

Bassingbourn Parish Council June 2021 - County Councillor's Report

New administration and directions: The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Independent groups have formed a new Joint Administration for the Council. The Joint Agreement, which sets out priorities and the operation of the council going forward, can be read here:

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cambridgelibdems/pages/5179/attachments/original/1620984611/County_agreement_2021_FINAL.pdf?1620984611

New service committees have now been established (reduced by two) and meetings will begin this month. I'll be serving on the Education Transport Appeals panel; as Chair of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Board; and Vice Chair of the County Council's Adults and Health Committee which covers social care and public health, and NHS scrutiny.

Outside of the council, I'll continue coordinating the Cam Vale Bus User Group, A10 Corridor Cycling Campaign and the Community Rail Partnership. The new Mayor Nik Johnson has signaled a new direction in terms of public transport and we await with anticipation what this will mean for us locally.

Enormous growth pressures that now seem part and parcel of life in South Cambs including East West Rail's southern approach, which has clearly spawned the Thakeham speculative town proposal even though the route and station have moved from Bassingbourn to Cambourne; and the proposed expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus which will have many knock-on effects.

Covid Latest from the Acting Director of Public Health:

We've continued to offer rapid tests from our mobile unit in a number of locations across Cambridgeshire. You can see where the van will be each week at

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rapidtesting

We really need people to get involved in the testing, as this is one of our best defences against the virus. We are now following up as many cases as possible to identify where they think they may have caught the infection so that we can put in place preventative measures to help stop its spread and keep our rates as low as possible.

The virus is still circulating in our communities, and we need to take precautions to make sure it is not allowed to spread in the way it has done previously. Even if you have had both doses, you can still spread the virus and catch it.

Currently, People aged 25 and over, or those who turn 25 before 1 July, are now being called to book their vaccine which they can do so at www.nhs.uk.

The data we are receiving tells us that more younger people, particularly those aged 11 to 24, are contracting the virus, so it is really important people in this age group take regular rapid tests to break the chains of transmission.

Drains: A local resident has helpfully shared unanswered reports of blocked drains in South End, which I've followed up with Highways. A drainage programme for Bassingbourn has been scheduled to take place between July and September – I've asked for details and will share with the parish clerk when I have them.

Consultation: Cambridgeshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure: Closing July 6th.

This is a timely opportunity to highlight the active travel component of the new Bassingbourn village hall, as a central village amenity.

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/cc-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-consultation-2021>

Bassingbourn Practical Solutions Group will meet in early July. Representatives from Bassingbourn Barracks, school and village college, District and County Council communities teams and Bassingbourn Climate Action group have been invited.

South West Cambridge Action Group (SWCAG): Round-up of activity in relation to the speculative developer Thakeham's proposal for a town of 25,000 homes between Meldreth, Whaddon, Bassingbourn, Wimpole, Orwell, Barrington, Shepreth, Foxton and Melbourn.

- SWCAG invited Thakeham to a public meeting to answer questions from the public, but Thakeham has so far declined.
- The May 26th SWCAG meeting for parish council representatives with Stephen Kelly, Head of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, focused on the OxCam Arc and juxtapositions of local authority and central government planning powers.
- Mr Kelly reported that Thakeham has to date not lodged a submission to the South Cambs Call for Sites, the statutory planning process in the creation of a new Local Plan. The window of opportunity to do so is diminishing.
- A response has been received on an appeal to a Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government's Freedom of Information Act refusal – the appeal was denied on the basis that it is not in the public interest. This has been posted on the SWCAG website under the News and Events page: www.swcag.org.uk
- Thakeham have confirmed that it has commissioned surveillance work on its proposed site and anecdotal evidence suggests that the flurry of helicopters overhead in early June were part of this – we await Thakeham's confirmation that the helicopters were indeed commissioned by them.