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Cambridgeshire matters

Welcome to Cambridgeshire Matters July 2023

Cambridgeshire Matters is our monthly newsletter which aims to share good news, highlights and updates from across Cambridgeshire to help our network of district, city and community members stay informed.

Find out about the great work that is taking place to support everyone in the county. Share this newsletter with your parish council colleagues and feel welcome to use any of the features in your own newsletter or on social media.

Quality of Life survey

As part of Cambridgeshire County Council's vision to make Cambridgeshire greener, fairer and more caring, a countywide survey was launched in June - speaking to 5,500 residents to understand their views on the quality of their lives.



The annual survey aims to track the responses over time to see how changes to council decisions and policies, and the work of other public sector bodies in the county, affect views and to give Members vital insight when they make business decisions.

There is still time to complete the survey before it closes on Friday 4 August. [Visit the County Council website to find out more.](#)

Innovative Cambridgeshire farm receives seal of approval with Royal visit

An innovative use of a Cambridgeshire farm to increase biodiversity with the support of local developers has been [visited by His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester.](#)



His Royal Highness, welcomed by the Lord-Lieutenant Julie Spence, also unveiled a plaque at the site marking the farm as part of the 'Queen's Green Canopy', a tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

The Duke took a tour of the 'Biodiversity Net Gain' scheme at Lower Valley Farm, Fulbourn. It has been developed by Cambridgeshire County Council to diversify its farm estate use, mitigate the climate crisis and to encourage businesses to also become part of the solution.

The council has enhanced the landscape at the 140 hectare farm, creating species rich habitats, including woodlands, grasslands and hedgerows. Local developers can become involved by buying biodiversity units to offset the impacts their developments have on the environment.

Businesses can find out more information about the scheme by visiting the [Bidwells website](#).

The scheme, a first for the county, is part of the council's commitment to tackle the depletion of nature in Cambridgeshire and the climate crisis, with the aim to be net zero as an organisation by 2030 and as a county by 2045, five years ahead of national targets.

Moves to support the UK's farming future backed by England's largest landowning Council

As the owner of the largest county farms estate in England and Wales, [Cambridgeshire County Council backed a motion to help reverse a farming skills shortage](#), by supporting pathways into agriculture for young people and those from non-farming families, and calling for greater protection for agricultural workers' rights.



Cambridgeshire County Council's Farms Estate extends to over 33,000 acres of farmland across the county and has more than 160 tenants. In Cambridgeshire, 47% of the population lives in rural communities, a far higher total than the UK average of 17%.

In a cross-party motion put by Cllr Alex Bulat, seconded by Cllr Mark Goldsack, on 18 July, Members supported a move to work with skills providers to increase local vocational training to deal with shortages in the rural workforce.

The council also backed a proposal for its chief executive to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs calling for greater protection of food standards and workers' rights in the agricultural sector.

Watch a recording of Cambridgeshire's Full Meeting of Council on the [County Council's YouTube channel](#).

Full steam ahead for the road surface programme

A [large-scale programme to maintain and improve the quality of Cambridgeshire's roads](#) is well underway.

Around £5m is being invested into a programme of surface dressing, which will prevent damage and prolong the life of the county's roads, as well as ensuring they continue to be safe for all road users.



Cambridgeshire County Council's highways team have already treated 39 locations across the county, and more than 50 roads are in the process of being completed.

In addition to this surface dressing programme, a countywide programme of road markings, carriageway and footway resurfacing is also being delivered. As well as ongoing work addressing the roads on peat soils across the county.

Find out more about the [locations and types of road surface treatment](#) on our website.

Families can 'Get Activated' with a summer of free or low cost activities

Families across Cambridgeshire can gear up for a summer of fun with a range of enjoyable and healthy activities available across the county.

Through the countywide campaign Get Activated, county and district councils, alongside partner organisations, will be offering low-cost and free varied activities to keep families busy - including cycling, walking, sports and cultural and community events.



To find out more about the campaign and the activities being promoted follow Cambridgeshire County Council's [Facebook page](#) and our [Twitter feed](#).

Capture the essence of summer with the #LetsGetOutdoors photography competition

Calling all photography enthusiasts and performing artists - take part in the [#LetsGetOutdoors photography competition](#) this summer to be in with a chance of winning a £50 or £25 runner up supermarket voucher.

Ran by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Parks Partnership, the competition is inviting residents to share images or videos in a local park or space which capture the theme 'embracing the sun'.



All suitable entries will be exhibited on the [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Parks Partnership website](#) and the [Camsopenspace website](#).

The closing date is Wednesday 23 August 2023 at 12pm. [Read the rules and guidance for the competition here](#).

Cambridgeshire's HAF programme offers free spaces for food and fun this summer

This summer, the [Holiday Activity and Food \(HAF\) programme](#) is offering free spaces for primary and secondary school children in Cambridgeshire (who are eligible for [free school meals](#)) to enjoy enriching experiences and nutritious food.



As part of the programme, eligible children will be able to access fun and entertaining play opportunities to help develop their skills and knowledge and keep physically active. They will also receive a nutritious meal every day.

The programme will run until 31 August and is delivered by approved providers, co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Further information on the [HAF programme](#) can be found on the County Council's website.

Cambridgeshire's mobile libraries deliver £300,000 of value every year

[Economists have found Cambridgeshire's mobile library service](#) produces over £300,000 of value each year for its users.



The three mobile libraries visit 388 locations in 98 villages each month, stopping at care homes, primary schools, playgroups, housing shelters and science parks.

They enable potentially isolated people and those in rural areas to stay connected and independent by borrowing books, CDs, magazines and jigsaws, buying stamps and reading glasses and collecting free walking stick ferrules.

The full report, Libraries for Living, and for Living Better is [available to download as a PDF](#) online.

Find a [mobile library stop near you](#) or [visit a library branch](#).

Ready, Set, Read! with the Summer Reading Challenge

This summer children across Cambridgeshire can discover their favourite sporty heroes and unleash the power of play, sport and physical activity all through reading.



[The Summer Reading Challenge](#), ran annually by the [Reading Agency](#), features sports and games themed challenges to keep children's minds and bodies active over the summer break.

The challenge is open to pre-school and primary school aged children and is designed for all reading abilities. They can borrow books of their choice through their local library and attend a programme of fun and interactive free themed activities.

To complete the challenge, children must read six books of their choice by the end of the school summer holidays - for each book they read, they will collect special stickers and for completing the challenge they will receive a certificate and medal.

It is free to take part in the challenge, and children can sign up at their local library or online at [The Summer Reading Challenge website](#). [Find your local library here](#).

Local groups and organisations invited to apply for the Cambridgeshire Priorities Capital Fund

Applications are now open for the [Cambridgeshire Priorities Capital Fund](#) (CPCF) - inviting groups and organisations from across Cambridgeshire to apply for funding for projects that will make positive changes in local communities.



The CPCF is designed to support local communities - by helping to upgrade and improve community buildings and assets to better meet the needs of the families, households and communities who use them.

All applications must support the Council to achieve its vision, and proposals should support the deliver of at least three ambitions in our [Strategic Framework 2023-2028](#).

[Find out which groups and organisations are eligible to apply](#) on the County Council website. Details on how to apply are also available on the webpage.

All Expressions of Interest must be completed by 24 September 2023.

Did you know that there are types of fostering that you can do alongside work?

Our foster carers come from all walks of life, and all types of backgrounds. We are keen to support compassionate people who want to foster alongside work in any way we can, as this helps us to keep children and young people local. By staying local, the children and young people in our care can maintain their connections to their schools, their communities, and the people who are important to them.



If you are not sure whether you could become a foster carer because of work, please do not rule yourself out. You could be denying both yourself and a child or young person in care a life-changing experience, and we are here to support you.

Some people worry about the tax implications of working alongside fostering, but since the fostering allowance is not considered an income, any tax paid is minimal.

Different types of foster care that suit different work and lifestyle arrangements include:

- respite care – fostering at weekends and during holidays
- supported lodgings – helping young people develop their independence skills
- time-limited – usually for newly looked after children while their family situation is being assessed
- link care – emergency care, overnight care, or care on a time-limited basis for a child with a disability or complex health need

To find out more about fostering for Cambridgeshire County Council, please visit [our fostering webpage](#) or get in touch with our recruitment team for a friendly chat:

- Email fostering@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
- Call 0800 052 0078

Foster for us!

You can make a real difference to the lives of children or young people as a foster carer for your local authority.

- Local training and development
- Generous pay and benefits
- 24/7 support from a Supervising Social Worker
- Local support groups and networking opportunities

If you are over 21, have a spare bedroom, and are willing and able to provide a stable and loving environment for children, then we want to hear from you.

0800 052 0078

Text FOSTERING to 60777

Email fostering@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Visit cambridgeshire.gov.uk/fostering

We want to hear your views! Too long? Too short? Not enough relevant features? Let us know your thoughts after reading Cambridgeshire Matters so we can ensure our newsletter works for you.

Please email the [Internal Communications Team](#).



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