

Councillor Peter McDonald Duxford Division & Ward:
District Councillor for Parishes of Duxford, Hinxton, Ickleton, Babraham, Pampisford.
County Councillor also for Foxton, Fowlmere, Shepreth, Thriplow, Heydon, Chishills, Whittlesford

Fowlmere County Council Report May 2026

The key thing to update residents is the proposed budget for 2026/27 so I summarise here.

County Council Budget 2026/27

- The business plan and budget paper discussed at Full Council in February and now accepted set out the financial position for the year ahead (2026-27), projecting growth of £31 million in the 2026-27 revenue budget – a 5.4% increase on 2025-26 – enabling the council to continue investing in key services. This will give the council a net budget of just over £600 million in 2026-27, and a gross total of about £1.2 billion once schools and services funded by specific grants from Government are included.
- Demand for council services is growing as people live longer, often with multiple long-term conditions that need support from health and social care, and more children and young people are being identified with special educational needs and mental health needs. Meeting these needs remains a priority, whilst also managing the impact of inflation and the limits on the funding the council receives.
- To develop a legal and balanced budget for 2026-27 and deliver the revised ambitions, the council has had to identify £40 million through a combination of savings or extra income. Proposals set out at the committee meant that a £6.4m gap remained, which was closed in February 2026. The key elements of the business plan and budget proposals for 2026-27 are:
 - Supporting a green and sustainable county
 - To improve day to day journeys for drivers, cyclists and bus users, it has allocated an additional £20m for highway maintenance, on top of Government funding, to provide safer and more reliable roads across Cambridgeshire. The council will also continue to provide leadership and deliver its Climate Change and Environment Strategy.
 - Enabling full and healthy lives for all
 - To support older people, adults with disabilities and families, who rely on care every day, the council is allocating £14.7m of additional funding for adult social care providers. This will help them to manage rising costs and ensure care workers are paid the Real Living Wage, improving stability and quality for those who depend on care workers for their support.
 - Ensuring fairness and opportunity
 - To help families under pressure from the cost-of-living crisis, the council is prioritising £1m to continue holiday meal vouchers for the children most in need, through to the end of summer 2026. As the Government withdraws the Household Support Fund, the council will also use its new £5m Crisis and Resilience Fund to provide a wider range of anti-poverty measures, offering practical support to households facing financial challenges.

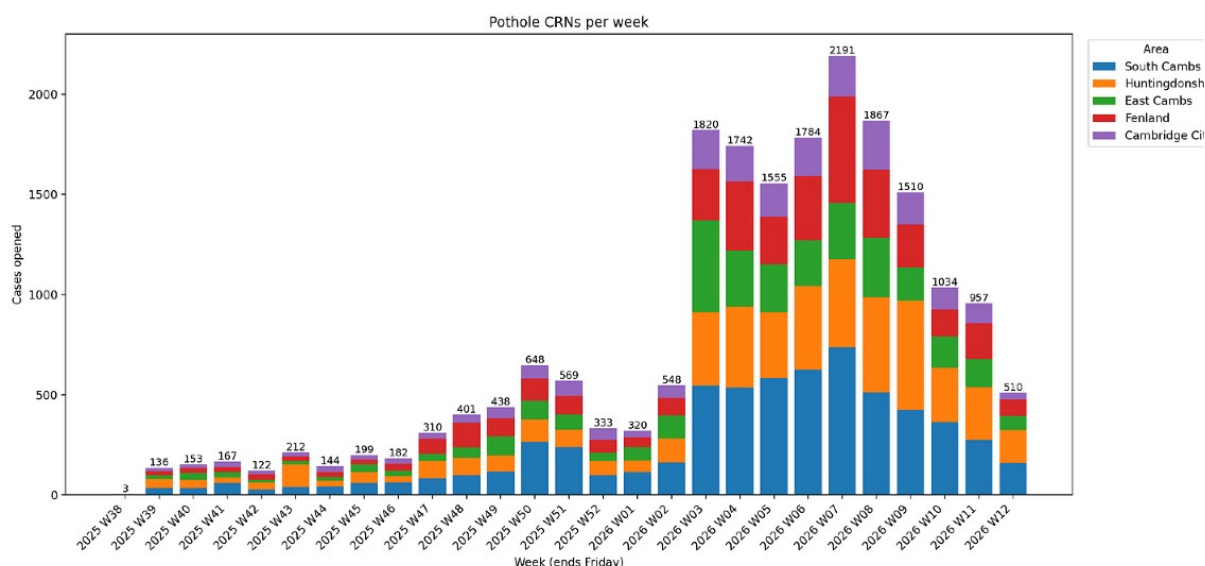
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- The plan will create 3,500 new primary school places and invest £72 million over five years to increase secondary school places, including at Alconbury Weald and North-West Cambridge. It also includes £780,000 a year to run a children’s residential home in South Cambridgeshire, as well as continued funding for the Families First programme, an early-intervention project that helps keep more families together and is supported by the £6.7 million Children’s, Families and Youth Grant. In addition, more than £1.2 million will be invested in libraries and archives over the next two years.
- The plans agreed included an increase of council tax by 4.99%, the maximum permitted by Government for county councils, as is the case in nearly all councils across England, and the level assumed by Government in setting its grant allocations. A total 2% of this increase is specifically for adult social care funding. The increase will generate around £21million in additional funding and help the council continue providing the essential services people rely on. This will mean that for a Band D property, the County Council’s share of Council Tax would increase by £84.78 a year, or £1.63 a week.

Potholes & Highways

- As of end March 26, there were 2,200 potholes requiring repair across Cambridgeshire.



- Since 2023/24, the amount of capital funding spent on highway maintenance has increased by £35m, from £24m to £59m. The Council has allocated more than £73m for highways maintenance in 2026/27.

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Pothole facts:

- Over the past five years, we have repaired an average of 55,400 individual potholes each year.
- In general terms, if a pothole is large and deep, we will fix it within five days. If it is smaller and less of a hazard, we will fix it within 21 days
- We mark up the potholes in different ways, those repaired in five days are not marked as our repair is immediate, yellow means we will repair it within 21 days. We always aim to fix potholes within five and 21 days depending on their level of priority
- We aim to fix emergency faults as soon as possible, always within five days
- We always aim to repair potholes with a permanent fix first time. However, this depends on the weather – if it's wet or has been raining we sometimes have to make temporary fixes to keep people safe and moving as the road conditions are too wet for permanent repairs. Permanent fixes will then be programmed in and delivered when the weather allows
- A pothole repair costs around £50
- The dragon patcher is a specialist machine, nicknamed the 'dragon' because it fires out flames to dry out the road surface, it is then cleaned with compressed air and sealed with a stone mix and hot bitumen. It is much quicker and simpler compared to traditional methods.

Fowlmere Highways

Key things which have been done are the repairs on the Butts, the triangle Fowlmere/Cambridge Rd, outside the old Saffron Restaurant and the re-surfacing of London Rd. Pothole repairs ordered on Rectory Lane. Gulley cleaning along Long Lane has been ordered

A505 & Duxford IWM AvTech

A study was commissioned to look at the A505 and connectivity. Plans are being prepared to signalise Flint Cross. The planning application for the new AvTech development will come forward in autumn 26 and I will be closely working with Highways Officers to evaluate the impact on the A505.

Peter McDonald May 2026