

CHAIR'S REPORT SEPTEMBER 2026

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Government was unable to decide on Local Government Reorganisation in Cambridgeshire in July and now hopes to have a decision by the end of October, but watch this space!!!

CAR PARKS, PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND REVITALISATION OF TOWN CENTRES IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Members will be aware of the survey that HDC carried out from mid-July to mid-August regarding its parking strategy, and its late notification to town and parish councils.

HDC also commissioned Capital and Centric to look at the revitalisation of the Town Centres of Huntingdon, St. Neots and St. Ives. "Events" were held in the three towns on the evenings of 17th, 18th and 19th August and I attended the first two, but spoke to a few people as they came out of the St. Ives exhibition.

The proposals centred on the redevelopment of the Princes Street Car Park and the Bus Station in Huntingdon, Tebbutts Road Car Park in St. Neots and the Cattle Market Car Park in St. Ives. All proposals would result in significant reductions in parking spaces. The public at all three events were aghast at the proposals and such was the opposition at Huntingdon that I was not surprised that no plans were made available at St. Neots. I only saw one member of the Administration at Huntingdon and none at St. Neots. Although others may have been there, they kept a low profile.

Because of this and issues regarding subsidising car parking, reduced journey times and frequency on the busway and the reduction in local bus services, I felt that the best option was to ask a question at the next meeting of HDC on Wednesday 9th September.

I have shared my question with Anne, as Vice-Chair, and Martin, our District Councillor.

It is as follows:

"There are a number of inter-related issues regarding transport and parking, but there does not appear to be any co-ordination

1. The Council launched a survey regarding its parking strategy, closing on 16th.August, but only notified the parish and town councils on 30th July.
2. The day after this survey closed, Capital and Centric held "events" regarding three well-used town centre car parks without indicating how those parking spaces will be replaced.
3. The Combined Authority wants to provide an hour's free parking rather than use the funds to improve the local bus services. Instead, it is reducing them.

4. The speed limit on the busway imposed whilst the drawn-out installation of fencing takes place has lengthened journey times and reduced passenger numbers, which has now resulted in a reduced frequency.

Why is there no joined-up thinking, why have a short consultation period during summer holidays, what on earth is going on with your existing car parks and why does it appear that nobody is talking to each other?"

REMEMBRANCE DAY

There are two matters that require a decision.

The first is whether we continue to buy a wreath and what our donation will be. For the last two years it has been the minimum of £25, and I would suggest that we have a wreath and increase our donation to £50.

The second is my continuing concern that many people are not happy that the Act of Remembrance at 11 o'clock on Remembrance Day takes place in St Mary's Church rather than at the War Memorial. I intend to be at the War Memorial for 11 o'clock and hope that the Council will agree to my placing a small notice about this in the November "Roundabout".