

South Area Neighbourhood Panel

Ashley • Bottisham • Brinkley • Burrough Green • Burwell • Cheveley
Dullingham • Kirtling • Lode • Reach • Stetchworth • Swaffham Bulbeck,
Swaffham Prior • Woodditton • Westley Waterless.



Welcome to the South Area Neighbourhood Panel newsletter! It summarises the main topics and points raised at the recent Neighbourhood Panel meeting held on **Wednesday 20th March 2013 at Kirtling Village Hall.**

Neighbourhood Panels are your opportunity to tell agencies working in your area what you would like to see improved and will ultimately make your locality a better place to live. Please come along to the next Panel meeting and help shape the discussions about your community!

Please use the link to access the Neighbourhood Panel webpage, which provides background information and all up-to-date documents
www.eastcamb.gov.uk/neighbourhood-panels/neighbourhood-panels



Well done

East Cambs Policing Team!!

January 2013 was the lowest recorded month for crime in East Cambridgeshire since the introduction of current recording systems in April 2007. Under 200 crimes were recorded in East Cambs in Dec 12, Jan 13 and Feb 13 – which has never happened before!

East Cambridgeshire is showing the highest crime reduction rates of any area in the Constabulary for 2012-13.

Keep up the good work!

Hot Topics

Welfare Reform

– What it means to you

The Welfare Reform Act became law on 8th March 2012. The Government is attempting to create incentives to get more people into work by ensuring work always pays whilst protecting the most vulnerable in society. Those affected will be working age – 18 to 61 (currently) and couples of mixed ages (working and pension age), with people of Pension credit age being mostly unaffected.

The changes include:

- Non-dependant deductions (from housing benefit deductions)
- Under Occupation Size Criteria

- Benefit cap
- Council tax support
- Disability Benefits (Disability living allowance moving to Personal Independence Payments)
Universal Credit

The Under occupation size criteria (known as the bedroom tax)

Working age claimants will be affected. If the property is under-occupied by one bedroom, 14% of full eligible rent will be deducted from Housing Benefit. If the property is under-occupied by two bedrooms or more, 25% of full eligible rent deducted from Housing Benefit.

**April -
June 2013**

Contents

- **Hot Topics – Welfare Reform and Buildings of Local Interest**
- **What we've been doing since the last meeting**
- **What you have asked us to do next**
- **Did You Know**

Priorities for Action

- **Shoplifting**
- **Speeding**
- **Dwelling Burglaries**

One bedroom will be allocated to:

- Every adult couple
- Any other adult aged 16 or over
- Any two children of the same sex aged under 16
- Any two children regardless of sex aged under 10
- Any other child aged under 16
- A non-resident carer (claimant/partner have disability and need overnight care)
- Foster children
- Armed services personnel that are temporarily absent.

The Benefits cap

A cap will be put on benefits for non-working households of £500 per week or £26,000 per year. It will affect working age claimants and non-working households. The Government has pledged that "No household will receive more in benefit than the average earnings of working households after tax". Single claimants will receive £350 per week and couple and lone parents will receive £500 per week. Any deductions will be taken from Housing Benefit first.

There are exemptions to the Benefit cap for anyone in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Working Tax credit, Industrial Injuries benefit, support element of ESA & anyone that has reached Pension credit age.

Universal Credit

Universal credit replaces several means-tested benefits: Income Support; JSA (income-based); ESA (income-related); Working Tax Credit; Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit. It is a gradual introduction from October 2013-2017, with the aim of simplifying the system into a single benefit. It will be paid monthly in arrears (where as benefits are currently paid every two weeks), direct to individuals. Applicants must apply on line. More details can be found at:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/universal-credit/toolkit.shtml>

Housing costs – Pension age – from October 2014

Housing Credit will be administered alongside Pension Credit. The rules are similar to Housing Benefit/Universal Credit:

- Bedroom Tax doesn't apply for social housing tenants
- No cap on the total payment
- Pension age social housing tenants can choose whether rent is paid to self or landlord
- Migration completed by October 2017

Unlike the current system, both couples need to have reached pension age to be treated as pensioners. If one person in couple is working age the couple will have to claim Universal Credit.

Pensioners will be unaffected by Under Occupation & Benefit capping.

Council Tax Benefit

Council Tax Benefit administered by Government has been abolished from 01.04.2013. The budget has been cut by 10% and transferred to Local Authorities to administer their own scheme which varies in each area.

Changes to disability benefit

From 8th April 2013 Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for adults aged 16-64 is to be abolished and replaced by Personal Independence Payment (PIP). More details are available at: www.dwp.gov.uk/pip-toolkit/.

Buildings of Local Interest

East Cambridgeshire District Council is consulting on the criteria for a new project called 'Buildings of Local Interest'. This will allow buildings/structures that play an important role within the local area, and contribute to a sense of place and local distinctiveness to be included on a list that would increase their significance and ensure that sufficient weight is placed on that significance during the planning process.

Under current legislation, unlisted buildings/structures outside conservation areas are not currently afforded protection. It is important to identify and formally recognise significant heritage assets that contribute to the local identity of the District. The local list will offer these assets appropriate protection during the planning process and will be an important planning tool for the Councils development control and conservation teams

The inclusion of a building/structure on the local list does **NOT** change the existing planning controls that apply to the building. If permitted development rights have not been removed (through planning conditions or Article 4 Directions) owners will still be able to carry out certain works without planning permission.

Inclusion on the list will ensure that proposals that do require planning permission will take into consideration the significance of the building.

The aims of the Project are:

- To raise the profile and give recognition to buildings and structures that contribute to local character and distinctiveness
- To encourage the preservation and repair of buildings and structures of local significance
- To enhance the appearance of the District's built environment
- To provide clear guidance for developers
- To ensure that development is sympathetic and appropriate to the character of an area.

The proposed criteria for inclusion on the list are:

Age - The older the building or structure the more likely it is to be of historical significance

Architectural Interest - a building or structure that is of local architectural value and includes design qualities typical of the local area

Historical Association - Buildings or structures with well documented associations with locally important people or events that also retain some quality in their physical fabric.

Local Characteristics - buildings or structures that contribute to local identity and distinctiveness.

Townscape Significance - individual or groups of buildings that contribute positively to the character or

identity of a local townscape, street scene or rural area. These include key landmark buildings, notable buildings on important routes into the area and those that create an important vista or contribute to the skyline.

Designed Landscapes & Archaeological Remains

- examples that are easily recognisable in the landscape and are not already designated. It does not include all areas of open space, only those that are clearly designed landscapes.

For more information contact Lorraine Brown, Conservation Officer, East Cambridgeshire District Council. Tel: 01353 665555

Did you know?.....

..... that you can report pot holes and other highway faults via www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/roads/reportingafault.htm or by telephoning the Contract Centre on 0345 045 5212. If you make the report on-line you can also track the progress of the repair.

Between the beginning of December 2012 and the end of January 2013, more than 600 potholes across Cambridgeshire were reported and repair work to fix them ordered by the County Council highway teams. Together we can improve the state of our roads!



What we've been doing since the last meeting'

Priority: To reduce speeding and illegal parking throughout the Panel area.

Action taken: 23 speed checks carried out by local officers over 6 weeks at various locations across the Panel area. This resulted in:

- 3 speeding offences revealed and letters sent to the registered owners of the vehicles.
- 44 parking tickets issued for a number of different parking offences over the panel area.
- Some discussion in the local press about parking enforcement in Soham.
- 4 out of date tax disc notifications sent to DVLA.

During the review period the Safety Camera Van was deployed at the following locations:

- A14, Bottisham – 8 Fixed Penalty tickets, 63 Speed Awareness referrals
- A1303 Stetchworth Toll, Newmarket – 3 Fixed Penalty tickets, 8 Speed Awareness referrals
- B1061 Dullingham Road, Newmarket – 4 Speed Awareness referrals

Priority: ASB and Intimidation in Swaffham Bulbeck

Action taken:

- Regular patrols were undertaken by local staff. A

number of youths were stopped and spoken with and ASB and its effects explained. There have been no recent calls for service although patrols have continued.

- There has only been one report of ASB during this period (in mid Jan 2013), which arose from an argument following a football going over a hedge into a private garden.
- An assault involving local youths is being dealt with by local officers, and the offender should be dealt with this week.

Some of the other issues that were addressed since the last Panel meeting were:

Issue: To seek advice/clarification on the ECDC Members Code of Conduct and Declaring Spousal interests:

Action: Employees at ECDC have their own Code of Conduct and are required to make declarations to the Monitoring Officer on gifts/ hospitality and interests in contracts, which are kept on a register as required in their Code. The different rules that apply are different, because the legal requirements introduced under the Localism Act 2011 and Regulations applied to elected and co-opted Councillors, not Officers.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services, ECDC raised the issue of Declaring Spousal interests and the Parish resignations with the Secretary of State with responsibility for this matter, the Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles, (back in November 12) and received a response from the DCLG at the end of January 2013. The response states that the Government sees the requirement to disclose spouse/ partners interests and put these on the District Council's website as reasonable requirements that they do not intend to change.

Issue: Can Heath Road in Swaffham Bulbeck be salted right through to old A11 road. It is well used?

Action: The Local Highway Authority undertakes an annual review of performance and routing to ensure delivery of the best service practicable.

This road is treated when forecasts predict ongoing sub zero temperatures but, as it is not a service bus route, it does not meet the criteria for inclusion as one of the higher priority regularly treated routes.

There are, of course, other regularly treated routes people can use (B1102, A1303 etc), albeit they may require motorists to make a longer journey. The reality is that the County Council is unable to treat any more roads than it does currently without something else giving; that is the purpose of the annual review - to make sure that the council keeps up-to-date with changes in circumstances.

If a local community feels that the Local Highway Authority (LHA) has got it wrong and wishes to write formally to the LHA explaining why this is so, those comments could be taken into account as part of the annual review.

Some of the issues you have asked us to address next

- Dog Fouling in Ashley.
- Remove the redundant yellow signs on various approach roads for the two developments in Bottisham that are now complete.
- Repair the damage on the pavements at The Hall and Beechcroft in Brinkley caused by large agricultural vehicles trying to pass.
- Parking on grassed areas at the Causeway, Burwell.
- Shoplifting in Burwell.
- Unsafe and inconsiderate parking at Ditton Lodge School
-

Priorities for Action

The Panel agreed that the priorities up until to the end of May and across the Panel area should be:

- **Shoplifting**
- **Speeding**
- **Dwelling Burglaries**

Did you know?.....

....that stickers reminding people to clean up after their dog can be purchased by the Parish Council for £1 (minimum order of 10) from East Cambs District Council? Every Parish Council in East Cambridgeshire has been offered the opportunity to purchase the stickers, so if there is an area that you feel needs to have a sticker (or perhaps you feel there is an area that needs a dog bin), contact your Parish Council.

Failing to remove dog faeces is an offence under the 'Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996. In order for the District Council to take action against the dog owner any witnesses to the offence must note what has happened. Include:

- The name and address of the person in charge of the dog
- A description of the dog
- The date and time of the offence
- The place the offence occurred.

Contact East Cambs District Council as soon as possible with the information you have obtained by phoning: 01353 665555



If you would like to raise an issue of concern, but are unable to come to the next Panel meeting, please contact your local Neighbourhood Panel representative or contact Julie Cornwell, Partnerships Officer on 01353 665555. Alternatively visit www.Shapeyourplace.org and have your say!

The next South Panel meetings are on

Wednesday 19th June 2013 7-9pm at the Ellesmere Centre, Stetchworth

Tuesday 8th October 2013, 7-9pm at the Ellesmere Centre, Stetchworth