



March 2023

This month I have been busy working with the Integrated Care Board to try and secure the future of Sutton GP Surgery and highlighting the state of our region's roads to the County Council - more details of these are provided below.

It's also a time to really start thinking about the forthcoming district elections on 4 May. I would encourage anyone who has not yet registered to vote to do so now. Your vote really is your voice when it comes to having a say on the decisions made locally. Please also remember you need to take photographic ID with you when you make your vote.



On a lighter note, I am delighted to announce a new digital sign initiative for Ely, our plans to replace our recycling fleet with vehicles that run on vegetable oil and a poetry competition to help celebrate the King's Coronation.

Medieval meets modern



Digital signs are being installed across the city of Ely as part of a joint initiative designed to celebrate our medieval city using the latest modern technology.

East Cambridgeshire District Council has teamed up with Visit Ely and the City of Ely Council to install 13 digital information points which go live in June.

They'll use smart touchscreen technology – linked to the free public wifi and a dedicated Visit Ely app – to benefit residents, tourists, businesses, and the environment.

As well as navigating people through the beautiful city using web mapping platforms like Google Maps, users will be able to easily search for the latest information on local shops and businesses.

Details of key events will be available to view at a glance and, if push notifications are requested, businesses can use the app to offer discounts and promotions.

Interesting facts and information will be uploaded by Visit Ely, enabling people to follow new historical routes around the city centre.

And a gamification feature will provide an element of fun with treasure hunts and quizzes.

The new technology is being installed by East Cambridgeshire District Council with a £240,000 grant from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority designed to help boost the local economy.

Once the digital signs and the accompanying mobile apps for Android and Apple are up and running they will be officially handed over to Visit Ely, which is managed by the City of Ely Council.

Council to invest in veg-fuelled recycling vehicles



Recycling lorries across East

Cambridgeshire could soon be running on vegetable oil.

The Council is planning to buy 10 new eco-friendly recycling vehicles - which will be converted to run on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO).

HVO generates 90 per cent less carbon than a traditional diesel fuel vehicle helping the Council make significant savings in its bid to become net carbon neutral by 2040.

HVO is made from feedstock such as vegetable oils and waste fats which is processed to produce a very clean burning fuel.

The Council is expected to agree the £2 million funding needed to buy the vehicles at its Operational Services Committee meeting on 27 March. If approved the new fleet is expected to be on the road early in 2024.



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](https://www.gov.uk) 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](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)

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



Interim provider found for Sutton surgery

East Cambridgeshire District Council has welcomed the news that from 1 April 2023, Malling Health will take on an interim contract to provide primary care services to the patients of Priors Field Surgery in Sutton.

NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System made the announcement on Friday 10 March 2023.

In a statement they say: "Whilst an interim service provider has been secured, our work to secure a lease on the Priors Field Surgery premises is not yet concluded. NHS Property Services is working in partnership with us to progress the matter as swiftly as possible.

"We will be sending a letter to all patients of Priors Field Surgery by post to confirm the new provider arrangements as soon as we have finalised lease arrangements in place. We also wanted to take the opportunity to once again apologise to the local community for any upset and concern the proposed closure of Priors Field Surgery has caused and thank everyone who has contacted us or attended a public meeting for sharing your views with us."

King's Coronation poetry competition

Young people across East Cambridgeshire are being given the opportunity to write a poem to help celebrate King Charles III's Coronation.

The competition is being run by East Cambridgeshire District Council over the Easter Holidays, with under 18s being asked to compile an illustrated poem entitled "If I were King Charles for the day."

Twenty poems will be shortlisted by the Council and transformed into a book which will be

sent to the King to celebrate his Coronation in June.

Each shortlisted winner will also receive a copy of the book with the best three poems being awarded £50 of National Garden Gift Vouchers. [Read more here.](#)

Highlighting the poor state of roads

This month I have been highlighting the poor state of repair and the safety of roads across East Cambridgeshire.

I am seriously worried about basic safety and the lack of maintenance on roads that are not even being considered for repair.

This is being reinforced by recent feedback from residents of our district who are raising this with me on a daily basis. They are suffering damage to their vehicles and accidents caused by the poor condition of our roads.

I have requested Cambridgeshire County Council officials rapidly convene a meeting to discuss the freeing up of significant funds for maintaining the highways.

CSP success



More than 70 people attended the Community Safety Partnership's first ever networking event at Ely Cathedral. The event featured a number of presentations to share what organisations are doing to help keep the public safe and support wellbeing.

They included a presentation on SisterSafe, which offers free self-defence classes for women and a talk on drink spiking from the Stamp Out Spiking Campaign.

Harriet Sugg, Community Safety Support and Anti-Social Behaviour Officer for the CSP and Lizzie Wales, the County Council's Youth and Community Co-ordinator for East Cambs also gave a presentation on the CSPs ever popular court experience days for students

28 Community Orchards now planted



East Cambridgeshire now has 28 new orchards thanks to a district council initiative to give away free trees to community groups.

Churchyards, schools and public open spaces are just some of the many areas across East Cambridgeshire to receive a share of approximately 300 native fruit trees made available under the East Cambridgeshire District Council's Community Orchard scheme.

Members of the Council's Green Team celebrated by planting their own mini orchard inside the grounds of the Jubilee Tree Maze at the Country Park in Ely.

Soham toilets remain temporarily closed



The public toilets on Fountain Lane, Soham, remain temporarily closed after the cleaner was threatened by a gang of youths. The toilets have been the subject of vandalism on at least 10 occasions recently.

We are working in partnership with the Police, Community Safety Partnership and the Town Council to put measures in place which will enable us to re-open them as soon as possible. In the meantime, anyone with information is asked to contact the police on 101.

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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