

Cambridgeshire County Council

Sawston and Shelford division

MONTHLY REPORT

AUGUST 2026

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FULL COUNCIL

Reform UK Ltd held the Ramsey and Bury county council seat in the by-election on 16th July.

The county council's current composition is now:

Liberal Democrat and Independent 33 seats, Conservative 10, Reform UK 9, Labour 5, Green 3 and Non-aligned Independent 1.

The next meeting of the full county council is on Tuesday 13 October.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

On the last day of Parliament before recess, the Secretary of State for local government announced that he would be delaying a decision on new councils for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. He said a decision would be made 'by October'.

Angela Rayner has since taken over from Steven Reed as Secretary of State.

Before the delay was announced, it had been rumoured that the Government would announce Option D as its preference—splitting Huntingdonshire down the middle. It seems probable that Cambridge City and South Cambs together will form the basis of one of probably three unitary councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Local elections to the new councils are still scheduled to go ahead in May 2027, regardless of the delayed announcement. This timetable gives very little time to complete preparations for apportionment of assets and liabilities between the councils, and to set up new services for highways, social services, education, and more.

ADULTS & HEALTH

Cambridgeshire County Council's **"Get Activated!"** summer activity campaign is back for 2026—promoting hundreds of free or low-cost activities for children, young people,

and families at locations across Cambridgeshire.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/campaigns/get-activated>

Learning disability partnerships rated Good by CQC

People with learning disabilities across Cambridgeshire are benefiting from high quality, compassionate and person-centred support, according to four Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessments published in late July, recognising significant improvements since their previous inspections in 2023.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE:

Ofsted carried out a focused visit to Cambridgeshire in June, and has recognised significant improvements in the County Council's provision of appropriate placements for Cambridgeshire children in care since their last visit in 2024. The summary also identified four areas for improvement, including the sufficiency of accommodation to meet the needs of children in care in Cambridgeshire.

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50307019>

ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN INVESTMENT

A new **Agricultural water resilience grant scheme** for farmers and growers has launched to help boost agricultural water resilience across Cambridgeshire. Farmers, growers and horticultural businesses can now apply for grants of between £2,000 and £50,000 from a £1.3M grant scheme designed to improve water efficiency, strengthen resilience to drought, and support sustainable food production.

The grant scheme is being delivered by Water Resources East (WRE) in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council as part of the Cambridge Water Efficiency Programme. The launch comes as Cambridgeshire's agricultural sector faces growing pressure on water resources due to climate change, population growth and increasing environmental demands.

Improving on-farm water efficiency is seen as key to securing future water supplies, protecting sensitive river environments, and supporting long-term food production. The first application closure dates is 27th September 2026

<https://wre.org.uk/agricultural-water-resilience-grant/>

Minerals and Waste local plan

Consultation on this stage of the plan closes on 10th October.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/mwlp-review

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

The County Council's Highways & Transport Committee has agreed to spend an additional £5M on winter readiness, to help prepare more of the county's roads for the winter.

This comes on top of record levels of highways maintenance funding. Over £78M has been allocated for highways maintenance in 2026-27, of which £31.3M comes from central the Government.

This will include repairs to sections of road in the fens (A142 between Ely and Soham, and the A1123 in Haddenham) using techniques new to Cambridgeshire such as large-scale mastic screed repairs, and structural patching as well as crack sealing to protect roads before defects form. The programme starts this month with a view to delivering as much preventative work as possible before winter.

The innovative road repair trial will be carried out by Winvic Construction Ltd and is aimed to tackle the long-standing challenges of maintaining roads built on peat soils. The trial will test new and more resilient ways of repairing highways affected by peat and weak soils.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and parking/highway-projects/soil-affected-roads-innovation-trial>

The council will also run a pothole innovation trial in October. This will test new equipment and materials under real-world conditions to identify the most effective approaches for future highway maintenance.

Countryside access and Rights of Way

The County Council is reviewing its **Rights of Way Improvement Plan** and will soon be seeking comments from parish councils and county councillors. The Plan outlines what the county council intends to do to protect and enhance our public rights of way network over the next ten years. The council would welcome feedback on this important policy which affects rural communities and people who do not use a car to travel around our county.

Any questions, please email claf@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

CAMBRIDGESHIRE and PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority has been granted ‘Enhanced’ status by the Government, and will now be in line for more powers to be passed from the Government to Mayors.

The statement by the Government (“Rewiring the State”) suggests this might include control of budgets for 16-19 education, commuter rail services, social and affordable housing, and services from health to policing and education.

From 2028 Mayors will also receive a share of local income tax—and councils will retain more business rates.