

## **District Councillors' report to parish councils – April 2023**

### **Ending of the food waste pilot:**

The trial has been running for over three years and comes to an end as of 31<sup>st</sup> March. The trial has been highly successful with a take up of 55% (national average 40%) with 90% of participants using the caddies correctly – not contaminating the bio bags with other waste or plastics. The Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service has gathered the information needed from the trial areas (Milton and Chesterton) and as of April residents will need to revert to placing food waste loose, or in paper liners or newspaper, in the green bin along with garden waste. The green bins will continue to be collected fortnightly from March to December and every four weeks in the colder Winter months from December through to the end of February. Home composting is of course another option. Many gardens within the ward are relatively small so a compost heap may not be feasible, but a specific composting bin may be something to consider. Low cost composters are available from [www.getcomposting.com](http://www.getcomposting.com) and by entering your postcode on the relevant part of the website, residents can get a discount. Naturally, the aim is also to reduce our food waste in the first place for both environmental and financial reasons. The website [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com) has a range of recipes, tips and advice.

Although the local food waste pilot is ending, we are also expecting that separate food waste collections will soon be a mandatory obligation on councils to provide with funding in place from national government in the near future. Councils are awaiting an announcement from DEFRA regarding this.

This is much to the credit of the residents of Milton and how seriously they take green issues in that so many got behind the scheme.

### **Decarbonisation of Council Homes:**

SCDC have successfully bid for £1.7 million from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. This funding will help the Council to continue its programme of improving the energy efficiency and insulation of its homes to a C rating or above. Energy saving measures that can be provided from the funding include exterior wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, new windows and doors, draft proofing measures, as well as heat pumps and solar panel installation. This funding is particularly timely considering the Cost of Living Crisis, providing potential savings in the region of £200 - £400 per year on domestic energy bills.

The Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) is also part of the Decarbonisation Fund, to support those in low income households living in the worst performing off gas grid properties to make their homes more energy efficient. More information is available on the UK government website.

### **Further Cost of Living Support:**

Plans for a further cost of living support package for residents, worth more than £200, 000, have been published by SCDC. These will include a roadshow of talks about costs of living; support to transform more Warm Hubs into Community Wellbeing Hubs; advertising to increase awareness of Council Tax support for 'just about managing' residents; more provision of free energy-saving appliances, such as electric blankets and slow cookers; and the creation of a South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Food Network to link all the existing foodbanks and food hubs within the district to support each other. The network would also look to create links with local farmers to donate excess food that is not suitable for supermarkets. Watch this space for more details as the various schemes come forward!

## **Support for Ukraine**

The Council continues to look for new potential hosts via our Spare Room campaign which appeals for anyone who would like to get involved to apply to re-match existing guests via the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Householders receive up to £500 a month as a thank you payment to assist with the costs of hosting refugees. If you are interested in hosting, or know of someone else who may be interested, please take a look at our website for details of the support available to new hosts and or text ROOM to 88802.

## **Ground floor of South Cambs Hall:**

In line with the business plan, the Council are exploring an opportunity to renovate and transform a portion of unused ground floor working space at South Cambridgeshire Hall and are currently asking the views of residents and businesses in a survey. The wider aim is to support start-up companies and help small businesses set-up and grow, along with constructively using sparsely occupied workspace at South Cambs Hall advantageously. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please ask them to complete the [survey](#). For any more specific questions please contact [businesskeyprojects@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:businesskeyprojects@scambs.gov.uk)

## **Launch of the Big Help Out App – Coronation weekend of King Charles III:**

This app has just been launched (20<sup>th</sup> March) to help community groups, charities and indeed all volunteer organisations, large or small, with their plans ahead of the ‘Big Help Out’ on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May – the final day of festivities/activities around the coronation weekend. For more details see the website <https://thebighelpout.org.uk/> or download the app <https://www.thebighelpout.com/>

South Cambs District Council has issued guidance to parishes and advises any groups setting up events to contact the Council’s Safety Advisory Group before 21<sup>st</sup> April. Go to [www.scambs.gov.uk/environmental-health/health-and-safety-regulation/event-safety-advisory-group/](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/environmental-health/health-and-safety-regulation/event-safety-advisory-group/) for general guidance which also provides a helpful link to the County site for any event which may involve a street closure.

In the forthcoming parish e-bulletin SCDC are providing advice about collecting and disposing of waste and recycling arising from the festivities.

*Cllrs Paul Bearpark, Anna Bradnam & Judith Rippeth*