

# Kingston Parish Council

## Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held at 8.00pm on 17 May 2012

### Present:

Simon Draper, Chairman, Kingston Parish Council  
Tim Fitzjohn, Vice-chairman, Kingston Parish Council  
James Clear, Katherine Stalham, Councillors, Kingston Parish Council  
Peter Stokes, Clerk to Kingston Parish Council  
Tumi Hawkins, Councillor, South Cambs District Council  
Fiona Whelan Councillor, Cambridgeshire County Council.

**Members of the public:** Paul Wheeler, Alison Greenwood, Charlie Richmond, Tony Smart, Betty Smart, Miki Ellar, Janet Clear, Irene Heyman, Christine Stone, Jill Coleman, Suzy Stokes, Linda Rimmer, Tom Allen, Lina Orsino.

A series of reports was presented, as listed below. Where a discussion followed or questions were asked, brief details of these are given. Full copies of the reports, where available, are attached as appendices.

1. **Chairman's report** presented by Simon Draper (see Appendix A)
2. **Financial report** presented by Peter Stokes, Parish Clerk (see Appendix B)  
In response to a question the Clerk confirmed that the unusually high figure of £1162.00 for parish magazine costs arose because there was some catching up on prior years which had not been invoiced to the Parish Council.
3. **Parochial Church Council report** presented by Janet Clear, PCC secretary (see Appendix C)
4. **Open Spaces report** presented by James Clear, Open Spaces Officer, KPC (see Appendix D)
5. **Village Hall Management Committee report** presented by Katherine Stalham, VHMC member, Village Hall upgrade sub-committee member.

No written report. Katherine briefly summarised events held during the year, particularly the very popular Pub Night on the first Saturday of each month. An upgrade sub-committee has been formed, comprising Torrie Smith (Chairman of VHMC), Katherine Stalham, Suzy Stokes, Paul Wheeler and Pat Draper. Meetings have been held of both the sub-committee and the full Management Committee, following which an architect has been selected who has produced preliminary layouts depicting two possible alternatives.

So far the group has held two major consultation exercises:

- A questionnaire has been circulated to all households asking for detailed information about what residents like or do not like about the village hall.
- Residents have been invited to one of two sessions held in the village hall at which the two alternative schemes were on display, and members of the sub-committee were on hand to answer questions.

6. **Kingston Community Plan status report** presented by Paul Wheeler and Alison Greenwood, Community Plan Subcommittee members (see Appendix E)

Miki Ellar stressed the importance of a parish plan to register officially the views of residents in regard to what they would like to see in Kingston in future, what they would *not* like to see, and what they want to retain.

Tim Fitzjohn noted that the responses and aspirations of residents could be split into those matters which are directly under the control of the parish council or the community, and

those matters which are under the control of a higher authority, over which we only have limited influence.

7. **County Councillor's report** presented by Fiona Whelan (see Appendix F)

8. **District Councillor's report presented by Tumi Hawkins** (see Appendix G)

Tumi stressed the need for individuals to register their interest in 'superfast broadband' online –She also highlighted the plan to set up Youth Councils, giving young people more say in local issues. More details on both of these in her report (Appendix D) and also in the June parish magazine.

9. **Footpaths and Conservation report** presented by Tim Fitzjohn, Footpaths Officer, KPC.

No written report. Tim reminded us that any problems with footpaths (eg blockages) can be reported to him or direct to Peter Gaskin, Rights of Way and Access Officer at CCC at peter.gaskin@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

10. **Kingston Poor Land Charity report** presented by Peter Stokes in the absence of either of the charity's trustees. See Appendix H.

11. **Open Forum**

11.1. **Flooding in field Road:** this has already been reported to the Highways Department who have confirmed that they will arrange for jetting and cleaning of the drains in this area.

11.2. **Narrow verges:** the encroaching hedge on the west side of Bourn Road beyond Tinkersfield has already been reported to the Highways Department, who have said they will cut the hedge at the end of their nesting season (i.e. early August). The Clerk will follow this up. Please report any other encroaching hedge problems to the Clerk.

Signed.....

Date.....

## Appendix A

### **KINGSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

#### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING THURSDAY 17 MAY 2012**

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Parish Council meets every two months. Anyone can attend these meetings as an observer. However this evening's meeting is not a Parish Council meeting but a public opportunity for everyone to air their views.

##### Kingston Parish Councillors

Simon Draper (Chairman)  
Tim Fitzjohn (Vice Chairman and Footpaths)  
James Clear (Open Spaces Officer)  
Julie Conder (Finance; Webmaster, Playground User Group)  
Katherine Stalham (Representative on Village Hall MC)

Peter Stokes, is the Clerk to the Parish Council

Most of our meetings are also attended by representatives from the South Cambs District Council and the Cambridgeshire County Council.

Tumi Hawkins, SCDC  
Fiona Whelan, CCC

#### 1. Setting the precept

This determines the amount of tax paid by householders. Last year in deciding on an RPI-linked increase in the precept we recognised that we had to make provision for any future one-off items such as repairs to the Village Hall. This policy of an RPI-based increase has continued.

In relation to the Village Hall, things have now moved on and it is hoped that it will be possible to completely upgrade the Hall rather than undertake running repairs. The *Village Hall Management Committee* (VHMC) has responsibility for this project and we will hear more about this later in the agenda.

While the Parish Council is empowered to make grants for such purposes under the *Local Government Act 1972*, clearly the bulk of the funding will need to be acquired from outside sources.

#### 2. Community Plan

Parish Councils are being encouraged to prepare a Community/Village Plan. Such plans carry weight with the planning authorities locally and under the localism agenda of the Westminster Government it has become increasingly important to undertake this exercise. Tim Fitzjohn has led in initiating the process for Kingston and again we will hear more later in the agenda.

#### 3. Allotments

We negotiated a lease arrangement for Kingston to acquire from SCDC management control of the allotments in Crane's Lane. All four allotments are let and they look good! This success is due to the enthusiasm of the new allotment holders and also to the fact that over the winter James Clear did an outstanding job in voluntarily clearing the brambles, perennial weeds and overhanging trees and hedge, without any charge to the village.

#### 4. Communications

The village web site and the Facebook page continue to prove popular. Thanks are due to Julie Conder who set-up and maintains our on-line services.

The on-line survey protocol '*Survey Monkey*' and the meeting date coordination facility '*Doodle*' have also been widely used for village business.

The Village magazine has been without a permanent editor for some time but Peter Stokes has been filling the role temporarily until later in the summer, when Ron Leslie returns from Canada. Ron has already agreed to take over the role of editor.

#### 5. Public Spaces : Playground and Village Orchard

The playground opened in the summer of 2010 but we have needed some further inputs resulting from the shortage of water last year and erosion by wear of the grass mound. Regular inspections are carried out and the Clerk has carried out repairs, or arranged for volunteer working parties or contractors as appropriate to carry out agreed maintenance work required for the playground.

The Village Orchard, which belongs to the Parish, is the location for the forthcoming Jubilee Celebrations. A working party has removed a number of small dead trees and pruned back others. More work will be needed in the autumn to undertake further pruning and coppicing. We may plant some additional fruit trees but intend to keep the central area free of plantings so that the Orchard can be used for community events as appropriate. Everyone in the Parish is welcome to pick apples and other fruit as it ripens.

#### 6. Buses

Cuts have been announced. We understand that as previously intimated at last year's meeting all subsidies are to be withdrawn within four years. Representations on this issue can be made to the Parish Council or directly to Tumi Hawkins, the SCDC Councillor for our region, who is taking a very active part in seeking solutions.

#### 7. Acknowledgements

Finally, I should like to thank everyone who has helped with the work of the Parish Council including of course all Parish Councillors, Fiona Whelan (County Councillor), Tumi Hawkins (District Councillor) and Peter Stokes who provides excellent support for all our meetings and for actions that fall due between meetings.

## Appendix B

### **Kingston Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting 17 May 2012 Clerk's Report**

I have attached a summary of income and expenditure for the year 2011/12, and will now highlight a few items from this.

#### **1. Grass and Hedgecutting**

Stuart Buchan has provided satisfactory performance and they are again our contractors this year. The County Council contribution for grass cutting of verges for 2011/12 was £262, reduced from £350 the previous year.

Please let me know of any problems with grasscutting in the village.

#### **2. Grants**

A Grant was made of £614 to Kingston Parish Church for graveyard maintenance.

#### **3. Insurance**

The insurance premium for the year was £744, the same as the previous year. This is because we have struck a three-year deal with our insurers so the premium will be the same next year. Our insurance covers us for accidental loss or damage to any parish-council owned assets, and also for any public liability claims. It also covers us for parish council-organised events, such as the litterpick or the jubilee party. No claim has been made on our insurance since I have been in this position

#### **4. Playground**

The new playground has proved popular and is in regular use. There has been some ongoing maintenance and this will continue, based on feedback from the regular inspections. Please report any problems you find at the playground.

#### **5. Bank Balances**

Our total bank balances at the end of the year, after adjustment for VAT, stood at £9073, slightly less than the previous year (£9136).

#### **6. Audit**

The internal audit for the 2011/12 accounts has been completed without problems and the Parish Council has approved the accounts. The Annual Return will shortly be sent to the external auditors. We do not expect any difficulties with this, and when the result of the audit is received it will be published in the usual way.

Peter Stokes  
Parish Clerk

## KINGSTON PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR 2010-11

(N.B.: all amounts are net of VAT as this is reclaimed)

2009/2010		2010/2011
£		£
<b>INCOME</b>		
6515.00	Precept	7048.00
399.91	Grasscutting	290.43
40.00	Rebate from Kingston Oil Club	45.00
17.99	Interest on deposit account	8.69
530.00	Play Pathfinder grant	0.00
	Allotment rent	82.47
<b>7502.90</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>7474.59</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
722.68	Insurance	744.39
343.00	Audit fees	347.00
2077.44	Grass and hedge cutting (contract)	2055.66
959.87	Clerk's salary	1005.00
323.30	Footpath lighting	132.30
153.17	Subscriptions	285.95
686.00	Grants	614.00
1791.36	Asset maintenance	708.29
0.00	Parish magazine	1162.00
303.27	Miscellaneous	483.11
25055.00	Play Pathfinder expenditure	0.00
<b>32415.09</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>7537.70</b>
<b>INCOME MINUS EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>-24912.19</b>		<b>-63.11</b>
<b>BANK BALANCE AT 31 Mar</b>		
9136.88	Total after adjustment for VAT reclaim (see note)	9073.77
	<b>Change last year to this year</b>	<b>-63.11</b>

**Note:** VAT will be reclaimed in 2012/13. Bank balances have been adjusted to include the VAT reclaim.

**Kingston Parochial Church Council report to the Kingston Parish Council  
Annual Parish Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 at 8pm in the Village Hall**

The Parochial Church Council holds 4 meetings a year.

At our AGM in March we retained our 6 committee members and 3 ex-officio members (these being 2 clergy and a Churchwarden), we also have 2 Sidesmen. Rev Dr Alexandra Clarke joined the Papworth Team in October 2011 as House for Duty Team Vicar and resides at The Rectory in Bourn. Alexandra has settled into her new surroundings. She has given some welcoming services and has partaken in some of the PCC fundraising events.

The Electoral Roll currently has 28 members.

**Church Matters**

Since the last Annual Parish Meeting we've had 1 wedding. The Church looked beautiful as it always does for the Festival Services.

The Collections from these Services go to Charity. These were:- The Arthur Rank Hospice Charity, The Children's Society, Tearfund and Street Pastors. The Church also gave a small contribution to The Royal British Legion from the Remembrance Service collection.

Attendances have risen in the last year, all Festival and the Family Services were well attended.

The following roles are made successful with the continued support of many Parishioners, these are:-

Flower Arranging, Church Cleaning, Family Service Coffee Rota and the Opening/closing of the Church on Saturdays between March and September.

**Church Fabric and Graveyard**

There have been 3 volunteer work days to date. These were very productive and included jobs such as preparing the ground for sowing grass seed where trees have been removed. The compost heap was cleared from the North East corner of the Graveyard. The Tomb on the edge of the path was cleared of all overgrown vegetation. An area of ground by the Tower was levelled and re-seeded, a headstone was re-aligned, and finally Mr Peter Reynolds has planted some trees in front of the gas tank and at the back of Mr Burnells Headstone. In March, Mr Brian Page of Archimage made his Quinquennial Inspection of the Church Fabric and reported that some major repairs need to be done, these are :- re-roofing of the South Aisle and Porch, as well as repairs to other roof slopes, re-pointing the entire tower exterior and to remove cementitious mortar on the North Aisle wall and replace with lime-based mortar. The estimated cost of these works is £180,000.

The Organ was serviced and this too needs to have some work done on the bellows.

## **Fundraising**

With approximately £8,000 each year going towards the Ministry Share and now the major repairs which need to be done, we have to keep fundraising.

Events include:-

The Fete and Gift Day, which are held alternative years, Jumble Sale, Historic Churches Trust 'Ride and Stride', Ghost Stories as told by Robert Lloyd Parry, the sale of Christmas Cards and Carol Singing.

The Auction of Promises held last October was a new fundraising event which Mr Torrie Smith arranged and also presided as the Auctioneer, this was a great success raising £3520 and the evening was enjoyed by all.

## **Kingston Parish and Church Magazine**

Mr David Coombs, Publisher for the Magazine, resigned last October and Mrs Rimmer, Acting Editor resigned earlier this year. Mr Peter Stokes has taken over these roles for now. The magazine continues to be a good source of information and recently there have been some wonderful memoirs from Dave Heath and Michael Black.

Janet Clear  
Kingston PCC  
Secretary



**Annual Parish Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 at 8pm in the  
Village Hall  
Report from the Open Spaces Officer**

The role of Open Spaces Officer was created last year to deal with any problems relating to the land owned by the Parish Council or for which it has responsibility, these are:-

The Village Green  
The Recreational Ground  
The Village Allotments  
The Village Orchard  
The Swards

The first task tackled in the autumn last year was to renovate the Village Allotments – 3 of the 4 Plots had been neglected and were very overgrown. The Plots were cleared, rubbish burnt and removed. The 3 Plots were handed over to the new Tenants (who are all from the village) and hopefully, weather permitting, they will produce good crops this year.

Some preliminary work has also been done on the Village Orchard to remove some dead trees and overgrown areas. The Orchard is to be used for the forthcoming Jubilee Celebrations and should provide a traditional setting for this event. Additional work will be needed next winter to prune the existing Fruit Trees and plant replacements where necessary. The object is to provide a calm and tranquil place for Villagers to enjoy and also have the benefit of fruit in the autumn.

A Village Litter Pick was held in March. Volunteers helped to remove a great deal of litter from the verges and ditches.

It was also hoped to renovate the Telephone Box on the Village Green but British Telecom who still own the Box were not co-operative and these plans have been shelved for the present.

If you come across any problems or have any suggestions regarding the Open Spaces in the Village, please contact me or any other member of the Parish Council.

James Clear  
Kingston Parish Council  
Open Spaces Officer

## Appendix E

# Kingston Parish Plan

## *Have your say*

Dear Villager

This is an update on the Kingston Parish plan, to let you know how far we have got with asking villagers for their views, and to explain the next steps.

Just to recap – the purpose of a Parish Plan is to be able to present to local and national organizations the views and needs of as many people in the community as possible. So, for example, the Parish Council will be able to refer to the Plan when called upon to make decisions about services and facilities in the village, or what we want our village to look like.

The first step was to understand the topics and issues important to the community. In order to do this, we distributed the *Love/Hate* survey. This tells us what is important to you, what you most value, and also what you wouldn't like to see in your village.

Now that we know what topics to include and issues to address, we will create a detailed questionnaire. A printed copy will be sent to you soon, or alternatively you will be able to complete an online survey, accessible via the Kingston Parish Council website.

*This is an initiative supported by Kingston Parish Council*

## Appendix F

### **County Councillor's Annual Report for Kingston Parish Council - May 17th 2012**

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Last year I started off by saying that it was going to be a hard year financially with many services being trimmed and that theme continues through this year *and beyond*. A council tax rise of **2.95%** has brought some extra money, but services are still trimmed to the bone in many areas.

It's not all doom and gloom and I'd describe this past 12 months by way of a mixed bag: the good, the bad and the ugly.

#### **The Good**

- **Madingley Rise**

Remedial Work has begun – a fantastic result after all the accidents to finally see safety measures being put in place.

#### **Comberton Library**

We have had a fantastic result with this over the last 12 months and thanks to the enthusiasm of local residents and Cllrs the Library has been saved. Suzan Griffiths and a group of energetic volunteers have set up FOCAL – Friends of Comberton Area Library - and whilst we have had a reduction in staff and changes to the opening hours, the library is now safe for the future.

More information and details of how to join FOCAL and become a library volunteer (you can be one without the other) are available at: <http://friendsofcombertonlibrary.wordpress.com/>

In addition, FOCAL can be reached by email at: [friendsofcombertonlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofcombertonlibrary@gmail.com)

#### **Local School Issues**

The new secondary school planned for Cambourne has passed all its hurdles and construction is beginning in time for it to open in September 2013. Once it is opened, future Cambourne children will be removed from the catchment area of CVC which means that we will not have problems with space for children from the village wanting a place at CVC. Children from Cambourne currently at CVC will be able to stay until they complete year 11. There is a slight worry further down the line because the new school will only have 5 forms of entry and the Cambourne Primary Schools currently have 6 forms of entry between them, but it is hoped that once money is more readily available in the future, the school can be extended if needed.

CVC has also opened its sixth form (I declare an interest as the parent of a sixth former) and all appears to be going well with it. Other than concerns about speeding buses I've had no concerns expressed to me about traffic problems when the college holds evening events. Double yellow lines have been painted on West Street outside CVC and the local PCSO does patrol from time to time to ensure that people aren't causing an obstruction.

A big change however is that CVC is now an Academy, which means that it is an autonomous body and no longer under the control – or one might say influence – of the local authority. The school can now set its own admission numbers. Although many have been worried about a possible increase in size, the school has asked for the size to decrease in September 2013 when the new school opens at Cambourne.

#### **Cambridge Guided Bus**

It opened! It's being used!

There is still the small matter of the outstanding legal case and the huge cost implications for the County – but it has finally opened which is good news. It would have been a very expensive habitat just for the badgers.

## The Bad

### Pavements and Highways.

**This is our Groundhog Day item for this year and I'm quite sure next as well!**

We continue to suffer from a lack of sufficient investment to deal with all the potholes and pavement issues that need repairing in the villages.

The County introduced a new reporting site last year:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/roads/reportingafault.htm>

Please continue to report faults to me if unable to access this site, but by using the online facility it starts a clock and we can track how long the fault takes to fix. It will also show up in the County's monthly monitoring statistics and will show how fast / slowly the County are responding to requests from local villages.

### Village Bus Service

The best I can say is to declare that this issue is now as clear as mud. The County is issuing press releases on a weekly basis which appear to be contradictory in relations to grants gained / lost re buses .

We'll be collecting signatures for the threatened 18 services – volunteers most welcome to join us!

The County have urged people to engage in the process – and your local Cllrs have been. We've done everything asked of us, been to every meeting, engaged with the local community, offered self financing initiatives but we are still at the point where services are under threat. Our concern now is that once the later part of the route is affected will the commercial part remain so? We have just heard that Stagecoach will be altering its services with effect from June 10<sup>th</sup> 2012 – but no details have been released about the changes yet

## The Ugly.

No report from the County Council would be complete without addressing the failed attempt of County Cllrs to award themselves a 25% allowance increase in December – which was, thankfully, ruled Ultra Vires when it came to light that the Independent Remuneration Panel hadn't been correctly convened. A new IRP was convened and the result was another recommendation – this time that Cllrs allowances would go up in accordance with County staff pay – i.e. a freeze for this year. I voted against the original 25% increase and made it clear that I wouldn't accept it once it was voted in. I did vote in favour of the new proposal. It's simply outrageous to award oneself a 25% increase whilst cutting services for the residents of the County, making staff redundant and freezing salaries.

## And finally as they say ...

- **Drought**

This subject was debated in great deal at the recent full Council meeting. It's clear that new houses and schools have some nod to "sustainability" with solar panels being the accepted bolt on, but the

issue isn't really being addressed. For example new housing schemes rarely use grey water recycling.

The issue is likely to be severe next year if there isn't enough rainfall over the next 12 months and there will be more than hosepipe bans next year.

Communities are being encouraged to look at the water issue when any new planning applications come before them. Sustainability really does need to include water these days.

I have very much enjoyed working with the Parish Council and Cllr Tumi Hawkins over the last 12 months. Please contact me if you are concerned about any issues that I can help with.

*Fiona*

***Fiona Whelan, Hardwick Division County Councillor  
fewhelan@gmail.com  
01954 212725 (h) 07947 865490 (m)***

## **District Councillor's Annual Report**

**Municipal Year: 2011-12**

### **1. General**

I have now come to the end of my second year as your District Councillor, a year that was busier than the previous one. I remained on the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, and continued as Scrutiny Monitor for the Finance Portfolio and the Economic Development Portfolio. I was involved in one task and finish review, looking at how we interact with Customers and learn from feedback. The general outcome of that is that we need to communicate more, celebrate successes and learn from and improve upon not so positive feedback. I also served as a member of the Planning Committee. The best and most important work though is for residents of the Parishes.

### **2. Highlights of local issues**

As you know, I attend the monthly parish council meetings of my parishes, where I give verbal and written reports on council matters that are of interest or relevance, and on local issues that I have been involved in or been asked to assist with. I also provide advice as needed on dealings with the district council. Being involved in the local issues is the most interesting and enjoyable part of the job!

Some of these issues include helping residents navigate their way through the local government red tape, and our complex planning system so they get to talk to the right people, and speaking on behalf of applicants and/or residents at Planning Committee meetings, Standards Committee meeting or raising issues of concern at the relevant Portfolio Holders meetings. I've monitored, taken pictures and videos to give evidence to the council about the long standing unresolved problem with overflowing of Caldecote pumping station. I've dealt with getting new litter bins, finding the right people to get rid of rodents, getting blue bins non-collection issues resolved, supporting bids for SCDC grants, being a sounding board for anyone who wants to bend my ear on SCDC matters or life for that matter! I spoke vigorously against the application for the touring caravan site on St Neots Road, but unfortunately, the planning committee saw differently and gave it approval.

I accompanied the SCDC CEO Mrs Jean Hunter on her visits to each of the villages to meet and chat with members of the Parish Council, and get to know the villages more. It was interesting to find myself learning even more about each village, which is always a good thing.

I continue to work with the County Councillor Fiona Whelan and Steve Harangozo the District Councillor for Comberton in finding a resolution to the withdrawal of bus subsidies for the No 18 service which affects Kingston and Toft, and the No.14 service that affects Caldecote. In March, I travelled to Wisbech (at my own expense) to attend a County Council cabinet meeting where the bus transport subsidy withdrawal decision was finally taken, and asked a question at the Full Council meeting in Shire Hall two weeks later, about the subsidy withdrawal and what support we could get for our proposal for alternative service for No.18. I also pointed out the case of price increase of the No.4 service from Childerley Roundabout.

The issue of superfast broadband is one that comes up again and again. As you may know, Caldecote and Childerley, both served by Madingley Exchange, are getting faster broadband shortly. I coordinated the campaign in Q3 of 2010 that enabled the exchange to be one of 6 winners in the BT Race to Infinity. I also continue to liaise with BT to provide updates when these are available. BT expects that it would be in a position to offer Caldecote and Childerley residents the superfast broadband service toward the end of June/beginning of July. Fingers crossed!

Check out the updates on [www.facebook.com/MadingleyExchange](http://www.facebook.com/MadingleyExchange) or [www.RaceToInfinity.org.uk](http://www.RaceToInfinity.org.uk)

The rest of Caldecote Ward, which is Toft and Kingston, now have a chance to get faster broadband as part of the County's new economic drive. The County has launched a new project called Connecting Cambridgeshire, to provide at least 90% of homes and businesses in Cambridgeshire with access to faster broadband of at least 25mbps. It will be using £6.75M of government funding and £20M from its own coffers to fund this project. Toft and Kingston are on the Comberton exchange, so to stand a chance of getting the upgrade, residents of these villages need to register their interest and demand at [www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk](http://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk) . If you would like to be a "digital champion" for your village, or know anyone who might be able to do so, then please raise your hand and contact me.

### **3. Council and Corporate Plan**

The Council administration continues to make policy as it sees fit. The corporate plan setting out the Council's vision, aims and actions for the period 2012-2017 is available to view and download at <http://bit.ly/SCDC3As>. The three core aims are (1) Listening to and engaging with residents, parishes and businesses, (2) working with partners (3) making sure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer outstanding quality of life. The approaches, actions and performance measures have been spelled out. Feel free to hold the administration to these objectives at all times.

### **4. Finance**

The Council administration has set its financial strategy for income and capital expenditure up to 2017. The detailed estimate book can be found at <http://bit.ly/SCDCmFS>. Whilst it looks like the books are balanced, the reality is that there is a financial hole of more than two hundred thousand, which will increase in the following years, and the administration has not yet identified where the savings will come from.

The SCDC element of council tax has been frozen for the second successive year. However, the County, Police and Fire Authority precepts increased by 2.95%, 2.92% and 2.49%, which is why you have seen an increase in your council tax for this year.

The Council has also taken on a debt of £205 million from central government, to enable it take full control of the rental income from council properties. The loan is taken out over a period of 30 years, and there is sufficient rental income from Council housing stock to service it.

### **5. Housing**

The Council owns and maintains a housing stock of over 5000 houses. The maintenance of these houses has now been outsourced to Mears, a national company, even though the in-house repair team was doing an excellent job. The new arrangements began on 2nd April, and the new number for repairs is 0800 085 1313.

The Council administration hopes to be able to build 1000 council housing, with half of that projected for delivery in the next 15 years, using some of the £205m loan facility that it recently took out. It has promised to work with Parish Councils to determine the locations for these houses.

The Council has an ongoing project to install PV panels on as many of the council houses as are viable. You may already have seen some of these (e.g in Toft), and those who've had it installed are reporting savings.

### **6. Planning and Economic Development**

The process for creating the new South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan is under way. The plan will create the strategy for building in the district from 2015 to 2031. Parish councils and elected Members have been participating in workshops to consider the issues that should be addressed. Some aspects of the way planning is implemented may change, based on the ideas that come forward. The plan will not be ready until 2014, and there is plenty of work to do in the meantime.

As a first stage, last year, SCDC sent out a request to local landowners and parish councils to suggest sites that could be used for building new developments. In Caldecote, a number of sites were submitted, most of which are to the west of the village, and include large plots at the rear of West Drive, Grafton Drive and Strympole Way, as well as Bourn airfield. You can find out more about these sites at <http://bit.ly/SHLAA1> and <http://bit.ly/SHLAA2>. These are just for information only as no decision is being taken as to their suitability or otherwise for a while yet.

Toft and Kingston do not have any sites brought forward as the villages are currently classed as infill and not able to support large developments. However, some sites were identified in Comberton, although the Bennell Farm site seems to have missed out!

The council is now actively promoting south cambs as a place open for business as it tries to encourage businesses to relocate or start up in the area. It has also woken up to the fact that faster broadband is

essential for business growth in the district, and has set aside some funds to use to provide resource to work in partnership with the Connecting Cambridgeshire initiative.

The Business StepUp competition, backed by some big names in local business, was run again successfully and the prize of £30,000 worth of business support was won by two sisters who run Cambridge Super Foods.

## 7. Environmental Services

For most of us, the face of this service is our bin collection and recycling. The blue bin recycling scheme is going very well indeed, with more people recycling last year than ever before. It has also saved the council a lot of money. Second blue bins are available for those who are real recycling geeks, but there is a delivery charge of £62.

## 8. Young People

As you may know, the Children and Young People's Plan was created and approved last year. It is the Councils promise to consult with and listen to young people when making decisions or providing services that could affect them. The next step to achieving that is to elect youth councillors to represent young people, and nominations for the Young People's Council has opened for those between the ages of 13-18 who live in the district, to put themselves forward for one of the 20 places available for youth councillors.

We don't know what the electoral system is going to be yet or the terms and conditions for the youth councillors as that will be determined along the way. My question to cabinet at the April full council meeting did not get answered properly.

For more information and to apply, email Tracy Mann at [tracy.mann@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.mann@scambs.gov.uk) or telephone 01954 713342. I will also be very happy to talk to young people about the role of a councillor and what they could expect!

## 9. Conclusion

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as your District Councillor. My special thanks to all my Parish Councils for the unstinting support I have been given. It has been a pleasure to work with you all, and I look forward to continuing to serve you in the future.

As your Councillor, I am here to help you. Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints. I can be contacted by phone, email, facebook, twitter or via my website as shown in the details below.

Please subscribe to my blog RSS feed, or Like my facebook page, so that you can get regular updates about relevant issues and what I get up to on your behalf.

With best wishes to all for the 2012-13 municipal year.

*Tumi*

Tumi Hawkins

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<b>Call me on:</b>	01954 210840



## **Kingston Poors' Land Charity**

### **Annual Report 2012**

Total in bank at 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2011 was £6066.02

Income was £467.48

A total of £700 was paid in 2011. This comprised gifts of book tokens to six school leavers, Christmas donations to three families and a payment to a person in need.

Mrs Joan Reynolds & Dr Donal O'Donnell  
Trustees