

District Council Report for September 2023

New bin collectios

From 20th September rubbish and recycling bin collections in Sawston will change to Wednesdays. The change follows a review of the district's bin collection rounds in the light of several years of new housing developments, the introduction of electric bin lorries and the trial by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) of a four-day working week. As previously, black (general rubbish) bins will be collected on alternate weeks with recycling bins. Blue recycling bins will be collected throughout the year whilst green (garden and food waste) bins will be collected once a month from December to March and otherwise fortnightly (with blue bins) as now. You can check the dates at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/find-your-household-bin-collection-day/>

Protecting the environment – fly tipping

Reducing the highly damaging illegal dumping of waste is now a key priority for SCDC. This is a major environmental problem for everyone; the council received 1,600 reports of fly tipping last year, costing £68,000 to remove. Fly tipping not only looks unsightly, it damages wildlife and contaminates land as well as tacitly giving “permission” for others to add to the dump. In other words rubbish unfortunately breeds more rubbish. As well as removing them, the council investigates piles of dumped rubbish (wearing hazmat clothing) for indications of the source. Sometimes this is a householder or business that has accepted a cheap disposal quote without taking proper care to check the operator's licence. This can lead to a fixed penalty fine or even a criminal prosecution. If the rubbish is found to be yours, illegal disposal is your responsibility.

Zero carbon grants

This year South Cambridgeshire District Council will award £125,000 in zero carbon grants to community groups. Grants can be either to reduce or lock up carbon or to engage communities in carbon reduction activities. Our neighbours at Duxford Community Centre have been awarded £15,000 to install solar panels in the first category. Cambridge Carbon Footprint will receive £15,000 to expand and develop their Repair Café network, which fixes items (that might otherwise be discarded) free of charge and helps educate people about repair and reuse. More about these grants, and the winning projects this year, can be found at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/half-a-million-pounds-in-zero-carbon-communities-grants-given-to-south-cambridgeshire-community-groups/>

Cambridge Sustainable Travel Zone

Revised proposals for the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership “Making Connections” scheme, which includes the introduction of road charging in the city of Cambridge, were published in late August. The revisions include:

- Peak time only charging (six hours per day instead of twelve)
- 50 free days per year for car users
- 50% discount for locally owned small businesses
- Low income discount
- More hospital exemptions
- No charge for motorcycles

These changes would address some of the concerns revealed by the public consultation. However they would also result in very significantly reduced revenue with which to implement original visions for improved public transport. As a consequence of this, and the level of evident public concern about the proposals, on 7th September the Greater Cambridge Partnership Joint Assembly – made up of elected councillors and representatives from businesses and academia – concluded that they weren't able to take the proposals forward. The Joint Assembly has asked its officers and executive board to provide information on the implications of not progressing with the scheme and to investigate further (alternative to the STZ) options for funding envisioned improvements to public transport and active travel.

Cllr Libby Earle
Amended 11 Sept 2023

Ends 568 words