

District Council Report for June 2024

Councillor James Hobro

District Councillor for the parishes of Foxton, Fowlmere, Heydon, Great Chishill & Little Chishill.

I am always happy to hear from residents with any questions about these or other issues relating to the District Council. Please contact me by telephone on 07768 706670 or by email at cllr.hobro@scamb.gov.uk.

General election on 4 July

The Democratic Services department at South Cambridgeshire District Council are now busy making arrangements for the general election which was called at short notice for 4 July. Please note that in Fowlmere the polling station this year will be at the Village Hall, not at the Chapel as in previous years.

Unlike in previous general elections, voters are now required to bring a valid form of identification to be allowed to cast their vote. Information is [available from the Electoral Commission](#) on the various forms accepted. Please help to publicise this widely to help minimise voter disenfranchisement. Posters to remind voters of this new requirement are available [here](#).

As a result of the rules governing the pre-election period, some local government meetings and consultations (including consultation on the GCP Greenway scheme in Foxton) will be postponed until after the general election.

Bin lorry fires and battery disposal

There have already been seven fires in bin lorries so far this year as a result of residents incorrectly disposing of batteries in the black bin. These were caused by lithium-ion batteries, as used in mobile phones, vapes, laptops etc. When these batteries are crushed in the bin lorry they can explode, so it is very dangerous to throw them away in the black bin.

Vape recycling has recently been introduced at Thriplow recycling centre. Larger batteries (e.g. from laptops or e-bikes) should also be taken to a recycling centre. Small household batteries (AA, AAA, C and D and button cells) can be put in a small plastic bag, tied shut and left on top of any of your wheelie bins (green, black, or blue) on collection day. Please help to publicise these rules about safe battery disposal. More details about how to recycle household waste can be found in the South Cambs magazine, or from recyclenow.com.

Planning department shortlisted for another award

On the back of being shortlisted for the Planning Awards' 'Local authority planning team of the year', the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning has now been shortlisted for the [Royal Town Planning Institute's 'Planning Authority of the Year – East of England'](#).

New operator and timetable for 26 bus route

The 26 bus route from Royston to Cambridge via Melbourn, Fowlmere, Foxton & Harston had been operated for the past 2 years by Centrebus under tender from the Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). This tender was up for renewal in June. However, the local bus operator A2B has now decided to run this route commercially, and will be taking over the service from 3 June.

A2B have expressed their wish to bring gradual improvements to the service. Initially they had decided to remove Fowlmere from the route, but after representation from Cllr McDonald, Cllr van de Ven and myself they have agreed not to do this, as the service between Fowlmere and Cambridge is very well used, and there is no rail alternative.

The new timetable is available [here](#). All single fares cost £2, and [£1 concession fares](#) are available for under-25s. Some services now additionally stop at the station and Tesco in Royston. One daytime service also runs via Shepreth and Meldreth. Cllr McDonald, Cllr van de Ven and I will keep a close eye on how the new service is working for residents and will work constructively with A2B to help bring continuous improvements for residents.

Rail and ale trail



A new initiative from the council and its partners to highlight our local village pubs was launched in May. The [Rail & Ale Trail](#) features pubs within walking distance of the stations at Foxton, Shepreth, Meldreth, Shelford and Whittlesford. It is being promoted by South Cambs, Greater Anglia, Great Northern, CAMRA, and the Meldreth, Shepreth & Foxton Community Rail Partnership, and is highlighted on the [Visit South Cambs website](#).

Community Chest grants

Congratulations to Fowlmere Village Hall for its success in receiving a Community Chest grant of £2000 towards new blinds for the main hall. I encourage all community groups to consider applying for funds from the Community Chest fund, which are available for a wide range of projects that help to improve our facilities and life for residents. More information on how to apply can be found [on the website](#).