards in the East Anglian heat of the annual Local Authority Building Excellence Awards (LABC) 2024 - which is testament to their hard work.

The awards are among the largest in the building control sector across 12 regions in the UK, with entries submitted by service users. There are place award categories for domestic and non-domestic projects, as well as people award categories for those who work within the construction industry involved in projects.

Congratulations to all the 3C Shared Services Regional East Anglia winners. They are:

- Winner: Best residential extension - Fulbrooke Road, Cambridge
- Winner: Best small new housing development - Grange Farm, Huntingdon
- Winner: Best medium volume new housing development - Elm Street, Cambridge
- Winner: Best small social housing development - More's Meadow, Cambridge
- Winner: Best large social housing development - Campkin Road, Cambridge
- Winner: LABC Site Manager of the Year - Anthony Koop, Morris Homes
- Winner: Best non-residential new build - Project Birchwood, Melbourn Science Park
- Winner: Public Service Superstar for collaboration working with 3C Shared Services - Danny Hans, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Highly Commended: Best large social housing development - Ironworks, Cambridge

All Regionals Winners were entered into the national final. For more information visit [www.labc.co.uk/awards/building-excellence-awards-2024](http://www.labc.co.uk/awards/building-excellence-awards-2024)

If you are considering your own improvement project, you may need to consider whether you require Building Regulations approval. For further advice and to make a Building Regulations application get in touch:

Website: [3csharedservices.org](http://3csharedservices.org)

Phone: 0300 7729622

Email: [buildingcontrol@3csharedservices.org](mailto:buildingcontrol@3csharedservices.org)

You can also visit the LABC Frontdoor website for advice on home improvements, building regulations and working with builders and designers:

Website: [www.labcfrontdoor.co.uk](http://www.labcfrontdoor.co.uk)

## **Competition: WIN Bottomless dinner for four people at Scott's All Day**

Scott's All Day based on Mill Road in Cambridge are offering a lucky winner a three course bottomless dinner for four people, with unlimited refills of soft drinks, Prosecco, wine or bottled lager!

'Scott' is Scott Holden who moved to Cambridge in 2013 to manage Fitzbillies, after running some of London's best casual restaurants (The Pig and Butcher, Smokehouse and Heirloom).

In Cambridge, Scott and his family lived off Mill Road, growing to love the area's rich food scene. When the opportunity came to open his dream neighbourhood cafe, it could only be on one street.

Scott has travelled widely, working in Vancouver and New York, running a low and slow BBQ restaurant and obsessively checking out every diner, deli and corner joint from Brooklyn to the Bronx. The quirky neighbourhood restaurants and diversity of great tasting quick food helped shape his ideas for Scott's. Just like those cosy dives embedded in New York's avenues, Scott wanted to build a home-from-home for locals with friendly faces and comforting dishes.

“Cambridge is a great place for food right now, says Scott, and there are amazing suppliers in the countryside all around, but I reckon there’s something more. Mill Road is our greatest food asset - tremendous ingredients from all over the world, a cosmopolitan crowd and a particular attitude I really recognise - a kind of feisty community pride”.

In 2024, Scott won the PAPA (Pizza and Pasta Awards) Pizza Chef of the Year competition, and also scooped the Bloggers choice award at the National Pizza Awards.

### **To enter**

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

**What is the name of our recently launched website AI Assistant?**

- a) AVA
- b) BOB
- c) SAM

You can enter the competition online.

**[www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)**

Click 'Apply' and then 'Reader's competition'.

### **Don't have Internet access?**

You can enter by post. Send your name, address and telephone number, along with your answer to the question, to:

South Cambs Magazine Competition, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, CB23 6EA

Closing date for entries is 5pm on Monday 31 March.

Terms and conditions are available at **[www.scambs.gov.uk/t-c](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/t-c)** or can be requested by calling us.

The winner will be notified in April and announced in the summer issue of South Cambs Magazine.