

District Councillors' Report to Parish Councils – February 2025

Waste Service Update - Blue bin recycling contract

Following a thorough public sector procurement process, Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS) is finalising a new contract for blue bin recycling processing. The current contract with Thalia expires at the end of February, and from March 3rd, a new provider - Re-Gen Waste Management Ltd - will take over the processing of our recyclable materials.

Importantly, residents will experience no changes to their recycling service. The same items can continue to be placed in blue bins, and collections will remain unchanged. While the materials will now be processed at Re-Gen's facility in Northern Ireland rather than locally at Waterbeach, this decision was made after careful evaluation of all options, with Re-Gen offering the best combination of cost-effectiveness, processing quality, and environmental compliance.

The new arrangement includes several positive features. Re-Gen's state-of-the-art facility uses advanced robotics technology that can achieve a 99% recycling rate - higher than current levels. The company has committed to sustainable practices, including plans to use more environmentally friendly fuels and establish a new facility in the Midlands during the contract term. To minimise environmental impact, they will coordinate transport with their existing operations, using return journeys of vehicles already delivering materials across the UK.

Most recyclable materials will continue to be processed within the UK - currently 82% overall and 100% for plastics - maintaining our commitment to domestic recycling. Materials will initially be consolidated at a Waterbeach transfer station before transport to Northern Ireland, where they will be sorted and sold to established UK-based processors and manufacturers.

The procurement process:

- ReGen Waste are being awarded the contract covering the haulage, sorting, onward processing and sale of recyclable materials from our blue bins. The procurement process, which was carried out by Cambridgeshire County Council on behalf of all the RECAP partner councils, explicitly defined how bidder's submissions would be scored and awarded. Therefore, all bidders knew in advance exactly how their submissions would be evaluated.
- Cambridgeshire County Council undertook this procurement exercise under [The Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#), which set out how public bodies have to procure contracts. Their procurement exercise was compliant with these regulations.
- All RECAP Partners were represented as part of the scoring process and scored the written submissions before being presented with any price information. The pricing was independently evaluated by financial consultants and then a total score was made up of the written submission score and the pricing score. This was a quantitative process which provided a result.

- Upon receipt of these bids, it was noted that the incumbent (Thalia) had submitted a non-compliant bid. This led to the incumbent bidder being eliminated from the process. This means that continuing to send materials to the Waterbeach site was not possible without breaking public procurement rules.
- The successful bidder, ReGen Waste, is appropriately licenced, authorised and regulated by the relevant UK authorities, to undertake the operations and activities required by the RECAP contract.

If you're interested in how blue bin waste is processed and where it ends up see the article in the most Zero Carbon Communities Newsletter

[Go to this Sway](#)

Consultation: Four day week

People can now share their views on South Cambridgeshire District Council's services during a trial of a four-day week.

Anyone anywhere can respond to a full public consultation which started on Monday 27 January. The consultation is open for eight weeks, closing at 11.59pm on Sunday 23 March.

South Cambridgeshire residents can [access the consultation online](#). Any South Cambridgeshire residents who would prefer to complete a paper survey can email communications@scambs.gov.uk or call 01954 713 000.

Given South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City councils share some key services – Greater Cambridge Shared Planning and Greater Cambridge Shared Waste – residents of Cambridge City are also being encouraged to comment on their experiences of using these services.

The information gathered during the consultation will help South Cambridgeshire District Councillors decide on the next steps for the four-day week at the Council.

The consultation has been set-up so that residents can share their views on how they have found Council services since January 2023 – when a trial of a four-day week began.

The Council announced plans to trial a four-day week – where people deliver 100% of their work, in around 80% of their hours, for 100% of their pay – to help address acute recruitment and retention issues.

South Cambridgeshire District Council's Lead Cabinet Member for Resources, Cllr John Williams, said: "We'd really appreciate residents taking the time to respond to this consultation. It's always been our plan to give residents, businesses, parish and town councils and community groups the chance to share their views. We want to understand your experiences of services you've received during our four-day week arrangements. So, we are very pleased to have now started that process. Our approach is designed to ensure those who have used our services during the four-day week arrangements can quickly and easily share their views - though anyone, anywhere is welcome to submit comments."

The idea of the four-day week at the Council is to help attract and keep talented colleagues in an incredibly competitive local employment market. It is also to help improve services by filling vacant posts permanently, rather than relying on more expensive agency staff. Regularly changing staff, or using agency staff to cover, is both costly and disruptive to services for residents.

Last summer, an [independent report by two universities](#) into the Council's performance during its four-day week trial was published. Of 24 key performance indicators monitored by the Council, analysis by the Universities of Cambridge and Salford found 22 improved or remained the same. There was also a financial assessment of the trial, which outlined a known full year cost saving of £371,500. The Council's opening hours have been maintained so it has been open for business just as it was before the trial – with longer opening hours on Wednesdays too.

Grant Funding Opportunity - Increased grant Funding for Electric Vehicle chargers

Funding available from the Council's Electric Vehicle charging grant has increased from £5,000, to up to £12,000 per project. This grant is open to parish councils, community groups and charities for public EV chargers in car parks associated with community buildings and village halls. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis and is open for the remainder of the 2024/25 financial year. We cannot guarantee the funding will be available into next financial year, so encourage those interested in applying to get in touch soon. For more information about this grant, please visit the [website](#). If you would like to know about community EV charging more generally, please visit [Electric vehicle charging - South Cambs District Council](#), where you can find a video by Steeple Morden Parish Council which explains how they installed their EVCP. You can also contact the Council on evcp.grant@scambs.gov.uk.

Save the date - South Cambs Sustainable Food Network Summit

The South Cambs Sustainable Food Network Summit is taking place on **19 February 2025** from **10am – 3.30pm**. This one-day event will bring together those working in the local food system in South Cambridgeshire. At the Summit we aim to:

- consider the main themes of sustainable food in South Cambridgeshire, and think about how we can build a stronger, more connected and resilient Sustainable Food Place;
- take the first steps towards forming a sustainable food network; and
- bring together local businesses, groups, organisations and individuals to discuss ideas and opportunities around sustainable food in South Cambridgeshire.

To save the date, and for more information, [visit the Eventbrite page](#). We hope that this event will form the first step in our journey to becoming a [Sustainable Food Place](#).



Development - Anglian Water Waste Water Treatment Plant Development Consent Order (DCO)

There has been a further delay to the decision to relocate the wastewater treatment plant. If you are interested, here is a link to the written ministerial statement on the issue: [Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#).

Campaign - City Fibre Cabinet

City Fibre have confirmed that they will be moving the very large cabinet which was installed without consent and probably illegally on Waterbeach village green. It will be moved to the corner of Car Dyke Rd and Cambridge Rd. We have been assured that it will not block the view of drivers emerging from Cambridge Rd.

We have also been successful in persuading City Fibre to move two cabinets off the cycle/foot path between Waterbeach and the A10. These are now no longer on the path.

Hopefully, they are learning that they need to take much more care when deciding where to put their cabinets.

Milton Police Station updates/eCops

Updates about the progress of the Milton Police Station will be documented in eCops. It also has a host of other updates that you may find useful. You can sign up to receive updates here: [Home Page - eCops](#)

Cllrs Paul Bearpark, Judith Rippeth and Anna Bradnam