

Cllr Liam Dewey-Beckett

County Council Report for Parish Councils: July and August 2026

County Councillor for Brampton Division, Cambridgeshire County Council | Chair, Health Scrutiny Committee | Cabinet Member for Audit & Governance, Huntingdonshire District Council

A round-up of my work at Cambridgeshire County Council since my last report, for circulation to parish councils across Brampton & Buckden Division.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Government Stalls LGR – For Now

Local Government Reorganisation for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is now delayed, after the Government confirmed in July that its decision on the future shape of local councils in our area would be pushed back to October, they now have firmly hit the pause button while they take into consideration new legal advice and review their previous decisions. It is unclear whether Unitary elections will now take place in May – and officers have written to ministers seeking clarification on this exact point already.

Further Updates will follow.

HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT

Active Travel: Working Through the Detail on Brampton Road

The proposed active travel scheme on Brampton Road continues to generate strong feelings locally, and I want residents to know I'm taking the concerns raised seriously. Following our engagement events in Brampton and Hinchingsbrooke, we've secured the removal of a signalised crossing at the Church Road roundabout to keep traffic moving, and secured a commitment to thorough traffic modelling at the Bromholme Lane junction before any final decisions are made. I'll keep pressing for a scheme that is evidence based and that works for everyone: residents, schoolchildren and drivers alike.

Roads Fixed Across Brampton and Hinchingsbrooke

Working with County Highways, I've logged and chased a long list of defects across the ward, from collapsed drains to worn road markings. This has secured a full drainage investigation and resurfacing of Church Road, between the Black Bull and the Brampton Park roundabout, and a full resurface of West End. I'm continuing to push for more of our roads to be added to the County's capital programme.

School Parking at Offord Primary: Enforcement Under Way

Following persistent concerns from residents of Miller Close in Offord Darcy about dangerous and inconsiderate parking during school drop off and pick up, I've secured cyclical Civil Parking

Enforcement attendance at the location, with officers making unannounced visits over a six month period to help change driver behaviour. I've also asked the Council's School Streets team to assess whether a School Street scheme could work here in future, alongside the Parish Council and the school.

Bus Route 65: Significant Changes Now Firmly Proposed from February 2027

The CPCA/Mayor have laid out the proposals as follows:

"Service 65 will see significant revision and enhancement to the service to deliver a more sustainable and usable service moving forwards. Service 65 will be rerouted in St Neots to additionally serve St Neots Rail Station, before continued onward to Great Paxton, Offord D'arcy and Offord Cluny. The service will no longer serve Buckden, with the route instead continuing north to Godmanchester, Hemingford Abbots, Hemingford Grey and St Ives which will offer significant new connection options. Services will be timed to connect with rail services to and from London, and the timetable will be enhanced to offer an improved frequency to communities along the route. The new service will also additionally operate on Saturdays. The new 2 hourly service is anticipated to be a more sustainable and better value use of the funding to deliver bus services in this area, which was otherwise at risk of full withdrawal.

- Travel from St Neots to Buckden is still possible using the more frequent 66 service.
- Travel to Buckden from Great Paxton and The Offords is still possible with Tiger on Demand.

Anticipated Procurement Pathway This service is intended to go through a full procurement process with implementation in February 2027."

HEALTH SCRUTINY

Scrutinising CPFT's Quality Account

Building on my last report, the Task and Finish Group I chaired has been finalising its formal scrutiny statement on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust's Quality Account. Alongside our findings on ward safety and rising complaints in children's neurodevelopmental services, we've asked the Trust to publish clearer year on year benchmarking data, including a breakdown of Freedom to Speak Up referral themes, so residents and councillors can properly judge whether things are improving.

NHS Patient Records and the New Hinchingsbrooke Hospital

At the Committee's July meeting, I pressed North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust on the twenty four month delay to its new electronic patient records system, the last major digital upgrade of its kind still outstanding in our region. This matters directly for Huntingdonshire: the Trust's own business case says the new system needs to be running for two to three years before the new Hinchingsbrooke Hospital opens, so I've asked the Committee to treat this as a genuine risk to our new hospital's timeline, not just an IT project, and to keep tracking where responsibility sits for the delay.

Holding the NHS to Account on Dental Underspend

Freedom of Information data obtained by local campaign groups Toothless in Cambridge and Toothless in Huntingdon showed the NHS reclaimed £16.2 million from underperforming dental contracts across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough over two years, with only £4 million reinvested locally and £1.9 million returned to NHS England rather than spent on local dental capacity. I responded formally to a Council question on this, and I'm following up with the Integrated Care Board for a full explanation, including where nearly £7 million of the reclaimed funding has actually gone.

Seeking Answers on Doddington and North Cambs Hospital

I'm pressing NHS bodies for a full explanation of the pattern of service changes at North Cambs Hospital in Wisbech and Doddington Community Hospital, where residents have seen the MRI scanner moved to Ely and not returned, X-ray patients redirected to King's Lynn, and audiology and dermatology services withdrawn or paused. I've asked whether these changes amount to a "substantial variation" requiring formal consultation, and I'm seeking full answers ahead of the Committee's meeting on 1 October, when the Trusts will attend in person.

Keeping NHS Data Systems Under Scrutiny

The Committee is continuing to ask local NHS bodies for assurance on how new national data systems, including the NHS Federated Data Platform, are being introduced and governed locally, so that patient trust and data protection are properly safeguarded as these systems roll out.

ACROSS CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Have Your Say on Rights of Way

The County Council has begun a review of its Rights of Way Improvement Plan and is inviting comments from parish councils and residents on priorities for our local footpath and bridleway network. This is a good opportunity for parish councils to flag local issues directly. Comments can be made at yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk before the deadline of Sunday 11 October.

Minerals and Waste Local Plan Consultation

The current stage of consultation on the County's Minerals and Waste Local Plan remains open until 10 October, at cambridgeshire.gov.uk/mwlp-review. This is relevant to any parish considering applications for mineral extraction or waste facilities nearby.

Support for Unpaid Carers and the Future of Adult Social Care

The County Council is running workshops between September 2026 and March 2027 to help shape future support for unpaid carers, and is encouraging anyone with caring experience to get involved via Commissioning.FPTeam@cambridgeshire.gov.uk. Separately, the national Big Conversation on Care, launched by Baroness Louise Casey, is inviting views on the future of adult social care until April 2027, at caseycommission.co.uk/bigconversation.

Homelessness in Rural Areas Rising Faster Than the National Average

New analysis from the County Councils Network shows homelessness and temporary accommodation costs in county and rural areas, including Cambridgeshire, have risen faster than almost anywhere else in England over the last six years: a reminder that this isn't only a big city issue.

Wildfire Risk and Our Changing Climate

The recent serious fires at Holme Fen and elsewhere in the country are a stark reminder of how vulnerable our fenland landscape is to extreme weather. The County Council worked with partners during the recent heatwave to help manage the risk, and it's an area I'll keep watching closely given how much of Huntingdonshire sits on fen and peatland.

CASEWORK & COMMUNITY

Keeping Vulnerable Residents Cool at Hilary Lodge

Working with Places for People, Warren Smith and I helped secure air conditioning for vulnerable residents at Hilary Lodge ahead of this summer's heatwaves: a small change that makes a real difference to people's health and dignity in extreme weather.

Looking at Financial Inclusion

I've also started looking at how the Council, through both my Audit & Governance and Health Scrutiny roles, can help residents access good financial advice and make better financial choices, from debt advice as part of health support to how the Council treats residents in financial difficulty. More to follow as this work develops.

GRANTS AVAILABLE: CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Funding for Parish Councils and Local Groups

Parish and town councils, village halls and local community groups are directly eligible to apply for grants through the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, which distributes over 50 funds supporting projects that improve quality of life across the county. Grants for organisations typically range from £1,500 to £4,500, though this varies by fund, and funding can cover project costs, capital items, and even staff time.

Applications are accepted in quarterly rounds. The current round closes at 11:59am on 1 November 2026, covering activity through to February 2027. Full guidance and the online application form are at cambscf.org.uk/funds, and [Hunts Forum](#) offers free local support with applications for groups in Huntingdonshire.

I'd encourage any parish council or local group with a project in mind to take a look, and please get in touch if I can help.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

I can be contacted:

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Cllr Liam Dewey-Beckett

County Councillor for Brampton & Buckden Division