

Kingston Parish Council (KPC)

Minutes of Meeting Held at 7.30pm on 14th January 2025

Present

Sue Dalglish (SD) (Chair) (Clerk)
Mark Nicholls (MN) (Parish Councillor)
Tumi Hawkins (TH) (County Councillor)

Julie Conder (JC) (Vice-Chair)
Paul Wheeler (PW) (Parish Councillor)

Meeting commenced at 7.35pm

1 Apologies

Miki Ellar (ME) (Parish Councillor)

2 Approval of Previous Minutes of Parish Council Meetings

2.1 Minutes from Parish Council Meeting on 12th November 2024 approved and signed by SD.

3 County Councillor's Report – Report Attached (Appendix A)

4 District Councillor's Report – Report Attached (Appendix B)

TH highlighted the following issues which were discussed:-

4.1 Local government re-organization is being considered on a national level. In the meantime local elections will continue as usual this year in Cambridgeshire.

4.2 Planning reforms are proposed at a national level. South Cambridgeshire was already working towards the housing target numbers that have recently been advised by central government (2309 new homes per year).

4.3 EWR – Council leaders continue to meet with representatives of EWR to discuss concerns of residents about the project.

Full details of all topics are shown in Appendix B

Matters Ongoing

5 Cranes Lane/The Green – Road Surface/pot holes/ water issues (PW)

We continue to have two blocked underground drain pipes in Kingston - one is located in Cranes Lane and the other on The Green close to Green Lees. PW is going to look at trying to clear an additional blocked pipe that was found when we were clearing the ditch beside parish council land and Town Farm House. It is hoped this work will perhaps help surface water in the village drain more easily.

PW will continue to liaise with the county council to see if work could be carried out on the two block drainage pipes however it is understood that budgets are tight and priority

is given to main roads in the county so we might have to wait a little while for work to be carried out.

6 Play Park Repairs (PW/SD)

PW advised that the goal posts in the play park have been painted. New goal post nets have been purchased and will be fitted in spring when the weather is better. SD asked whether we could purchase a bag of mulch to be spread under the climbing frame so that it will be in place prior to the playpark safety inspection in spring. PW will contact our grass cutting supplier to see if this is something he could facilitate.

7 Grass Services Contract Tender Update (PW)

PW will create a contract which will be provided to our new contractor for signature - it will include plans of the various areas to be maintained that were used to obtain the tender quotations last year.

PW also discussed the quotation for a tree survey for the village Orchard. It has been several years since regular maintenance has been carried out in the Orchard and several trees are growing into the power lines which supply several houses in the village. It is planned that a tree survey will be carried out at a cost of £725.00 plus VAT and this report will then be presented to the power network company to arrange for them to carry out work on the larger trees that are growing close to the power cables. The council will then discuss this report further and decide upon a plan of ongoing maintenance for the trees growing in the Orchard which will aim to carry out tree works over several years.

8. 20MPH Speed Limit (PW)

PW will submit an application when the next system opens at the end of February 2025 to ask that Kingston be considered for a 20 MPH speed limit funding.

9. Open Spaces Report (MN) – Appendix C

MN reported that footpaths in the parish are generally in good condition despite the winter weather.

MN highlighted that ownership of the land at the rear of the Orchard has not been registered with the land registry authorities. This land has been owned and operated by the Parish Council for many years and was once two allotments which were rented out to villagers.

This land is separate to the other 4 allotments which are located in Cranes Lane and are still operational but owned by the District Council.

MN explained that parish council records document the history of the land and parish council involvement over many years. This is particularly important as proof of ownership from past records is a requirement to allow us to register the land with the land registry authorities. MN has researched Parish Council Archives to find reference to Parish Council ownership of the land and details are provided in Appendix C. It was agreed that the parish council will instruct a solicitor to advise the council on the

process needed to register the land and will also ask the solicitor to draft an application on behalf of the council.

Matters Arising

10. Budget Setting 2025 (JC) - Appendix D

JC outlined the various parts of the proposed budget for the year 2025/26. The council faces greatly increased costs in the areas of grass cutting and village asset maintenance.

These two areas give a total increase in costs of £4241.00 however we have managed to restrict the total overall budget increase to £1377.00 (difference between 24/25 budget figure of £11718.00 and 25/26 figure of £13095.00 through a combination of savings in various areas combined with the parish council clerk role being covered for the next 12 months on an unpaid basis year by Sue Dalglish on an unpaid basis for 12 months as part of the required rules relating to council officials taking over clerical roles.

The total budget required for the year 2025/26 is £ 13095.00. The current parish council precept for a Band D property was £84.49 for the year 24/25 and the proposed Precept for a Band D property for the years 25/26 is proposed to be £94.21 which is an increase of £9.72 for a Band D property. In view of the large increase in grass cutting costs following the sad death of our previous contractor and the tree works and other village asset maintenance required partly on health and safety grounds it was felt that the council supported this increase.

11. Appointment of Ben Stoehr LGS services as new parish council internal auditor

It was agreed that Ben Shoehr would be appointed as the parish council's new auditor following the retiral of our previous auditor

12. New Parish Clerk Recruitment (SD)

SD reported that unfortunately we have not been able to recruit a new parish clerk either locally or nationally despite several advertisement locally and also after placing an advert with SLCC nationally.

SD she would be willing to stand down as Chair and Councillor and would take on the role of parish clerk. As part of the regulations covering this process SD would take on the role on an unpaid basis for a 12 month period.

13. East West Rail (JC)

JC reported that the Parish Council has been requested to take part in two consultations in respect of the EWR project.

1. Non Statutory Response – EWR has invited the parish council and individuals living in the area to submit responses with concerns/questions they have in relation to both the construction and the operation of the rail line. JC will create a draft document detailing concerns of the parish council with regard to EWR and will send it to the parish council for consideration before it is submitted to EWR before the deadline of 24 January 2025.

2. Scoping Opinion Response Document - this document invites organisations to put forward topics that should be considered in EWR's environmental statement. JC has been liaising with Paul Wright who has experience in this area and has advised some of the areas that the parish council should consider when making our submission. JC will create a draft document which will be sent to the parish council for consideration before it is submitted to EWR.

14. ESPO Street Lighting Renewal (SD)

SD advised that no regular direct debit payments have been collected in respect of our new contract period and that this was being discussed with ESPO.

15. Village Verge Damage The Green (PW)

PW advised that he will place posts around the triangle of grass in the centre of the village and we will monitor to see if this is successful in preventing damage to the grass from vehicles driving over the area.

It was agreed that the council would look into other ways of protecting grass in the centre of the village from vehicle damage.

16. Allotment Renewals (SD)

SD advised that we are still awaiting signed annual contracts in respect of the various plots in the Allotments. The annual rental charges for two of the allotments have been received. It is planned that further documents will be posted with reply paid envelopes which can be used to return the signed documentation along with payment.

17. Invoices Paid and for Approval

Company	Service	Date Paid	Amount	Paid by:
James Wakeling	Grass and Hedge Cutting Services - end of year treatment	19 November 2024	1487.50	B/P
Unity Trust	Bank Service charge	30 November 2024	6.00	D/D
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Annual Subscription Renewal	2 December 2024	65.00	B/P
Kingston Parish Church	Grant for Churchyard Maintenance	2 December 2024	850.00	B/P
P Wheeler	Expenses for paint to refurbish goal posts at play park	9 December 2024	31.42	B/P
P Wheeler	Expenses for Timber Posts to protect verges	17 December 2024	53.95	B/P
Kingston Parish Church	Grant for Parish Magazine 2024	20 December 2024	708.97	B/P

Unity Trust	Bank Service Charge	31 December 2024	6.00	D/D
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All invoices agreed for payment.

18. Bi-monthly Report (JC) - See Appendix E

JC reported that the finances were as expected for the time of year.

19. Items for next meeting to be held on 11 March 2025

Continuation of items covered in this meeting

20. A.O.B

SD advised that we are awaiting the final invoice from the VHMC for hall rental for the Year 2024 as there were two hall hire dates missing from the invoice relating to short planning meetings.

21. Resignation of Chair/Appointment of new Chair/Appointment of Parish Clerk

SD resigned as Chair of the Parish councillor and also as a Councillor.

JC proposed that PW become the Chair of the Parish Council.
 MN seconded the proposal that PW become Chair of the Parish Council

This proposal was then voted upon and agreed. PW will take on the role of Chair of the parish council with immediate effect.

It was then agreed that SD would take over the role of Parish clerk with effect from 15th January 2025 on an unpaid basis for 12 months.

The meeting closed at 10.05pm.

Minutes reference: 20250114

Signed: A Wheeler

Date: 11/03/25

Report: County Councillor (Hardwick div.) District Councillor (Harston & Comberton) Cllr Michael Atkins January 2025

Highlights

- Flooding information and disambiguation
- EWR consultation
- Devolution and local government reorganisation
- Net Zero Villages grants
- Planning committee: Comberton Retirement Village and Coton Orchard trees
- Contact information

News from the County

Flooding information

The County Council has produced two resources to help understand flooding, watercourse ownership and requirements:

A Mapping Tool showing the status of the County's watercourses:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/watercourse-management>

A flowchart showing who has responsibility for responding to flooding:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Investigating-and-Regulating-Flooding-Who-Manages-What.pdf>

This hopefully makes a very complex picture somewhat clearer.

Household recycling

A new larger recycling facility will be constructed on the Milton site. It will include a purpose built re-use space and more accessible parking for cars and bikes. Work will start in the Autumn for approximately 9 months, during which time you will need to use the sites at Thriplow, Witchford and Bluntisham instead.

News from GCP, Combined Authority & Gov't

East-west Rail Consultation

The delayed non-statutory consultation on East West Rail opened on 14th November. Materials and information will be made available here: <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation2024>

There will be in person events as follows:

Comberton, [Comberton Village Hall](#), 10 January 2025, 2pm - 7pm

I have previously signed a declaration opposing the southern alignment for EWR (from Camborne to Cambridge South) because of the direct impact on villages in our area, and also raised broader concerns about the use of diesel trains, the economic rationale, and the lack of benefits for local residents. I will be interested to see how/if the plans have changed when the materials are published this month.

The Consultation closes on **24th January**

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

The Government has indicated that it wishes to reorganise how local government is delivered. In short, the ambition is by the end of the current parliament that everywhere in England will have a combined authority with an elected Mayor, and then a number of unitary authorities underneath them.

As we already have an elected Mayor with some (but not all possible) devolved powers, the potential impact for our area would be the replacement of the existing District and County Council with some number of Unitary authorities that would have the duties of both. It is also possible that the size/shape of the Mayor's combined authority could change.

Some areas of the country can apply for elections scheduled in May 2025 to be delayed: we are not in this category.

Proposals will be invited from the affected Councils this month with a deadline of the Autumn as to how reorganisation could work in our area.

Voi Scooter Scheme expansion

The current Voi scooter scheme is set to expand over the course of 2025 to include Grantchester and Coton (though not the roads directly between them, i.e. only for journeys into/out of Cambridge). I am a cautious advocate of this scheme, as the Voi scooters have capped speeds (12.5mph) and clear registration numbers for reporting infringements, and can be an effective method of travel in the Cambridge area. As the rollout approaches, I will of course work with Parish Councils to identify suitable and unsuitable parking spots, and any areas that require 'go slow' settings to be activated on the scooters and ebikes.

A reminder that all other e-scooters are not permitted on either public highways or footpaths – they can only be used on private land with the consent of the landowner.

Tiger On Demand replaces Ting services

The on demand bus service operating in Huntingdonshire has now been rebranded as "Tiger on Demand" with a new app. We are expecting the service area to expand to include Northstowe and surrounding villages in 2025.

Tiger bus passes for young people continue to be popular with 30,000 applications for the £1 bus ticket scheme.

The X2/X3 route from Huntingdon to Cambridge has increased in frequency to every 30 minutes (from 60) which may be of benefit as these routes run close to several villages.

News from the District

Council tax on second/vacant properties

From April 2026 Council Tax will be doubled on long-term vacant and empty properties. This is aimed to encourage owners to sell or rent their properties to bring the housing stock into use. Exemptions are available for sensible reasons such as: delayed sale, undergoing probate, major works etc. The Council will support owners to bring their properties back into use: see for more details <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/housing-development/empty-homes>

Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders

The 23/24 report has been published on our website and sent to all Council tenants and leaseholders: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/information-for-council-tenants/tenant-news-and-involvement/tenant-and-leaseholder-news#report>

The report includes how we fare on 22 satisfaction measures, and a breakdown of how the rent collected by the Council is spent.

Net Zero Villages

A significant grant scheme has been opened with a total pot of £360k to be awarded to rural villages to become low carbon, more sustainable and more resilient to the effects of climate change. It will fund capital projects on the following themes:

- Energy efficiency and generation (e.g. insulation, solar panels, turbines, batteries)
- Low Carbon Transport (e.g. community bus -> electric)
- Nature-Based Solutions (e.g. green roofs, tree planting etc.)

More information is available at <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/net-zero-villages-grant> and the deadline is **January 26th**.

The Hoops, Barton

The Council has added this building to the list of Assets of Community Value. For more information go to: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-development/community-rights/assets-of-community-value/>

Planning Committee – January meeting

The District Planning Committee meeting of 15th January has two items of particular interest to our villages. First is the proposed Comberton Retirement Village, which officers have recommending refusing, on the grounds of inappropriate Green Belt development, loss of openness, and other environmental and ecological objections.

Second is a proposed Tree Protection Order for twelve trees in Coton Orchard which are threatened by the construction of the C2C busway. Officers are also recommending refusal in this case, on the grounds that: the trees are on private land and not accessible or observable from public highway/footpaths, and also that the only known threat to the trees (construction of the busway) would in any case override the protections a TPO affords.

I intend to attend and speak to both items – if you have any particular feedback on these matters you would like me to raise please let me know.

Contact Details

Councillors and residents are welcome to contact me on any issue which is concerning them:

<p>CLr Michael I. Atkins matkinslibdem@gmail.com 07968 264637</p>
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South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caldecote Ward

(comprises the Parishes of Caldecote, Childerley, Kingston, Bourn, Longstowe & Little Gransden)

Councillor's Monthly Report – January 2025

This report of previous month events is for all the Ward, so please be aware that some of the content may not be relevant to your particular Parish.

General

Please contact me with comments, questions, requests for assistance, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues. Don't fight on your own. I am available to help you to get the best outcome possible for your situation.

Check out articles on my facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/itsCouncillorTumi> and my blog <http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk>. What I post on there is my view and not LibDem or South Cambs official policy unless I state that it is.

General

Welcome to 2025 one and all. The year ahead looks like it will be a busy one for us on the local government front. Hopefully the journey will be one we can work on together as a community.

Local Government Transformation

The new Government published its white paper on devolution and local government reorganisation on 16 December 2024. There are many proposals for Combined Authorities and Mayors. One of the most significant proposals is the creation of unitary authorities where there are currently two-tier councils such as in our region. It is expected that newly created unitary authorities would have populations exceeding 500,000 but there may be exceptions.

The rationale for creating unitary authorities is expected "efficiency savings" and service improvements. The paper cites a PWC County Councils Network commissioned report. It emphasises maintaining community-level engagement despite the larger size of unitary authorities compared with our local district and city councils. A phased implementation approach is proposed. The paper also discusses changes to the way that councils are funded including a review of the business rates retention system. The rationale given by government for creating massive unitary authorities is expected efficiency savings (£2.3 billion which is not a lot when you look at the cost of social care and health) and service improvements.

Many councils are challenging this and expressing grave concerns about losing what is truly local in Local Government. It means there will be far fewer councillors each responsible for much larger areas. The outcome is that many people will not know who their councillor is and councillors will no longer have the sort of close relationship with their communities which we currently enjoy.

Additionally local government reorganisation takes years and costs millions of pounds to implement. During that time we are likely to see councils having to focus their resources on restructuring and away from a lot of the discretionary things they currently do such as helping people struggling with the cost of living.

Planning Reforms

The Government through the MHCLG (The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government) on 12 December 2024 announced changes to the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework). The updates to planning policy includes new compulsory housing targets, revisions to

greenbelt policy or more specifically introduction of a “grey belt”, and new rules to ensure local planning authorities create and have up-to-date Local plans. The Government is intent on doing what it must to meet the target of building 1.5 million homes during this parliament.

Note at this point that the housing target numbers for Greater Cambridge area is 2,309 homes per year. This figure is similar to the one we’re already working with for the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan. It does not mean it will be easier to deliver, but at least there is no additional strain on our numbers for now. Not all councils are in that fortunate position.

We are required to publish our local plan timetable and will be doing so in the next few weeks. It will not be much different to what is already on our website, but now its official we can work toward submitting the local plan by December 2026 under the current plan making system. It will be challenging timeframe, so it will require all hands on deck.

Infrastructure Updates

East West Rail

In December, the Council Leader Cllr Bridget Smith and Director of Planning Stephen Kelly attended a meeting which included all the chairs / vice chairs of all the parishes long the proposed southern route. The meeting was to hear from all the parishes their concerns so that it could be collated and presented to EWR in a coordinated response to the ongoing consultation. Those responses have now been put together with a view to submitting by the deadline date of 24 January 2025.

EWR is still holding public consultation in-person events details of which are available on the website at <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/consultation2024#block-1851>

Bus Services - CPCA

The CPCA (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) are restarting the procurement process for the final seven precept-funded bus services. This is in response to news that a bus operator – who cannot be named for legal reasons – has withdrawn all of its winning bids to run these services. As a result, the tendering process for the remaining seven routes – covering places including Peterborough, Cambridge, Ely, Huntingdon, Wisbech and surrounding villages – now has to start over, meaning the services are now not expected to launch until May. The routes that may be more relevant to our area that are affected by the withdrawal of bids are:

- Tiger 1 – Huntingdon to Cambridge
- Tiger 2/3 – Cambridge North and South connections

More details are contained <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/news/delayed-operator-withdraws-all-winning-bids-for-new-combined-authority-tiger-services/>.

Environmental Services Updates

REMINDER from the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS) the partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District councils, asking residents to ensure they dispose of batteries correctly.

Frozen green waste bins

At this time of year there is a risk that the contents of green bins can freeze and stick to the inside, preventing the bins from being emptied properly. The council’s web pages on bins and recycling contain some advice on how to minimise the risk of your bin freezing. Please circulate this and keep

residents informed to help minimise this frustrating problem. In January and February the green bins will be emptied once a month and from the beginning of March, they will be emptied fortnightly.

Housing Updates

Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders

The annual report to tenants and leaseholders for 2023 to 2024 has been published and is being sent to all tenants and leaseholders. It is available on the council website at

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/information-for-council-tenants/tenant-news-and-involvement/tenant-and-leaseholder-news#report>

It is largely focussed on the new tenant satisfaction measures that have been brought in by the Regulator of Social Housing that we must report on annually. The Regulator of Social Housing has created these measures to look at how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services. There are 22 tenant satisfaction measures, covering five themes, with some being measured by landlords directly and others measured by landlords carrying out tenant satisfaction surveys.

Finance/Grants/Business/Resource Updates

Council Tax increase for vacant properties

From April 2026, Council Tax will be doubled on long-term vacant properties in South Cambridgeshire as an incentive to bring the estimated 2600 empty properties in the district into use. Exemptions exist for properties that are on the market, subject to probate, or are under renovation. This approach has been used successfully by other councils to bring properties back into use and is expected to help address the high demand for housing in the district. It is estimated that the change will generate an additional £100,000 a year in income for South Cambridgeshire which will help support vital frontline services.

Net Zero Villages Grant Scheme

The scheme offering a total funding pot of £362,547 has been launched by South Cambridgeshire District Council to help rural communities become low carbon, more sustainable and more resilient to the effects of climate change. The initiative, funded by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, provides grants ranging from £20,000 to £100,000 to support transformative, community-led projects. With climate change at the forefront of global and local concerns, this grant scheme is designed to support the district's villages in taking meaningful steps towards reaching net zero and securing a more sustainable future.

The Net Zero Villages scheme will fund capital projects under the following themes:

- Energy Efficiency and Generation – Examples include installing insulation, LED lighting, solar panels, wind turbines, or battery storage for renewable energy.
- Low Carbon Transport – Initiatives such as community-run electric shuttle buses or other sustainable transport solutions.
- Nature-Based Solutions – Projects like green roofs, walls, or tree planting to cool and enhance community spaces.

Eligible projects must improve community assets and reduce carbon emissions, such as retrofitting village halls, enhancing public transport access, or implementing green infrastructure.

of all watercourses in Cambridgeshire is available on the County Council website. You can also read more about rights and responsibilities as a riparian owner.

Burns Night

Caldecote Village Club is holding a Burns Night event starting 7pm on Saturday 25th January 2025 in the Club House at 54 Highfields Road, Caldecote. You will enjoy Haggis, mashed neeps and tatties, with Cranachan dessert, cheese & biscuits! Sounds good to you – then call 01954 210791 or email caldecotesocialclub@gmail.com to get your tickets. I highly recommend it.

South Cambs Magazine

The magazine is published quarterly and each household in South Cambridgeshire receives a paper copy. The delivery windows tend to be Spring (end February), Summer (end June), Autumn (end August) and Winter (end November). The specific dates will be notified later. As the magazine is delivered through a distribution company, anyone who does not receive their copy should contact Smart Distribution, email scdc@smartdistribution.co.uk, Tel: 0800 6444 011. You can copy me in on the email so I am aware and can help chase if necessary. The magazine is also available online at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/the-south-cambs-magazine>.

UK-wide Day of Reflection

A UK-wide Day of Reflection for the COVID-19 pandemic will take place on Sunday 9 March 2025. The COVID-19 Day of Reflection is an opportunity for communities across the UK to come together in reflection and commemoration for those who lost their lives and for everyone impacted by the pandemic. On the day itself and in the week before, the public will be able to mark the day in ways that feel most appropriate and fitting to them, both in person and online. More at <https://dayofreflection.campaign.gov.uk/about/>

Action for Happiness

The Action for Happiness theme for January is at <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/calendar> - **Happier January**. The focus is “*Let’s start the new year happier*”. Have a look at the daily calendar which has some really good ideas for action on a daily basis.

Casework

Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. I will help as best I can

You will find the current and past reports on my blog at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/caldecote-ward/reports/monthly-reports/>. Feel free to read, share and/or download.

Tumi

Tumi Hawkins
8 January 2025

Email me @:	tumi@tumihawkins.org.uk
Read my blog at:	http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk
Twitter:	@CouncillorTumi
Facebook	@itsCouncillorTumi
LinkedIn	TumiHawkins
Call me on:	07802 323269

The grant is open to community groups, parish councils and rural businesses across South Cambridgeshire.

Community Updates

Help for people working with health problems

The District Council has worked in partnership with neighbouring councils to launch a free programme called WorkWell, offering help to anyone struggling to find or keep a job due to health problems. This is a valuable initiative that seeks to improve the lives of those affected, to work with the wider community to understand and overcome the barriers involved, and to help boost our local economy.

Menopause friendly accreditation

South Cambridgeshire District Council has recently been independently accredited as a menopause friendly employer. This is an important step in the council's drive to ensure that it is an inclusive and supportive employer. For more information on the Menopause Friendly Accreditation, please visit <https://menopausefriendly.co.uk/>

Campaign – Support for Young Carers

The Digital Poverty Alliance wants to make more people aware of the support on offer to equip young carers with digital access and skills. The Alliance is not reaching everyone who could benefit so we are sharing this information and asking parish councillors to reach out to people you're your communities who you think could be supported. More information is available on the [Digital Poverty Alliance website](#).

Useful information - Flooding

This comes up yearly in my reports and as we go into the season when it happens a lot. SCDC's Scrutiny and Overview Committee recently discussed local drainage, flooding and mitigation of water pollution. One of the tasks to come out of that meeting was to provide South Cambridgeshire's parish and town councils and residents with some helpful information and tools to support them – particularly when it comes to flooding.

Who is responsible for what and who should I contact?

It can be confusing and time-consuming to work out who is responsible for what when it comes to investigating and regulating flooding. The handy flowchart from Cambridgeshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority shows a clearly defined list of responsibilities and contact details on the website. The idea of this flowchart is to help you identify an issue relating to flooding and make contact with the appropriate organisation. We hope it will help with more isolated or local emergencies related to sewerage or surface water issues, which can present challenges for residents who don't know who to contact to find help.

Watercourse rights and responsibilities

If there is a watercourse on, next to or under a property you own, then you could be a Riparian Owner. The deeds for your property or land may tell you if this is the case. However, even if your deeds do not say you are responsible for an adjacent watercourse, the law will assume you are. Waiver of responsibility only applies where a title deed states specifically that you are not responsible. This means you are responsible for its maintenance to ensure it flows freely without obstruction, pollution or diversion, and you should also maintain your side of the riverbank. A map

Appendix C

REGISTRATION OF THE ORCHARD OPPOSITE OLD POST OFFICE

The southern third of the Village Orchard, formerly owned by Brigadier Cartwright, was purchased by Kingston Parish Council in 1994. **The northern two thirds has not been registered with the Land Registry.** At the November meeting I was asked to explore the possibility of and process for registration.

Earlier attempts to register: extracts from our Minute Books

KPC 19 July 2007 minute 3, Registration of the Village Green, confirmed this plot is not registered and agreed to register with land registry and as village green. Action by Clerk.

KPC 15 May 2008, work ongoing, an updated register of assets was attached. The register notes that this plot was formerly rented out as allotments by the Council, and before 1971 by the Annual Parish Meeting. This of course indicates long-assumed possession and KPC management of the plot.

KPC 17 July 2008, minute 3.8. Noted that the Village Green had been registered, and that the Clerk would try to gather evidence to register the Green south of Field Road with the Land Registry. This turned into a long and ultimately fruitless process. Bidwells were advising us. Conclusion was minuted at KPC 12 November 2009 minute 7.6 and the matter then morphed into a quest to register that land as village green, which in turn concluded unsuccessfully: KPC 11 November 2010, minute 4.5.

KPC 20 April 2009. At an extraordinary meeting on site, The Smithy (evidently by this stage intended to include the northern portion too) was renamed Kingston Village Orchard. A helpful report by Peter Reynolds on trees in the Orchard, made at this time, also contains a history of the Smithy site, again referencing the earlier use of the northern part as allotments.

Peter Stokes has confirmed to me that, so far as he can recall, no further steps were taken after 2010 to register the northern portion of what is now the Orchard.

Documentary Evidence of Parish Council Ownership/Management

We hold extensive and compelling evidence. To date the following references are on file, relating to the years before 2000.

A copy of a lease of one rood of land between Church Lane and Rectory Lane by the Parish Meeting to Dorothy Chapman, 7 August 1951 (see land claims in filing cabinet).

Minutes of Parish Meeting, 29 April 1981, 'Future Use of Parish Land, Rectory Lane'.

Repeated references in the Parish Council Minutes to the allocation and use of the Rectory Lane Allotments in 1989. See also meeting of 20 November 1991, Minute 14. There seem to be two allotments, then paying £5 rent a year. Also see meeting of 15 January 1992, matter arising.

In response to a survey run by the National Society of Allotments, the PC responded that there 'are two on Parish Council property, measuring approx. 20 feet square and 30 feet square'. Meeting of 15 March 1995, minute 12.

Approval was given to purchase and erect a gate on the allotment site, in order to prevent the unauthorised dumping of rubbish there. Meeting of 19 July 1995, minute 23. The gate was reported as erected on 20 March 1996. This tends to suggest that by this stage the allotments, or at least one of them, had fallen into disuse.

A Smithy management plan, adopted in January 1996 and attached at the end of the Council minute book, refers to 'the northern fence adjoining the allotments owned by the Parish Council'.

From 1997 there are references in the minutes to 'the old allotments', assurances from SCDC that they have no development plans for the Crane's Lane allotments, and a note at 16 September 1997 minute 22 that four allotments are now vacant. It seems that the SCDC owned allotments are referred to here, without bothering to distinguish them from those owned by KPC.

The KPC meeting on 24 August 1998 called principally to discuss suggestions concerning the millennium noted that the allotment area (incorrectly minuted as lying between the Smithy and the Green) be cleared to 'allow the total area to become one entity'. The old allotments have evidently been discontinued.

'It was generally agreed that the Old Allotment Area and the Smithy become one unit. Details of procedure to be determined ... it is anticipated that the project will commence in the near future.' Meeting of 25 November 1998, minute 18.

From this time on, the old allotments and the Cartwright land are almost invariably treated as a single unit in our records and minutes.

Next Steps

1. A letter from Peter Reynolds, 5 August 2008, is helpful as to the registration process. It looks as if at least one statutory declaration of ownership made to a solicitor will be necessary, at a cost to KPC of course. As Peter points out, it will be essential to consult a solicitor since the process needs professional legal input and may have changed since 2008. While KPC would undertake the paperwork and planning, declarations should be made formally by people long familiar with the land and its de facto use, since our claim is best grounded on

our management of and care for the plot across a long period. Those people must assert something they themselves know. A past chair of the parish council, with long personal knowledge of village matters would be ideal. Peter Reynolds comes to mind. A neighbour to the property of long standing would also help. Peter Stokes, perhaps.

2. We will also need to provide a carefully drawn map of the property. I can supply this.
3. Depending on legal advice, this further step may not be necessary. But to further support our declaration through demonstration of long-term KPC management of this plot, we may wish to:
 - A. Locate relevant references in earlier KPC minute books and the minutes of parish meetings before 1971,
 - B. Search for similar in earlier Vestry minutes, and
 - C. Check the Enclosure Award 1815. All these materials are held at the Cambridgeshire Record Office.

I am happy to look further into this and establish a solicitor's charge for such work, if the Council still wishes me to do so.

Kingston Parish Council

Financial report 31 December 2024

N.B. All figures exclude VAT

Item	Budget 2024/25 £	Expenditure YTD £	Budget minus expenditure YTD £	Additional Information
Grass and Hedge cutting - Expenditure	2,914	3,268	(354)	2 invs Buchans (£968); lawnmower hire; new contractor autumn cut
Grass and Hedge cutting - Income	(311)	(305)	(6)	Fasnacloich and County Council
Insurance	467	300	167	New insurer
Clerk's salary	3,101	497	2,604	2 months
Grants (section 137)	850	1,350	(500)	Solar panels village hall; Churchyard maintenance
Village Hall upgrade	1,288	1,288	0	PWLB 2 of 2 tranches paid
Audit fees	78	80	(2)	
Village asset maintenance	1,035	1,560	(525)	Defibrillator pads; bus shelter cleaning last yr; RoSPA inspection; tree surgery; MetroRod; goalposts; verge posts. To pay: ditches, tree survey?
Subscriptions	569	461	108	Paid: ICO, CAPALC, one.com; ACRE; SLCC and Parish Online to pay
Parish Magazine	862	709	153	No further payments expected
Footpath lighting	353	113	240	New supplier
Miscellaneous and expenses	1,000	283	717	allotments rent paid to SCDC; village hall hire last yr; bank charges; job ad
Income other than precept	(488)	(852)	364	interest; ditch clearance receipt; allotments
Total	11,718	8,752	2,966	

Bank balances	Current account:	793	
	Deposit account:	22,135	
At 31 December 2024		22,928	<i>see below</i>

Reconciliation of bank balances

Balances brought forward	Current account:	3,465	
	Deposit account:	16,357	
At 01 April 2024		19,822	
Net expenditure as above		(8,752)	
Other items:	Precept income	11,718	
	VAT refund received	849	For financial year 2023-24
	VAT incurred on net expenditure 2024-25	(709)	To be recovered
At 31 December 2024		22,928	<i>As above</i>