

County Councillor's Report May 2018

Longstanton Road

The airfield road will close as previously reported.

Oakington to Cottenham Cycle Path

I have held further meetings discussing the business case and viability plan for this new project. Unfortunately, not all the verge is wide enough, so some private land will need to be used and purchased. Land search is going on and owners will be contacted, and there are also ditches and draining issues to be considered. This will hopefully be included in the Greenway project, and the scheme has been put forward to be included on the list. We then need to find one million pounds to fund it! With that in mind, we are going to the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) to beg for their resources! The GCP Assembly meets to recommend project funding, so we have to present the project with all its good points to convince them, this then goes forward to the GCP Board for a final decision.

Pot Holes

A total of 8,477 potholes were reported to Cambridgeshire County Council between January 1 and the end of April this year - around 50 per cent more than were reported in the whole of last year. Inspectors also look out for potholes when they're working, who, along with 11 crews - and a dragon patcher vehicle - filled a total of 15,040 potholes altogether, the crews are amounting to around 1,300 pothole fills per week. The total number of potholes filled has increased. Between April 1, 2016, and March 31, 2017, a total of 29,370 potholes were filled in. 30,877 potholes were filled in between April 1, 2017, and March 31, 2018. When potholes are reported each one is inspected and risk assessed, to prioritise repairs for areas most in need. Some potholes are fixed immediately, if they are considered a safety risk, while others will be repaired as part of programmed maintenance work. Depending on the size, location, and any safety risk, the council commits to deal with potholes between five days and 12 weeks after they are reported but "try to deal with them much quicker"

The number of potholes filled in should accelerate in the coming months, when two more dragon patcher vehicles are due to join the first one, which joined the region in January. The first dragon patcher made around 1,700 repairs in its first month on the roads - repairing up to 150 potholes a day. It has been a challenging time for our crews, especially with the severe weather conditions. Now the weather is improving, the teams will be working flat out to deal with the number of potholes that have been reported.

This year, the council has £6.3 million to repair potholes.

The new forum I am arranging between the Parish Clerks of Oakington & Westwick, Longstanton, and Over with our local highways officer will hopefully keep all of our highway issues up to date. This forum should be starting next month and will meet regularly every 2/3 months.

Ground-breaking new housing advice service launches in Cambridgeshire

Home is important, it can make all the difference to our quality of life – but what if you're living in the wrong type of home as you or a loved one gets older? In a first for the East of England, a new service which offers specialist housing information and advice to older people is being rolled out by Cambridgeshire County Council following a successful 7-month pilot last year.

HOOP (Housing Options for Older People) is designed to ensure that all older people have access to free information, advice and support to consider their housing options and where they live at an early stage to maintain independence and wellbeing. People answer a simple questionnaire about their home and how it suits them. The answers are then used to put them in touch with local housing options (sheltered housing, extra care schemes), support services and community groups that can provide a mixture of practical support and advice.

I believe that it's really important that people are able live in their own homes for as long as possible and the County Council is committed to helping them do that. People who are in their retirement years may envision staying in their long-time homes indefinitely – but this might not always be the right option for them as they get older. HOOP encourages older people to think about how well their home suits them at an early stage before they reach a crisis and provides solutions to help them do this. This could be moving to somewhere cheaper and easier to run, more suitably designed or located and offering more human company, more security from crime and reassurance in case of an accident.

Scheme helps steer children towards bike safety

With winter behind us, it's time to get our children gearing up for road safety training ready to ride safely into the summer season. The Bikeability training programme is designed to equip school children with the skills, confidence and enthusiasm to cycle safely on a daily basis. The course is made up of three levels along with a variety of Bikeability Plus modules, taking pupils from the basics of balance and control off-road, all the way to planning and making independent journeys on busier roads. Supported by Cambridgeshire County Council, this cycle training programme is now in its ninth year and has delivered training modules to over 45,000 pupils since 2009. Last year Bikeability saw more than 8,500 pupils from over 260 Cambridgeshire schools take part in programme. Outspoken Training have been awarded a further two year contract by the County Council to continue delivering the Bikeability programme to provide training across schools in Cambridgeshire delivered free of charge to school children from reception through to Year 9.

For more information visit the County Councils Cycling Safety webpage:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/cycling/cycling-safety/>

Living Sport wins National Lottery funding from Sport England to help people stay active when moving into new communities.

Living Sport is celebrating after being awarded £500,000 of National Lottery funding to help people in new housing growth communities across the area stay active.

The funding bid, which will go towards the Active New Communities project, is a successful collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council.

Living Sport's Active New Communities project focuses on helping individuals to stay active while relocating to a new community. Moving into an entirely new community, which at first often lacks sporting facilities and established sport and physical activity provision, can have a negative impact on physical activity habits. The Active New Communities project will be delivered into eight strategic growth sites in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. These eight 'new communities' are being built and occupied during the period 2018-2021. In the first year, activity will be focused on Northstowe, Alconbury Weald and Hauxton.

The project will bring together a range of partner organisations that work in Cambridgeshire's new communities to ensure that residents are provided with information and opportunities to engage in sport and physical activity. The County Councils priority is to keep people active and improve their physical wellbeing. This project will help those who are moving into new communities to find the best sport activities for them near their new home.

Peter Hudson
County Councillor
Oakington, Westwick, Longstanton, Over, and Northstowe.