

# Babraham Parish Council

## Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 12 May, 2022 at 19.30, in Babraham School Hall

Present:

Denise Dear (Chair)

Jane Goody

Charlotte Rogers

Richard Bandy

Anne Charteris (Clerk)

Chris Chapman

Members of the public: 6

### Minutes

**22APM/01** Apologies for Absence  
Damon Stanwell-Smith, Peter McDonald, Stuart Laurie

**22APM/02** **Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council.**

**Due to previous Chair Cllr Laurie being unable to attend, the report was read out by current Chair Denise Dear:**

I regret I am unable to attend the meeting today due to the need for a holiday and a desire to avoid midges in Scotland, so please accept my apologies. There have been a number of changes in the village and I have tried to include them in this brief report.

#### New development in Babraham/ nr Sawston

The housing development of 158 homes on the H1/B site on our border with Sawston is nearing completion and the s106 contribution to Babraham PC has now been paid to the council. The hard-fought payment of £72K plus £20K for internals, will go towards a village hub/ hall.

We have further negotiated a larger sum for the H1/C development opposite H1/B where 200+ houses will be built. This will be paid on completion of the build and will further aid the village hall project.

Regarding the 2 plots of land above, Sawston requested a boundary review to remove these areas from the Babraham Parish and place responsibility with Sawston. We agreed with conditions as indicated above and I believe the boundary has now been moved.

#### Traffic calming

The parish paid £19K towards the long sought-after traffic calming and the District Council contributed £5K towards the cost via their LHI (local highways initiative) scheme. I am pleased to inform you that a further payment of £19K has been promised from s106 funds for the H1/C project (opposite H1/B) which

means the council can recover it's outlay and possibly install further measure to reduce traffic speed through the village.

#### Pocket park

The pocket park remains tidy and well used by residents and passers-by. The old village bench that stood opposite the George Inn has been moved to the pocket park, and a new bench installed in its place. For the bird enthusiasts kingfishers have recently been spotted near the church area of the river, and little egrets spotted further out from the village. The park and village garden area next to the letterbox are currently maintained by two of our faithful parishioners, we thank them for their continued efforts.

#### Development and the Neighbourhood plan

Last year Cheveley Park Farms offered the majority of their land for development, and later presented their 'vision' of Babraham in the future. This vision included 5000 houses, schools, recreational areas and green spaces. The vision, we understand, was driven by the proposed busway, so if the busway fails to go ahead then one assumes that the vision would be withdrawn. The neighbourhood plan is progressing well and a survey of parishioner opinions has been completed. One of the main results of the survey was the outstanding opposition to the busway, which would run from the proposed park and ride in Babraham, via Sawston, Stapleford and Shelford to the Hospital site. A further grant is being sought to cover costs of project management for a further period to allow completion. The resulting document will again be presented to the parish for their approval and, if accepted, will form the guide to future development in the village. The plan is being drawn up in collaboration with the Babraham Campus to produce a unified view.

#### The High Street

Last year the junction between High Street and the A1307 was altered following a strong lobby by the PC in order to improve safety. To date no accidents have been reported at this point. Jonas Webb still stands proud overlooking the High Street and takes on a number of decorative roles throughout the year. A recent addition to this area is the Book -swap cupboard, where books can be exchanged. The war memorial has been cleaned and now shines out as a reminder of those who fell in war.

#### The forest garden

A grant to plant a forest garden under the Zero carbon projects scheme was approved and planting is almost complete. The project is managed and groups of volunteers are gathered to water and maintain the area. The site is currently fenced to prevent wild and domestic animal damage and we look forward to crops of fruits, nuts and edible plants in the future.

#### Defibrillator

I am pleased to report that the defibrillator has not been needed but remains as a useful emergency tool.

#### Dog walking

The dog poo bins in church lane continue to be well used, however, some people still fail to clear their dog's mess. We urge everyone to pick up their poo and keep the area tidy.

#### Parish council meetings

Just a reminder that the monthly meetings of the Parish Council are open to all. There is an opportunity for non-council members to speak, and the meetings are

conducted in an informal manner. Please feel free to attend. They are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month (excluding December)

I made the decision not to stand for re-election this year in the hope that other, possibly younger but enthusiastic people can take over and create the kind of village that they want to live in. Many believe that the Neighbourhood plan will provide local people with far more say in the development of their village. Let's hope so. I have enjoyed my time on the council and joined some 7 years ago as a complete novice, serving 6 years as chair. I wish my successor the very best and trust that they will steer the good ship Babraham away from the rocks. Finally, I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their efforts and I understand that some will be continuing in that role.

**22APM/03**

**Financial Report**

The Financial report was read out and paper copy distributed to public. A question was asked re the Precept: why had this gone up approx. 20%? The Parish Council had applied for the same Precept as last year; however, the tax base had changed and this has resulted in the amount per household increasing. PC were sympathetic that this had resulted in a higher charge, especially with the current rising cost of living and would look into whether any help was available to those who may be in need of financial help.

**22APM/04**

**Report from Cambridgeshire County Councillor Brian Milnes**

Report sent in advance and posted on website.

**22APM/05**

**Report from South Cambridgeshire District Councillor Peter McDonald**

Report sent in advance and posted on website.

**22APM/06**

**Report on the Neighbourhood Plan**

The survey has now been completed and the first draft of the plan made, we have teamed up with the BRC and the two plans will be pulled together, Hannah has provided funded support. The next stage is for a Masterplan to be developed. This sets out the guideline for the village and will lead to a referendum which will hopefully be done by Christmas, the plan will then become a statutory document if enough support from the referendum. However the Planning authority can still overrule this.

**22APM/07**

**Report from the Village Hall Committee**

**Village Hall Update – May 2022**

We are currently working with Babraham Primary school to build a small extension to the existing school hall, this will include a larger kitchen, toilets, storage areas and meeting room. The meeting room will be available to the parish to hire during the day, evenings, and weekends. The school hall will become the Babraham village hall during evenings and weekends, with a little TLC (painting, VA system etc). We are hoping to make this as sustainable as possible and will investigate the possibility of solar panels on the school hall roof and changing the heating system to an air source one.

We have received quotes from two architect companies and are hoping to finalise the process of selecting an architect soon!

We have been told that planning permission will take 3 months and equally as long to find a builder!

Hoping that we could start work early next year!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
Sandra Carroll

**22APM/08 Report from Babraham Primary School**

See below

**22APM/09 Report from St Peter's Church**

**St Peter's Vicar's Report –Babraham Parish Council AGM 12 May 2022**

I was very grateful for the warm welcome I received from everyone at St Peter's last June. I am pleased to say that the building project was completed prior to my arrival and the church now has a toilet and a kitchenette. Since I arrived, we have continued with the twice a month pattern of services sometimes being joined by a few people from the St Mary's Sawston congregation. Despite the continuing Coronavirus pandemic, we were able to hold our Harvest Festival and Lunch and all the Christmas and Easter services in person. We held a very successful Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Monday. Last summer we started to hold afternoon teas on the first Saturday of the month. From April this year we have started these again to encourage people into the church and to raise funds.

As a church we have maintained our close ties with the school, and I have forged good working relationships with Mrs Pentey and the rest of the staff. I have very much enjoyed going into Babraham School on a weekly basis to take an assembly and am also a governor. The children did come across to the church for their Harvest service but unfortunately not for their Christmas Carol service or any Easter services due to Covid. It has been a joy to get to know the children who now ask me all sort of questions on a regular basis, not all of which are easy to answer!

As a church we are extremely grateful for the help we receive from the Parish Council for the mowing of the grass and from the Institute for their ongoing help tidying the churchyard. We are also very grateful to the friends of St Peter's for their continuing support.

We will be faced with continuing challenges over the coming year including raising funds to pay the increased parish share and for the building works outlined in the quinquennial report. Please do come along to our Saturday afternoon teas and to our other events. Your support is very much welcomed and needed if the life and work of the church are to continue.

**22APM/10 Report from the Bush and Bennett Charity**

**The Bush & Bennett Charity  
Report from the Bush & Bennett Charity  
Annual Parish Council Meeting, May 2022**

**Trustees**

The Trustee board has changed quite a bit since the last Annual Parish Council meeting in 2019.

We were very sad to say goodbye to The Reverend Alan Partridge as his retirement as vicar of the Parish and his move to Ely triggered his resignation from The Bush & Bennett Board. Alan served the Charity for many years and his sage counsel, with a wonderful focus on pastoral care, will be sorely missed.

We are delighted, however, to have welcomed the Reverend Kathryn Waite in his stead, who has more than ably stepped in to Alan's shoes and we are already benefitting from her immense wisdom and positivity!

Sadly Anna James also resigned last year, since she has also moved out of the area. We are hoping to replace Anna soon, since her legal expertise was invaluable.

The rest of the Trustee board remains unchanged: Hannah Axon; Brian Page (Treasurer), Sally Punshon (Chair) and Marian Watson (Secretary).

The Trustees continue to be supported by many others – in particular

- Ed & Mary Hunt who give so much support to the Residents and help with day-to-day maintenance issues
- Hilary Seaward, our former Treasurer and who still provides financial and strategic advice and Accounts approval

### **Residents**

We are very pleased that the four Almshouses and The Old School House are still occupied by the same residents. Coronavirus restrictions meant that there were no social events for quite some time, but Trustees and Residents were very happy to meet for tea in the garden at the end of last summer and we very much hope to manage a repeat of that or something very soon!

The Old School Room

CCPS moved out of the front of the Old School Room in the summer of 2020.

We had hoped that this date would herald the start of restoration works for the whole building. However sadly these plans were, once again, put on hold. First tenders – for the building works alone - averaged at £300K plus VAT. The plans were revised to reduce this but were still untenable at £220K plus VAT plus all fees. With coronavirus adding yet more uncertainty to the viability of the project, it was agreed that unless there were obvious further ways to reduce costs or find an alternative use Charity registered in England 1113297

for the building, then, in order to maximize our income for the benefit of the Almshouses, we should re-let the front part of the Old School Room on a shorter lease.

There was obviously substantial expenditure on professional fees for this potential project. We do, however, have some particularly good proposals for the space should we ever be able to afford them.

Following internal decoration of the front part of the Old School Room and the creation of an outdoor breakout area, we were very happy to rent the space to Evgenia Teslyuk last Autumn. Evgenia has set up a wonderful new counselling service (Cambridge CYP Counselling) from The Old School Room and we hope she goes from strength to strength.

### **Building Works and Maintenance**

Works arising as the result of the 2019 Quinquennial were, thankfully, completed prior to Lockdown. There were some quite significant works such as repointing/restoring large areas of face brickwork; repairs to the Old School House chimneys and renovating the Old School House roofs. Nothing major was done to the Old School Room, since, at the time, we were still hoping to undertake the restoration project – so that may well mean significant works to render it safe and waterproof again in the not too distant future.

In addition to this we are about to replace the front doors of all the Almshouses and undertake quite significant repairs to most of the Almshouse windows,

which we will then obviously redecorate. Sadly we have been heavily impacted by the ever-increasing costs of all building works post Covid and Brexit, so these essential works are impacting us more than we would like.

#### **Finance**

We have obviously had heavy outgoings over the last three years. Last year our credits were still greater than our expenditure, on a controlled day-to-day basis, but we will need to find ways to raise additional funds to meet our objectives. This is not easy when building costs are getting exponentially greater each month, but the Trustees will continue to look after the fabric of the Listed buildings to the best of our ability and continue to put the needs of our residents (not forgetting our educational objective) at the forefront of everything we do.

#### **School Land**

And finally, on a positive note, the Trustees were very happy to learn earlier this year that the School and Village Hall Committee are talking once again about the building of a shared facility on School Land. (This land is under covenant to be retained for Babraham School). We are very supportive of the shared vision and look forward to hearing more.

#### **Sally Punshon**

**On behalf of the Bush & Bennett Trustees**

**May 2022**

**22APM/11**

#### **Report from Babraham Research Campus**

1. New building: work to begin in July, hoping to be completed by August 2023. Archaeologists will be looking at the plot before work begins.
2. Estate: paths which were created during the lockdown will now be closed off, this still leaves all the original paths open. The reason they will be closed is to protect the conservation areas and complies with the Country Stewardship scheme. It is hoped that more permissive paths will be opened later on. A lot of work has been done on the river and this is running really well now.
3. Groundsmen from the BRC will be going into the churchyard to help with the clearing up. They will then go in twice a year to continue with the clear-up.

**22APM/12**

#### **Report from Cheveley Park Farm**

No report received

**22APM/13**

#### **Report on Forest Garden-see below**

**22APM/14**

#### **Any Other Business / Open Forum**

Signature: *Anne Charteris* Clerk 20th May 2022

10 Duxford Rd, Hinxton, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1RB

## Appendix 1: Zero Carbon Communities Fund – End of Grant Report

Prepared by Hannah Thomas, Babraham Forest Garden Project Manager, for review by Babraham Parish Council before submission.

### **Please give us an overview of your project and whether you feel you were able to deliver the plans you set out to do (400 words max.)**

The project vision is to engage the community to create a beautiful, shared space for growing edible produce and working with nature to be more resistant to the impacts of climate change. The Forest Garden is projected to take three years to be created. ZCC funds have supported Year 1, covering approximately 90% of costs (with Babraham Parish Council providing the remainder). While adjustments to the project plan were necessary, all the planned activities were successfully delivered, as follows:

- 1) Forest Garden designed** – A horticulturalist and Forest Garden expert provided a layout, a complete species list and maintenance advice. Plants were carefully chosen to be suitable for local soil and climatic conditions and included heritage apple and gage varieties from the region.
  - 2) Forest Garden site prepared** – the site required fencing to prevent dogs from contaminating the area and deer from eating the new plants. Mature trees on site required substantial trimming and tree locations from the design were marked in the site in preparation for planting.
  - 3) Trees and planting materials sourced** - for Year 1, 502 hornbeam windbreak hedge trees and 80 forest garden trees were purchased, each with its own biodegradable tree guard, bamboo stake and tree tag label.
  - 4) 'Forest Garden Friends' working group established** – a small group of Babraham residents and interested volunteers to help design the volunteer and school planting days.
  - 5) Volunteer and School planting days organised** – Twelve tree-planting sessions were organised in February. PR teams from Babraham Research Campus, Babraham Institute their 'Green Labs' network helped promote the event, encouraging staff and biotech firms. Friends of Babraham School (FOBS) promoted an after-school planting event. Tea, coffee and homemade cakes were provided for volunteers using new Church kitchen facilities.
  - 6) Babraham School raised beds built** – Babraham School's neglected planting area was rebuilt with fun, 'child-sized' raised beds.
- 5) Project activities for sharing and scaling** - Communicating this innovative project to the community was done in multiple ways:
- Posters showing the design layout and a visualisation of the future Forest Garden
  - A page on the Parish Council website
  - A Facebook page
  - An article in the Cambridge Independent
  - a talk on the Forest Garden development to SCDC 'Green Connect' group.

**Please tell us what the most significant achievements of the project have been (400 words max.)**

### **1) Community engagement**

There has been an extraordinary and wonderfully positive response from all parts of the community. There were 12 separate tree planting sessions, and about 175 volunteers came to help plant, including a great many villagers, 24 groups of parents and their children from the School, companies within the Research Campus; local companies from the 'Green Labs' environmental network of biotech firms, and the Babraham Research Campus Gardening team. The Church very kindly allowed the use of their new kitchen and toilet facilities for refreshments at the end of the sessions, and several villagers contributed to making the project a great success by baking delicious cakes and coordinating the refreshments.

Babraham Primary School children took part in their own tree planting session in the forest garden, arranged through their EcoSquad of year group representatives. Each of the four school classes planted and labelled a fruit tree, enabling them to learn good planting technique and to follow the growth of the tree during their time at school.

### **2) Community interaction**

The project has created a significant positive collaboration between Babraham Parish Council, the Babraham community, and the Babraham Research Campus (and Babraham Institute). In addition, several companies from outside of Babraham joined the tree planting sessions as a means for employees to contribute to a climate change mitigation project.

### **3) Babraham Primary School new raised beds**

The whole school will benefit from new raised beds that are arranged to be more child-sized and interesting to look at. Since the EcoSquad children planted several fruit trees in the nearby forest garden, there has been noticeable enthusiasm from children to watch the new trees grow, and the raised beds will provide an opportunity in the coming season to grow smaller plants for transplanting into the forest garden.

### **4) Climate change mitigation**

Through the substantial seed funding from ZCC and Babraham Parish Council, 575 trees have been planted in a designated Forest Garden area for the community. The trees will mitigate the effects of climate change, but will also provide edible produce for the community, a beautiful space to spend time in and an additional habitat for wildlife.

**Please share any weaknesses and challenges you have faced (150 words max.)**

- Fence construction was underbudgeted in the proposal, when the need to make the site dog, deer and rabbit proof wasn't fully realised. However, overspend was absorbed by other budget lines without issue.
- The design included 10 local heritage fruit tree varieties, only grown by a local nursery. Unfortunately, the nursery's entire stock was purchased in a single order from East Cambridgeshire District Council for their Parish Council's tree planting scheme. Although both South and East District Councils were therefore funding the same idea, the project officer in ECDC rejected any idea of supporting Babraham Parish Council or releasing any trees. Ultimately, Babraham trees were ordered for the following year.
- Early on, posters were removed, though this quickly stopped. It suggests some may be less supportive of the forest garden (potentially dog walkers, whose dogs are now necessarily excluded to prevent dog waste contamination). Care has been taken to communicate the rationale and benefits of the project.

**What (if anything) did you need to change and adapt from your original plans? (300 words max.)**

The cost of the fence required a two-stage approach across two years. In this first year, the fence has been constructed to be dog and deer proof. In the second year, chicken wire will be added at the bottom to make the fence rabbit proof.

Due to the increased cost of the fence, a major change was made to the original plan:

- 1) The provision of a propagation area (polytunnel) to support growing plants for the forest garden was changed to rebuilding the existing raised beds that had been completely neglected being overly large for small children. All wood and materials were donated and only essential costs were incurred (e.g. hiring a digger to remove the soil).

**Did the project spend change from your original plans? If so, please provide details**

The original proposal requested £9,835 from the Zero Carbon Communities Grant and £12,425 from the Parish Council for Year 1 (£3,500 for trees and school raised beds) and Year 2 (£8,925 for all budget lines). Table 1 shows the Year 1 budget (Zero Carbon funds in green; Parish Council funds in yellow) and actual spend at end of grant, with changes explained.

**Table 1**

Description	Funding source	Yr 1 budget	Actuals at end of grant	Comments
Plants - Trees	Parish Council	2,500.00	1,745.52	Costs of trees came under budget.
Equipment for tree planting - Tree protection tubes; mulch matting; stakes	Zero Carbon	1,200.00	842.46	Mulch matting not needed (replaced by on-site tree chippings and cardboard). Cost of other equipment came under budget.
Equipment for growing plants - Propagation (shelter; containers; compost; seeds) for school	Parish Council	1,000.00	150.00	All raised bed materials and labour were donated for free except digger hire for soil moving.
Project Management - outreach & volunteer coord/school liaison	Zero Carbon	2,000.00	2,000.00	
Education, community engagement and scaling	Zero Carbon	2,000.00	1,000.00	Budget line reduced to £1000 to allow reallocation of £1000 to support additional fencing costs. Planned 'how-to' guides and short film removed from plan.
Groundworks - landscaping (fencing); ground preparation; digger hire; planting support; plus extra Parish Council funding support brought forward for fencing (as agreed by PC Nov 2021)	Zero Carbon	2,000.00	7,266.09	Budget line increased to £7266.09: - £850 from school raised beds budget line - £1000 from 'Education, community engagement and scaling' budget line - £500 from 'Irrigation' budget line - £635 from 'contingency' budget line - £1,508.32 from all other underspent budget lines - £772.77 removed from Year 2 Babraham Parish Council funds
Forest Garden Expertise (Forest Garden design consultant + online course)	Zero Carbon	1,000.00	1,107.88	Additional expenditure to cover train transport to visit the Falmouth forest garden and discuss consultancy with forest garden designer.
Volunteer working days expenses	Zero Carbon	500.00	103.70	Costs of refreshments (approx. £1/volunteer) came under budget
Irrigation	Zero Carbon	500.00	-	Budget line reallocated to support additional fencing costs
contingency	Zero Carbon	635.00	-	
	Totals	13,335.00	14,107.77	
	Parish Council	3,500.00	4,272.77	
	Zero Carbon	9,835.00	9,835.00	

**How sustainable do you think the changes you have achieved will be? (100 words max.)**

Judging by the enthusiasm expressed by the community, the forest garden project has been a great success and the community have continued to help support the development of the site. Longer-term sustainability will depend upon a small but dedicated working group willing to continue to encourage participation within the community, but there are several signs that the wider community are supportive and wish to remain involved.

**What key lessons will you take from this grant into any future work? (350 words max.)**

- 1) Large items such as fencing costs should be budgeted to a finer level of detail
- 2) Sourcing trees and plants requires a very long lead in time, to account for failed stock, and significant time should be built into future planning
- 3) Continued communication with the community and all involved stakeholders highlights potential issues early and enables decisions to be made in a timely manner.

**What are your plans for this project or work in future? (350 words max.)**

Progress and plans for the Forest Garden in Year 2 (April 2022- March 2023):

- 1) Mulching and watering parties (in the summer months) to help the trees establish their roots and to prevent drying out
- 2) Rabbit proofing the fence
- 3) Sourcing the shrub layer plants
- 4) Planting days for the shrub layer
- 5) Community engagement events

**Please share with us any social media channels that you use for your project (e.g. Facebook page, Twitter account etc.). Also, please update us on any social media campaigns you are planning in the coming year. (optional)**

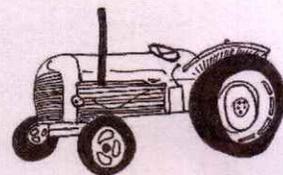
The Babraham Forest Garden has its own Facebook page: @BabrahamForestGarden

And a bespoke page on the Parish Council website:

[https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.babraham-village.net%2Fcommunity%2Fbabraham-parish-council-19919%2Fbabraham-forest-garden%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR3isfRyTK90PwNJUX\\_gsVyqfwdlAmVILB4AJmMZ5k4zqb9SA27rUYIAT14&h=AT1NAU7Qli35RZHPcQSQlcCaiKYHmI2J-PW\\_F\\_Lhyt4jDzTon2VE7HUpOZeCh9xtsjLbwyG1zZOeEZ4ixXP3zMLoSEdHzgWdBJOwKnOPIzOvXcAMNmi\\_MEu9BkYHqIGIKSA-YJk](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.babraham-village.net%2Fcommunity%2Fbabraham-parish-council-19919%2Fbabraham-forest-garden%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR3isfRyTK90PwNJUX_gsVyqfwdlAmVILB4AJmMZ5k4zqb9SA27rUYIAT14&h=AT1NAU7Qli35RZHPcQSQlcCaiKYHmI2J-PW_F_Lhyt4jDzTon2VE7HUpOZeCh9xtsjLbwyG1zZOeEZ4ixXP3zMLoSEdHzgWdBJOwKnOPIzOvXcAMNmi_MEu9BkYHqIGIKSA-YJk)

Please upload three photographs of your project which you are happy for us to share on our website and/or social media.





May 2022

## **Babraham School Report for the Parish Council**

The past year has continued to be challenging for the school as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. We have followed protocols set out by the Department for Education and the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust, and have had to deliver a hybrid education with some children in school and others at home, or keep the children apart in school in a system of class bubbles.

In September 2021, all children were able to return to school and we operated “as normal”, with robust risk assessments in place. The emergence of new covid variants placed a new strain on staff and families, as illness and the need to isolate meant that many children missed school. The Spring term was especially difficult as there were high rates of absence due to covid among school staff.

The school continues to be organised in four classes, with 91 pupils on roll. Since September 2019 it has worked closely with Thriplow Primary School, sharing a headteacher. This arrangement allows two small schools to operate on a model usually enjoyed by bigger schools, and we now have an assistant headteacher role at Babraham. Subject leadership and expertise are also shared across the schools. This is only now working properly as the covid restrictions meant that we could not meet together in person or visit other schools.

We look forward to emerging from the pandemic and participating more fully in parish and village events. A recent highlight was the tree planting in the new village garden.

Victoria Penty

## **Annual Parish Report 2022**

I have represented Duxford Division since February 2020 which includes Duxford, Hinxton, Ickleton, Babraham, Pampisford, Foxton, Fowlmere, Shepreth, Thriplow, Heathfield, Heydon, Chishills, Whittlesford.

The key change in Cambridgeshire occurred in May 2021 with a change to a new Joint Administration. The Council has an inherited gap of £80m+ over 5 years in its budget which it is now addressing. The JA agreement is here

[https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cambridgelibdems/pages/5179/attachments/original/1620984611/County\\_agreement\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf?1620984611](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cambridgelibdems/pages/5179/attachments/original/1620984611/County_agreement_2021_FINAL.pdf?1620984611)

The Joint Administration proposes in 2022/23 to raise the County Council share of council tax by 4.99% (3% council tax plus 1.99% for Adult Social Care). That will mean an extra charge of £1.04 per week for a Band B, and £1.19 for a Band C household. More than half of all homes in Cambridgeshire are in these two bands.

In Highways the JA priorities are stated as:

- *“We will focus on modal shift to encourage more residents out of their cars, along with infrastructure development, the encouragement of sustainable travel, and securing safe routes and connections for pedestrians and cyclists.*
- *We will consult communities openly and transparently on highways projects that affect them We will seek to invest more in road, footway, and cycleway maintenance and routine gulley clearance, and end the freeze on residents’ parking schemes.*
- *We will continue to work on ways in which we can limit HGVs rat-running through villages and urban communities.*
- *In partnership with local communities, we will make the option of 20MPH zones more widely available, and easier to obtain.”*

Outside of Highways the focus is on an evaluation of ‘This Land’ – the Council property company which has been loaned £120m. It is also bringing forward a report on the award of a County Council farm tenancy to the Previous Deputy leader Roger Hickford who resigned and left the Council.

My responsibilities are serving on:

- Highways Committee as Chair,
- Strategy & Resources,
- Fire Authority and
- County Farms Group as a member

Currently we are working on 20 mph implementation, Civil Parking Enforcement and HGV strategy to mitigate impacts of HGV on local villages.

Peter McDonald

May 2022





# South Cambs District Council

May 2022

Councillor Peter McDonald

District Councillor for Duxford, Ickleton, Hinxton, Babraham, Pampisford

# Key Changes 2022/2023

- Fourth year of New Administration in the Council from May 2018.
- Continued with Conservative Councillor as Chairman of Scrutiny Group.
- 45 Councillors instead of 57.
  - Lower cost to residents.
  - More work for us !
- Massive C19 support continued in 2021:
  - Community groups formed
  - Officers moved from normal duties to C19 support.
  - Business Grants paid:
    - £43.9 million in government Covid grants
  - Other Grants:
    - £78,000 to support work with young people.
    - 70 grants to covid groups
    - £58,000 in Community Chest grants a year
  - Others
    - 600 free trees
    - £1.4 mil to 102 businesses and start ups to help them grow.
    - £164,000 to voluntary groups
    - 900 hot meals over the covid Christmas period.



# Financials

2022/23

- SCDC takes c.£160 of the £1,500 of Band D Council Tax.
- Council Tax Increased this year by 3.4% or £5 to £160.
  - Correcting a deficit of £500k in 2019/20
  - Continuing C19-related expenditure
  - Councillor expenses increased in line with staff increase in 2021.
  - SCDC still looking to generate 25% of income from investments (to protect Council & residents)
- County C Tax Increased by £60 or 4,99%.

## 5 yr Business Plan

- South Cambs receives no Government grant.
- Savings planned of £1.5m next few years.
- By the end of March 2024, Council investments are forecasted to return an income of just over £5 million a year which will be used to protect the services people want and need.



# Services, Business Plan & Business Support

## 1. My South Cambs Portal & Call Back service

- To increase customer service.
- Single Golden number for enquires and new call back service.

## 2. Improving planning with new shared service and IT platform.

## 3. Higher number of planning delegations

- Previously <5%, now c 25%-30%

## 4. Re structure of the Council Management

- New CEO in 2020.
- New officer structure.

## 5. Business Plan Focus

## 6. Call for Sites Process

- Engaged with residents/Parishes
- 200+ people attended Guildhall meeting in 2020
- Focus on carbon & water resources.

## 7. New 6.1 yrs housing land supply

- prevents speculative development which happened pre-2018.

## 8. New Business Support

- 4 new staff
- Focus on SME < 10 employees
- Focused on the business growth/expansion.
- New Visit S Cambs Wesbite



# My Priorities

- 1. Monitor & influence planning projects.
  - Influence the local plan process/call for sites.
  - Monitor the 5 year housing land supply.
  - Work with villages on Wellcome Genome Campus development & housing covenants.
  - Gonville & Caius 800 houses were not included in call for sites.
  - Maarnford Close Duxford will be developed.
  - Whittlesford Depot will be re-developed.
- 2. Keep residents up to date
  - Monthly report for every Parish.
  - Facebook & Twitter.
  - Focus leaflets – 8 x since Election in 2018.
- 3. Carry out effective case work on:
  - Planning
  - Housing
  - Highways
- 4. Seek a solution to a path around Duxford school.
- 5. Represent the villages on Grants Advisory Committee.
  - Community chest - £58k
  - Community led £50k
  - Biodiversity- £10k
  - Zero carbon Grants £120k
- 6. Work effectively on Cabinet
  - Business Support responsibility



# Cambridgeshire County Council

Represent 11 Parishes: Duxford, Whittlesford, Foxton, Fowlmere, Hinxton, Ickleton, Pampisford, Shepreth, Thriplow & Heathfield, Chishills, Heydon, Ickleton.

# County Budget Headline

For 2022-23,

- First year on budget-setting of the new Joint Administration.
- Current year deficit of £22m- £80m over 5 years left by previous administration
- Council Tax increase of 4.99% is 3% (half of inflation) plus 1.99% adult social care.
- New Joint Administration Agreement
  - [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cambridgelibdems/pages/5179/attachments/original/1620984611/County\\_agreement\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf?1620984611](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cambridgelibdems/pages/5179/attachments/original/1620984611/County_agreement_2021_FINAL.pdf?1620984611)
- Independent Member is Chair of the Council

In Highways the JA priorities are stated as:

- “We will focus on modal shift to encourage more residents out of their cars, along with infrastructure development, the encouragement of sustainable travel, and securing safe routes and connections for pedestrians and cyclists.
- We will consult communities openly and transparently on highways projects that affect them
- We will seek to invest more in road, footway, and cycleway maintenance and routine gulley clearance, and end the freeze on residents’ parking schemes.
- We will continue to work on ways in which we can limit HGVs rat-running through villages and urban communities.
- In partnership with local communities, we will make the option of 20MPH zones more widely available, and easier to obtain.”

# Other Areas of Focus

## Budget:

- The Household Support Fund – with a £20 payment now available to all 39,000 Cambridgeshire people on universal credit – as well as additional help if people need it for specific bills or replacement of essential things like cookers, washing machines or fridges.
- Continued funding for Free School Meals of £15 per week for each eligible child throughout the school holidays.
- A 100% council tax rebate for Care Leavers until they are 21 – and a targeted fund to support them, if they need it, until they are 25.
- A £1m ‘catch up’ fund to help children catch up on activities which help them learn skills, build self-confidence and make friends.

## Other Areas:

- This Land
  - A full review has been done and the Board re structured in the County Council property company which has been loaned £120m.
- Ethics
  - It brought forward a report on the award of a County Council farm tenancy to the Previous Deputy leader Roger Hickford who resigned and left the Council.

# My Priorities

- 1. Two committees:
  - Highways
    - I have Chaired this committee in 2021/22
  - Strategy & Resources
    - Oversees general financial position
- 2. Highways Matters
  - 20 mph zone policy being progressed
  - Civil Parking Enforcement being progressed
  - Scanning of the highways initiated to get a proper view of the priorities.
  - New gulley scanning & cleaning programme initiated
- 3. Thakeham Action Group- SWCAG
  - Fighting the proposed new 25,000 house development
  - Thakeham are quiet (for now)
- 4. Infrastructure
  - A505 plan for next 10 years
  - Foxton & Whittlesford Travel Hubs.
    - Ensuring these are multi-modal hubs with benefits for the community.
- 5. School support
  - Post C19
  - Duxford school re-build
  - Supporting Foxton on the pre school provision.
- 6. Represent you on County Farms
  - Currently 33,000 acres
  - Environmental Land Management
  - Tree planting
  - New farm acquisition.