



February 2023

This month I am delighted to announce East Cambridgeshire District Council will be freezing its portion of the Council Tax bill - for the 10th year running.

This is at a time when many other local authorities are increasing theirs by the maximum amount possible.

Household costs are rising sharply, and as a Council, we want to do whatever we can to support our residents. We appreciate freezing our portion of Council Tax is a modest gesture, but we hope residents appreciate that we really do have their best interests at heart.



Council Tax frozen for 10th year running

East Cambridgeshire District Council has announced it will be freezing its element of Council Tax again in 2023/2024 for the tenth year running.

It is the only district, county or unitary authority still in operation in the country not to have put up bills during this time.

Despite the uncertain economy and rising interest rates the Council has announced it also has a balanced budget for the next two years.

The announcements were made during a meeting of the Full Council on 21 February 2023.

The amount residents pay to the District Council is less than eight per cent of the total bill. It means an average Band D property will pay £142.14 to the District Council, the same as it was 10 years ago.

The remainder is divided between Cambridgeshire County Council, parish or town councils, the emergency services and the Combined Authority.



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East Cambridgeshire
District Council

In East Cambridgeshire 80% pay their Council Tax by Direct Debit. It is convenient, easy and reliable, with the Direct Debit Guarantee.

There are a range of payment dates to choose from, and the choice of either 10 or 12 monthly instalments.

You can also help save the environment by choosing to go paperless and manage your account online. Sign up for e-billing, apply for discounts, report a change of address, and set up a Direct Debit [on our website](#).



If you are struggling to pay your Council Tax or any of the other bills you are facing, remember we are here to help. Cost of living advice can be accessed via our website using the QR code. Or, for help with your Council Tax bill contact [Anglia Revenues Partnership](#).

Independent financial advice is also available from the [Money Advice Service](#).



District council secures three changing places toilets

Ely, Littleport and Soham are each to get a fully accessible Changing Places toilet after East Cambridgeshire District Council put in a successful bid for Government funds.

The disabled toilets are special because they contain a hoist and a changing bench enabling people who need personal assistance to use the toilets or get changed without having to lay on the floor of a public toilet. This can include people with profound and multiple physical and learning disabilities, spinal injuries and people living with stroke.

The toilets are to be located at The Lighthouse Centre, Ely, the public toilets in Fountain Lane, Soham and Littleport Youth and Community Centre.



Don't forget you'll need photo ID to vote at election in May

For the first time, residents in East Cambridgeshire will need to show photographic ID to vote at this year's local elections.

Residents are being urged to make sure they are ready to vote on 4 May by checking they have an accepted form of ID.

Accepted forms of ID include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK, EEA or provisional drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes,

such as an older person's bus pass. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo.

Anyone who does not have one of the accepted forms of ID will be able to apply for free ID on the [GOV.UK portal](#) or by completing a paper form.

The full list of accepted ID is available on the Electoral Commission's website, along with more information about the new requirement and details of how to apply for the free ID, on the [Electoral Commission's website](#).

You can read more about [Voter ID on our website](#).



Council pledges support following Sutton GP closure announcement

East Cambridgeshire District Council is urgently looking into the announced closure of the GP practice at Priors Field on 31 March 2023.

We understand this is due to the current GPs retiring and the practice being unable to find new doctors who want to take on the surgery. While we expect to be formally notified of the closure by the NHS on Monday, we are concerned about the impact on residents and the speed at which it is happening.

The Council has already contacted Stephen Barclay, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and Conservative MP for North East Cambridgeshire, which includes Sutton, to ask him urgently to look into the issue.

Leader of the Council, Anna Bailey, said "We all know the NHS is a stretched resource and I am extremely concerned about the impact of the closure of the GP practice on residents.

"Fenland Group Practice, which runs the surgery, and NHS Cambridgeshire &

Peterborough are committed to ensuring all patients have access to high quality GP services and care in the future and our understanding is that they are working to provide a smooth transition for patients to an alternative GP practice.

“However, it is inevitable that many village residents who use the surgery and do not have easy access to a vehicle will be concerned about which new GP practice they are being allocated to, whether and how they have a say in that, and how they will access their new service.

"With stretched local resources, I am also very concerned about the effect of taking on large numbers of new patients on other GP practices."

“GPs are independent practices and while we as a Council, cannot affect the decisions of the Fenland Group Practice we are doing everything we can to raise this at the highest level of Government and we are also exploring any other community support we can provide.”

In the meantime, residents can find out more information on the [Fenland Group Practice's website](#)

or attend a drop-in session at the surgery on the following days:

Tuesday 7 March between 10am – 1pm

Wednesday 8 March between 1pm - 4pm



Young people asked for their say on Youth webpages

Young people are being asked for their feedback on a suite of youth webpages put together by East Cambridgeshire District Council.

You can provide [feedback on our webpages](#) on our website.

The pages include a directory of clubs and sporting facilities available across East Cambridgeshire, as well as details on how to easily access public transport, information on education and careers, and how to stay healthy.

Sections are also included on keeping safe, with links which signpost young people on where they can get help or find out more about issues such as bullying, knife crime, county

lines and online security.

There are also opportunities for young people to have their say on what issues are important to them and why.

The [suite of youth webpages can be accessed here](#).

Cost of living advice continues

The Council's infamous cost of living bus, which has featured recently on BBC Breakfast TV, will be off the road for the remainder of this week as it undergoes a new makeover.

During this time residents who need to access cost of living help can still continue to do so.

The community team offers advice on a variety of subjects including benefits, housing advice, debt and financial support and how to access help during the cost of living crisis.

They have seen demand for their services mushroom over the past 12 months as they have dealt with 1411 requests for general cost of living advice and 1029 requests for housing advice.

Daily drop-in sessions will continue to take place at East Cambridgeshire District Council's offices at The Grange in Ely.

Residents will find the team at:

Wednesday - Soham Library

Friday - Littleport Foodbank

Alternatively, if you would like a member of the team to visit your home address call

01353 665555 or email customerservices@eastcambs.gov.uk

After 6 March the bus will return to its usual [district timetable](#).

Cost of living advice is also available via the homepage of our [website](#).

Tell us what you think

We value your feedback. If you have any comments regarding the above publication, please email comms@eastcambs.gov.uk

[Visit the East Cambs District Council website](#)



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Our mailing address is:

East Cambridgeshire District Council, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB7 4EE

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