

SPRING 2026

# Cambridge Matters



Cambridge City Council's magazine for residents

**A biodiverse city**  
Protecting and enhancing  
nature in our open spaces

**Local  
elections  
2026**  
Vote early at  
three city venues



**Cambridge Folk Festival**  
This year's line-up announced

**Our budget for the next 12 months –  
and how we'll spend it on essential services**



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Front cover: Sheep's Green

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For any editorial enquiries:

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# New lido mural goes with the flow

A new mural celebrating the city's historical connection to water, nature and learning was unveiled recently at Jesus Green Lido.

The Human Current, by artist Anugrah Mishra, covers 120 square metres of the exterior wall, fence and rotundas of the Lido, capturing the joy and energy of swimming, the movement of the

human body, and celebrating what the Lido means to the community.

The idea for the mural came from Lido staff member Annabel Wright, who wanted a positive way to deter graffiti. After researching artists, she connected with Anugrah, who had been a student at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge.



## Cambridge Volunteer Fair - make a difference in your community

Would you be interested in getting involved in the community and helping other people? Then why not come along to the Cambridge Volunteer Fair on Saturday 25 April.

Volunteering is a fantastic way to meet new people, gain experience, and help strengthen our community. At this event, supported by the council, you can come and chat to a wide range of charities and community groups – all in one place. Whether you're looking to use your experience and skills, learn something new, or simply give something back, there'll be lots to discover.

From supporting vulnerable people to helping with arts, environment, or



health initiatives, there are plenty of ways to get involved in a rewarding way with local community groups. So just drop in any time during the event and discover how your time can make a real difference.

**Cambridge Volunteer Fair**  
Saturday 25 April, 11am-2pm  
Downing Place, Downing Street  
CB2 3EL (near John Lewis)

# Contact Cambridge City Council



It's often easier to contact us online, at a time that suits you. You can complete a short form to report things like flytipping – [cambridge.gov.uk/report-flytipping](http://cambridge.gov.uk/report-flytipping), a missed bin collection – [cambridge.gov.uk/report-a-missed-household-bin-collection](http://cambridge.gov.uk/report-a-missed-household-bin-collection), or a change in your circumstances affecting your benefits or Council Tax – [cambridge.gov.uk/online-accounts](http://cambridge.gov.uk/online-accounts).

✉ [cambridge.gov.uk](http://cambridge.gov.uk)

☎ 01223 457000, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.15pm

☎ 0300 3038 389, for emergencies outside of office hours

📍 Appointments are available for customers who have queries which cannot be resolved by telephone or online. Call us for help.

Appointments are available 9am to 5.15pm, Wednesday to Friday, at our Customer Service Centre at Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BY.

Please note that we no longer operate customer services from the Guildhall.

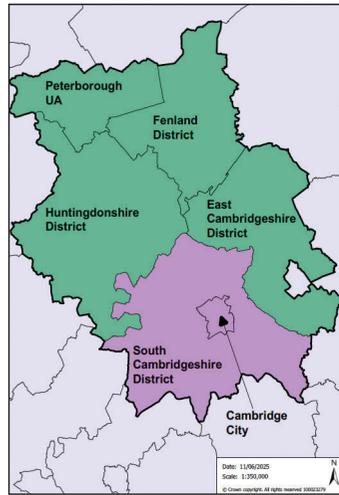
# Can you help decide the future of local government for Cambridge?

As you may have read in the last few issues of Cambridge Matters, the Government is going ahead with plans to disband existing district, city and county councils to create new 'unitary' councils across the country.

This means that from May 2028, Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council (along with neighbouring district and county councils) will cease to exist, and will be replaced with new councils to provide all of the services currently provided by city, district and county councils.

The leaders of Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council wrote jointly to the Government to state their preference for a reorganisation (known as 'Option B') which would see:

- A Greater Cambridge council, covering Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire
- A North Cambridgeshire



and Peterborough council, covering East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough.

The Leader of Cambridge City Council, Cllr Cameron Holloway, said: "Option B makes the most of a once in a lifetime opportunity to revolutionise services you rely on - from social care to bin collections. It's not just more of the same. Both councils will have similar sized economies, each with different strengths vital to the nation



– supporting a shared prosperity, rather than one area running ahead while the other struggles. With option B, we're committed to working closely with residents, businesses, volunteers and public sector

colleagues to design councils fit for the future – not faceless bureaucracies."



**Option B**  
Making the most of the opportunity to revolutionise council services

The government is currently asking Cambridgeshire residents for their views in a consultation which started in February and continues until 26 March, before the government ultimately decides which option to implement.

To take part in the Government's consultation visit [cambridge.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation](https://cambridge.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation)



## Thanks for sharing views on the Local Plan

A big thank you is due to the many thousands of people who took part in our recent consultation on the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

The draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan sets out where new homes, jobs, services, green spaces, and essential infrastructure could come forwards across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire over the next 20 years. Once adopted it will become part of the official Development Plan for the area, shaping decisions on planning applications.

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service received over 5,000 responses,

and we also met hundreds of people at drop-in events around the region and during online sessions. Every response received will be considered when refining the proposals that will guide future development in the area.

The draft plan has built on extensive technical work and thousands of comments from earlier consultations. Updated assessments confirmed the need for around 50,000 new homes up to 2045 to support the forecast 73,000 additional jobs expected in the area. Around 37,000 of these homes are already accounted for through existing planning permissions and sites identified



in the councils' adopted local plans from 2018.

Feedback from the consultation will inform the final version of the Plan, which will undergo a further round of

consultation later this year before being submitted to Government for examination.

For more information visit: [greatercambridgeplanning.org](https://greatercambridgeplanning.org)

# Cambridge at 75 - celebrating a city still coming of age



This year, the city of Cambridge turns 75. While Cambridge's history stretches back over two thousand years, 1951 marked a defining moment, when it was officially granted city status.

Gaining city status was more than a ceremonial title. It recognised Cambridge's growing national and international importance at a time of change in Britain. The post-war years were about rebuilding, innovation and optimism, and Cambridge was no longer just a historic market town and university centre, but a city with a wider civic, cultural and economic identity.

Over the past 75 years, the city has grown and diversified.

Alongside this growth has come a strong sense of civic pride — a shared belief that Cambridge should be not only be successful, but fair, welcoming and forward-thinking.

Turning 75 is a moment to recognise the balance Cambridge continues to strike between its past and its future. The city is globally renowned

for its heritage, but equally for innovation, research and creativity. From life-saving medical breakthroughs to cutting-edge climate research, Cambridge's influence reaches far beyond its boundaries.

For many, the anniversary is personal. It's about local parks, community centres, markets, libraries and neighbourhoods. It's about friendships formed, campaigns fought, festivals enjoyed and everyday moments that make Cambridge home.

Marking Cambridge at 75 is about more than a number. It's about recognising a shared journey, celebrating what makes this city special, and reaffirming values to guide it in the years ahead. Whether you've lived here all your life or arrived more recently, this anniversary belongs to you — because cities are defined, above all, by the people who call them home.

## Sunday 12 July – Family fun day

Jesus Green will play host to an exciting afternoon of free entertainment for all the family, to mark the 75th anniversary. Expect live music, stalls, food, drink and more – look out for further details coming soon.

Date  
for your  
diary

### Cambridge – a brief history

**1086** – The Domesday Book describes Cambridge as the most important town in the county

**1207** – The Charter of King John grants the town the right to elect a mayor, "whom they will and when they will".

**1317** – The Mayor of Cambridge is obliged to "maintain the customs and liberties" of the University. This was only brought to an end with the passing of the Cambridge Award Act in 1856

**1575** – The Borough of Cambridge, recipient of many royal charters, is granted a coat of arms.

**1835** – The Municipal Corporations Act requires members of municipal corporations in England and Wales to be elected by ratepayers

**1951** – The borough is granted the status of a city by King George VI

Whitehall, April 13, 1951.

The KING has been pleased, by Letters Patent under the Great Seal of the Realm, bearing date the 21st ultimo, to ordain that the Borough of Cambridge shall be a City and shall be called and styled "The City of Cambridge," and that the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the said Borough shall be one body politic and corporate by the name and style of "The Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of the City of Cambridge."

**1974** – Queen Elizabeth II re-awards city status following local government reorganisation

**2015** – Councillors vote unanimously for Cambridge to become a City of Sanctuary

## Royal charters restored to mark 75th anniversary

Securely stored in the Guildhall is a remarkable collection of historical documents tracing the history of Cambridge back to the 13th Century.

These are the city's royal charters, precious documents which symbolise the relationship across the centuries between Cambridge and the Crown under a succession of monarchs.

The oldest dates all the way back to the 13th Century reign of King John, who first granted Cambridge the right to have its own Mayor. In total the council has 30 charters spanning 767 years, including one from Queen Elizabeth I in 1589 [pictured], granting Cambridge the right to its coat of arms.

The council is now working with

external specialists to restore many of the charters, it is thought for the first time in about 100 years – in time for the celebrations to mark 75 years of Cambridge's city status. It is hoped many will be displayed to the public later this year, before new permanent homes are found for some of them.





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# Early voting trial at May elections – more options than ever to make your voice heard

There are upcoming Cambridge City Council elections on Thursday 7 May, with voters in every ward in the city having the chance to choose a councillor to represent them.

This year, Cambridge residents have the unique opportunity to trial a more flexible way of voting, as part of a new Government-backed 'Early Voting' pilot.

In the week before polling day, three 'Early Voting Hubs' will open in Cambridge. Unlike

traditional polling stations, voters can attend any Voting Hub in the city, making it a more flexible and convenient option for residents with busy lives. On **Thursday 30 April, Friday 1 May and Saturday 2 May**, you can choose to cast your vote between 9am and 6pm at:

- **Clay Farm Centre, Hobson Square, Trumpington, Cambridge CB2 9FN**
- **The Guildhall, Peas Hill entrance, Cambridge CB2 3QJ**
- **Meadows Community**

**Centre, 299, Arbury Road, Cambridge CB4 2JL**

Under the pilot, eligible voters in Cambridge can still choose to vote in the usual way at their allocated polling station on polling day, Thursday 7 May, if they've not already voted in a hub. Postal and proxy voting will also continue to be available in the normal way.

If you are not already registered to vote, it's quick and easy to apply online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote). The process takes less than five minutes to complete, but you will need your National Insurance number to hand, if you have one. The deadline to register to vote for the city council elections is Monday 20 April at 11:59pm.

Voter ID is now a requirement to vote in-person – if you do not have any valid ID, you can apply for free photo ID until Tuesday 28 April at 5pm.

If you cannot make it to vote in-person, you can apply for a postal vote until Tuesday 21 April at 5pm. You can also apply for a proxy vote - where someone you trust votes on your behalf – until Tuesday 28 April at 5pm.

For assistance with your application, or to request a paper application form, contact the council's Electoral Services team using the details below.

For more information visit:  
[cambridge.gov.uk/elections](http://cambridge.gov.uk/elections)  
[elections@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:elections@cambridge.gov.uk)  
 01223 457048



## Reminder to renew your postal vote

If you applied for a postal vote before 30 January 2024, by law you were required to reapply by 31 January 2026. If you did not reapply, your postal vote has now been cancelled. If you wish to continue voting by post, please reapply online at [gov.uk/apply-postal-vote](http://gov.uk/apply-postal-vote), or contact the council's Electoral Services to request a paper form.



## Citywide Smoke Control Area moves a step closer

Following public consultation in 2025, the council is continuing to move forward with plans to implement a citywide Smoke Control Area (SCA).

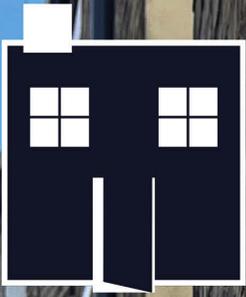
A smoke control area is a designated area where the emission of smoke from burning solid fuel is not allowed. If you want to burn wood in a smoke control area, you must use a Government-approved stove. Alternatively, you can burn smokeless fuel in an open fire or non-approved stove.

We have requested to revoke our existing smoke control areas and will be creating an order for a citywide one this spring. Once approved this should be in place by the end of this year.

**For details on the changes and rules around burning in SCAs, and how they may affect you, visit [cambridge.gov.uk/smoke-control-area-changes](http://cambridge.gov.uk/smoke-control-area-changes)**



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# Council news in brief

## Abbey Cabin opens its doors to young people

Over the last few years, we have been working with local charities including Abbey People and the Cambridge United Foundation to create a dedicated space for young people at the Abbey Leisure Complex, designed with input from young people in Abbey ward.

Earlier this year, the Abbey Youth Cabin opened its doors and is already being used by young people and community groups working with them for a range of activities. The bespoke new hub building is an adaptable space open for bookings during the week and at weekends to support young people through activities



potentially ranging from arts to yoga sessions, counselling to nature clubs.

We have also recently been granted funding from Cambridgeshire County Council's Digital Hub fund to purchase both Wi-Fi connectivity for the cabin and laptops and tablets to help with digital skills for young people. Groups can access these at The Cabin to help with anything from homework to job applications, video creation and more.



**For more information and to enquire about booking Abbey Youth Cabin visit:**  
[cambridge.gov.uk/abbey-youth-cabin](https://cambridge.gov.uk/abbey-youth-cabin)  
[parksandrecreation@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:parksandrecreation@cambridge.gov.uk)

## Pocket park named for Gloria

A public open space in Coleridge ward has been named to commemorate the achievements of a trailblazing academic with close links to Cambridge.

Gloria Carpenter is believed to be the first Black woman to have received a degree from the University of Cambridge, having studied Law at Girton College and qualifying as a barrister in the 1940s. She later went on to become a prominent social reformer in Jamaica.

An information board was unveiled recently to mark the naming of the Gloria Carpenter Pocket Park, off Rustat Road at the end of Davy Road.



## Extended and improved cycle park open at Queen Anne Terrace

Cyclists can now make use of extended cycle parking areas – and improved security and storage for their bikes – at Queen Anne Terrace, following the completion of an improvement programme there.

- The new facilities include:
- Extended and resurfaced undercover cycle park with new style stands, improved fixings and additional space for cargo and non-standard cycles
  - An access-controlled indoor fenced and gated cycle park

with 36 spaces, offering additional security for cycle owners wishing to pay an annual subscription

- A redesigned cycle parking area in front of the main car park building, with parking for 52 bikes and three new trees
- 12 new CCTV cameras across the whole improved area, plus two 24-hour help points for users, and improved signage and lighting.

People wishing to apply for a contactless key fob to use the access-controlled area of the cycle park can apply now at

[cambridge.gov.uk/access-controlled-cycle-parking](https://cambridge.gov.uk/access-controlled-cycle-parking). A year's subscription to the

service costs £30, and is available on a first-come, first-served basis.



"I remember waving goodbye as the helicopter took off and not knowing whether I was a wife or a widow."

Ann Hawes,  
wife of Terry, former patient  
and heart attack survivor

East Anglian  
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# New council solar park to help power more electric bin lorries

Construction has begun on a pioneering renewable energy solar park to help power electric bin lorries and other vehicles for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

The project will see the installation of a one-megawatt solar park paired with a battery that can store enough energy to keep operations at the councils' Waterbeach Depot running smoothly. This will feed into 36 electric vehicle charging points for use by electric bin lorries and other vehicles, with the ultimate aim of future-proofing waste and recycling collections locally.

The Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network will enable the councils to significantly reduce carbon emissions from their waste fleets.

By 2027, the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste service between the two

councils will have 18 electric bin lorries in operation, supported by clean, renewable energy generated on-site. There are currently four electric bin lorries in use but there is not enough capacity in the local electrical grid to power more without this work.

As well as powering electric bin lorries, the project is expected to supply the majority of the depot's total energy needs from renewable sources and will be complemented by measures to boost biodiversity such as planting wildflowers and new hedgerows to create a haven for local wildlife.

The £6.1 million scheme is jointly funded by Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.



Work is under way on the renewable energy network at Waterbeach

For more on what we're doing to tackle climate change visit: [cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change](https://cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change)



# Cambridge celebrates being an A-list city for its work to tackle climate change

Cambridge has been named as an 'A' list city for the third year running by the Carbon Disclosure Project, for our work to mitigate and adapt to climate change – one of only 120 cities in the world to gain this accolade.

The 'A' score places Cambridge among leaders demonstrating transparency, ambition, and bold action in addressing climate change. Cambridge achieved this score through delivering a range of projects including:



- Work to manage water courses and improve biodiversity, including a partnership project to understand and address the many threats to our internationally rare chalk streams
- A £5 million project to upgrade 48 council homes to net zero carbon standards, improving how comfortable tenants' homes are and bringing down energy bills, while also supporting installers to specialise in zero carbon retrofit work locally
- Every new council home we build meeting or exceeding the 'Cam Standard' – meaning all of our 700 new council homes have low energy usage, high levels of thermal comfort, and strong resilience to future climate impacts.



Aylesborough Close

Find out more at: [cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change-strategy](https://cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change-strategy)

# Our budget for the next 12 months plan to spend it on essential

Our budget for 2026-27 was approved recently, confirming the council has funds to protect and enhance its services for residents. It shows the forecast overspend of £11.5 million by 2030-2031 has now been reduced to just £1.4 million, out of approximately £80 million which we will spend in the coming year.

Over recent years, we have been able to protect frontline services that residents rely on by making changes to reduce the costs of delivering services and increase the council's income.

We deliver two types of service – 'statutory' and 'discretionary'.

**Statutory services are services the council is legally required to run, such as:**

- Domestic waste collections
- Determining planning applications
- Administering benefits.

**Discretionary services, which the council is not obliged to run but chooses to provide for the city, include:**

- Our seven community centres
- Swimming pools, Jesus Green lido and splash pads
- Free community events including the annual fireworks night on Midsummer Common
- Improving biodiversity including caring for local chalk streams
- Operating public toilets.

**To pay for these and the other services we provide, we receive income from sources including fees and**



**charges, commercial property rents and Housing Benefit subsidy. Income also comes from your Council Tax payments, grants from the government and a share of local business rates. Here are some of the things we will spend money totalling around £80 million on during the coming 12 months:**



£4.9m for streets and open spaces, including grass cutting, planting, managing weeds and litter collections.



£3.2m collecting household black bin, recycling and garden waste – including an additional £1m on new food waste collections.



£2.7m to improve our environment and keep people safe, including food safety inspections, taxi licensing and noise complaints.



£1.7m towards the Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network to charge waste collection vehicles with clean, renewable energy.



£1.4m on planning, including policy to ensure good standards for new homes and that they are supported by the right infrastructure, and determining planning applications.



£1.1m to support community safety, including covering cost to keep streetlights on.



Over £1m awarded through the council's annual Community Grants programme to local community organisations.



£865k for repairs and maintenance in car parks and the council's commercial properties and administrative buildings



# 12 months – and how we provide services for residents



£677k (as part of a £4.3 million) investment in the new community centre at East Barnwell.



£400k grant funding to partners working to prevent people from becoming homeless.



£253k on the 100+ council-run play parks across the city.



£175k on swimming pools, including improving water quality, reducing the use of chemicals; and new water recovery and rainwater harvesting systems.



£80k over two years to accelerate weed clearance following the first year of our herbicide-free weed clearance programme.



£36.5k to fund new trees being planted.



**In addition to our general budget, we have a separate ring-fenced budget exclusively for housing. In 2026-27 we'll manage, improve and maintain our 7,500-plus council-owned homes, including through extra funding to improve energy performance, and to tackle damp, condensation and mould. In addition, in the coming years we'll continue building another 1,300 new council homes to complement more than 1,000 we've already built in recent years.**



## How Council Tax is divided up

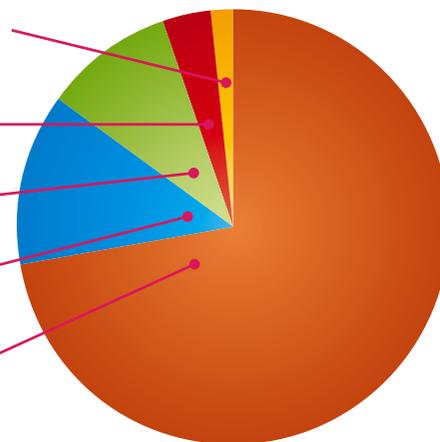
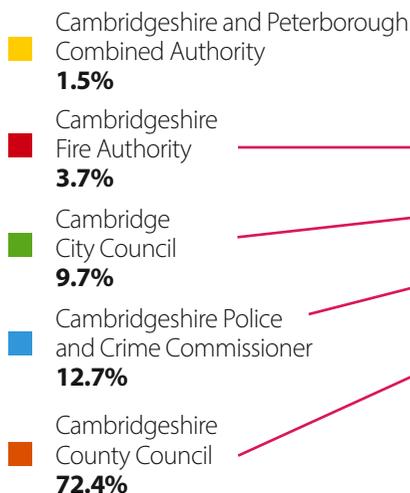
This year the city council has taken the decision to increase our share of council tax by the 2.99% rate set out by government, to help us to remain financially sound while continuing to avoid having to make any cuts to services people rely on.

For people in a band D home, this will mean the portion of your council tax that goes towards the city council increases from £232.13 a year to £239.07 a year from April – equivalent to an increase of 13p per week.

There are many ways that we can

support people in financial difficulty including through our Council Tax Reductio Scheme. For more details on financial support we can offer, visit [cambridge.gov.uk/council-tax](http://cambridge.gov.uk/council-tax) or phone 01223 457000.

Council Tax is payable on most domestic properties. These are usually houses or flats, but can also be other types of property such as a houseboats or caravans. The percentages of the Council Tax which Cambridge residents pay is divided up as follows:



# Cambridge Folk Festival is back this summer!

**NOW BOOKING!**



After a year off, Cambridge Folk Festival makes its eagerly-anticipated return this summer with an incredible line-up of performers from around the world across a packed weekend at Cherry Hinton Hall – and a series of special events at venues across the city.

The festival is heading back to its spiritual home of Cherry Hinton Hall for the main festival weekend on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 August. Headlining this year are Frank Turner on the Saturday and co-headliners Suzanne Vega, and Richard Thompson with Zara Phillips on the Sunday. Among a host of other exciting acts across the weekend are This Is The Kit, Seth Lakeman, Brògeal, The

Songs of Joni Mitchell with Jesca Hoop, Lail Arad & more, Ustad Noor Bakhsh, Nick Harper and Mark Radcliffe with David Boardman.

As well as the two main stages, there will be a **street performance area** showcasing buskers and roving acts, and a dedicated **Club Corner**, programmed in partnership with local folk clubs. And as ever, visitors can enjoy a spectacular array of food and drink offerings, camping is available nearby (although numbers are limited) and there will be plenty of surprises along the way.

This year, for the first time, the festival will be reaching out beyond Cherry Hinton Hall to venues across the city in the run up to the main weekend. This will include concerts at



Cambridge Corn Exchange on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 July and The Portland Arms on 29 July. Cambridgeshire Music will host the Summer School again in 2026, 27-30 July, with a finale performance on the festival stage on Saturday 1 August.

Tickets for Cambridge Folk Festival 2026, 1-2 August, Cherry Hinton Hall

Day tickets: Adults: £65; Concessions (including Young Folk 14-25) £45; Children (0-13) Free.

Weekend tickets: Adults: £130; Concessions (including Young Folk 14-25) £90; Children (0-13) Free.

Prices are subject to booking fees. Please see website for concessions, payment plan, camping and parking information. Limited camping available. Please book early to avoid disappointment. Visit [cambridgefolkfestival.co.uk](http://cambridgefolkfestival.co.uk)



Suzanne Vega



Richard Thompson



Frank Turner

## Hitting the streets for Street Aid

A team of council staff laced up their running shoes at the start of March to take part in the Cambridge Half Marathon and raise money for Cambridge Street Aid – a very worthy cause that helps some of the most vulnerable people in our city.

Cambridge Street Aid is 10 years old this year. It's a charitable fund that was set up to provide people with an alternative to giving cash directly to people on the streets, and to help people who have experienced rough sleeping by awarding them grants of up to £750.

The grants help people looking to turn their lives around with things like job applications, transport costs for work, essential items for new accommodation home, or advance rent.

Since Cambridge Street Aid started in 2016, residents and visitors to the city have kindly donated more than £250,000, including through various contactless donation points in locations including Grand Arcade, Mandela House and The Grafton shopping centre. This has enabled us to give more than 650 grants which have gone directly to help people make positive changes to their lives.



Find out more about Cambridge Street Aid and make a donation





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Little Women, March 2026 (Photo by Paul Ashley)

# Trees For Peace branches out across the city

Earlier this year we planted some of the latest additions to the city's growing urban forest, as part of a new project called 'Trees For Peace'.

This is a new annual community planting project which will see 14 trees planted each year – mirroring Cambridge's 14 wards – to symbolise the city and the council's commitment to peace, and the ongoing work to foster peaceful, inclusive, empowered and connected communities here.

Residents' groups took part in a number of Trees For Peace planting events in parks and open spaces across the city during January, one of the best months for planting young trees, and will help look after them as they grow.

There are more than 240,000 trees in Cambridge with different landowners responsible for their upkeep, including the council, other local authorities, universities, private households and businesses. Over recent years the council



A group including the Mayor of Cambridge planting a tree at Christ's Pieces

has planted thousands of trees in public spaces around the city and continues to do so.

For more information visit: [cambridge.gov.uk/trees](http://cambridge.gov.uk/trees)

# Get on the trail of butterflies this spring

As the weather gets warmer this spring you'll start to see more butterflies and moths taking to the air in our parks and open spaces – and it's a great time to follow the Cambridge Butterfly Trail.



There are marker posts in 30 different open spaces around the city – each has a QR code to provide you with information about a different butterfly or moth. You or family members can collect rubbings of the species from the plaques attached to the markers. Download a sheet for these and you could win a pair of free tickets to Cambridge Botanic Garden for completing the Trail.

To find out more visit [cambridge.gov.uk/butterfly-trail](http://cambridge.gov.uk/butterfly-trail) - collect all 30 butterfly species and send in your completed collection form to [nature@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:nature@cambridge.gov.uk)

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# Sponsor a new tree near your home or in your favourite park

Cambridge City Council has partnered with **Trees for Streets**, the national treesponsorship charity, to make it easy for residents to help plant more urban trees.

You can choose to sponsor a Street Tree in your neighbourhood, or a Celebration Tree in one of Cambridge's beautiful parks - perfect for marking a special occasion or honouring

someone important.

Trees bring huge benefits to our city: they absorb air pollution, capture carbon, create shade, help reduce flooding, and support wildlife. They also make our streets greener, cooler, and more welcoming.

Many Cambridge residents have already sponsored more than 200 new trees so far. Once you submit a request, the

council checks whether the location is suitable, and if approved, the tree is planted the following winter.

Whether you want to

improve your street, support local biodiversity, or leave a lasting legacy, sponsoring a tree is a simple and meaningful way to make a difference.

## Work on watercourses for chalk stream project

This spring you may see our teams in the vicinity of Coldham's Common and Abbey Leisure, clad in waders and waterproofs, working away on some of the watercourses there.

More than 800 metres of channel are being restored using various methods to enhance the streams' flow, bank stability, and to improve habitat for aquatic plants and river insects.

The work has been funded by the national Big Chalk Nature Recovery Fund and forms part of our own Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project. Chalk streams have been described as 'England's Great Barrier Reef' of freshwater ecosystems, and are among the rarest and most fragile habitats on Earth with

around 85% of these streams located in England including many in Cambridgeshire.

Chalk streams are renowned for crystal-clear waters which support a wide variety of plants and animals, but are under threat from pollution. The Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project, with funding from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Anglian Water and Cambridge Water, as well as the city council, was established to gather critical data about the streams and develop strategies to protect and restore these ecosystems.

 To find out more, including volunteering opportunities visit:  
 [cambridge.gov.uk/chalk-streams](http://cambridge.gov.uk/chalk-streams)



## Volunteers help mimic vital habitats

Some of our local nature reserve volunteers have been helping boost biodiversity in recent months by creating some remarkable habitats which mimics those found in veteran trees.

The structures were made at Bramblefields, Byron's Pool, Logan's Meadow and Nine Wells Local Nature Reserves with an outer ring of logs filled with smaller bits of wood which can rot down quicker. This emulates how older trees function, with a rotting centre and an outside 'trunk' which has many crevasses and fissures running through it, attracting invertebrates and fungi.

These man-made structures can help with



what is known as a habitat 'gap' in our woodlands. Every woodland needs trees of different ages and structure to support a healthy ecosystem, but sometimes very old trees are missing from some of our nature reserve woodlands.

 For more information visit:  
 [cambridge.gov.uk/nature-reserves](http://cambridge.gov.uk/nature-reserves)

# How we can help you stay active in later life

Regular physical activity is one of the best ways for older adults to stay healthy, independent, and confident in daily life. Being active can help prevent or delay common age-related health problems and make everyday tasks like shopping or cleaning easier to manage.

Regular activity strengthens muscles and bones, reduces the risk of osteoporosis and helps maintain strength needed for daily movement. Staying active also improves balance, which lowers the chance of falling – one of the biggest health risks for older adults.

It also supports mental wellbeing by boosting mood, easing stress and increasing energy levels. It even benefits brain health by improving memory and slowing cognitive decline. Importantly, every bit of movement helps, so doing something is always better than doing nothing.



## How can the council help you – or someone you know – to move more?

The Active Lifestyles team at Cambridge City Council provides a variety of services and activities to help support your physical and mental health for people aged over 55. These include:

- Specialist exercise classes via self-referral or referral by a health professional
- Wellbeing classes such as yoga, Pilates and t'ai chi
- Social racquet sport sessions

- including badminton, pickleball and table tennis
- Strength and balance classes for frailer and less mobile residents.

These sociable sessions are subsidised, costing between £3.50-£4.50 per visit and are available at different locations across the city. These groups provide people with an opportunity to connect with others, and are delivered by friendly facilitators and instructors who welcome new participants.



## Strength and Balance classes



Boosting strength and balance is important in preventing illness and injury in older members of the community. Our Strength and Balance classes are available to join in nine different locations in Cambridge, including within our Assisted Living Schemes (sheltered housing). All of the classes are open to all, no matter the venue – no booking in advance is required, and payment is made on arrival by cash, or in some instances, by card.

### What our regular participants say:

*"The health issues I have now will be for life and it is so important that my mental and physical state stay strong. The Strength and Balance class has a mixture of personalities, abilities and ages made possible with an amazing tutor, who is welcoming, offers clear instruction, is patient, and has the ability to watch us all – making sure that every one of us feels safe."*

*"I cannot see any reason why a person would not want to attend a Strength and Balance class in older age. It keeps you fit, you make new friends and most importantly it's fun!"*

## Interested in finding out more?

- 📄 [cambridge.gov.uk/physical-activities-for-older-adults](https://cambridge.gov.uk/physical-activities-for-older-adults)
  - 📄 Visit our public booking page: <https://bookwhen.com/camsport>
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# Weekly food waste collections rolling out across the area

In January we began our new weekly food waste collection service which will be rolled out during 2026 in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. By the end of January we had delivered new food waste caddies to the first 17,200 households and began collecting food waste from them weekly.

The weekly collection service for food waste is being introduced in different

areas at different times throughout 2026. You can check when collections are due to start for you by putting your postcode into the 'In My Area' section at [greatercambridgewaste.org](http://greatercambridgewaste.org)

You will receive full instructions when your caddies are delivered to you. There is also a video you can watch and more information at [greatercambridgewaste.org/foodwaste](http://greatercambridgewaste.org/foodwaste)



## Recycling our food waste has become a habit really quickly



Claire's household has been using the weekly food waste collection service. She says: "We've found that recycling our food waste has become a habit really quickly, and the new service is easy to use. The liners for the kitchen caddy keep everything clean and it has really highlighted which foods are getting thrown away. I've been making more effort to use things up or freeze them and have even stopped buying some foods that our family haven't been eating up. We all need to do our bit for the environment so I'd recommend everyone uses the new service."

You may be surprised to learn that so much food is thrown away by households. We expect to collect 9,000 tonnes of food waste per year. Some of this is what we call

unavoidable food waste – things you can't eat like bones, egg shells or banana skins. But most of it is food that could have been eaten, and has been thrown away because either too much was cooked, or it has 'gone off' or mouldy before it could be used. We call this avoidable food waste.

When you start using your new caddy for weekly food waste collections it is well worth paying attention to what you end up putting in it, and why. You might even find it helpful to keep a notebook next to your kitchen caddy so you can make a note, or keep a list on your phone. If you are producing avoidable food waste think about why – you can get tips and ideas to stop wasting food and save potentially £100s each year at [lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://lovefoodhatewaste.com)



## Please don't put loose ash and dust in your bin

Please ensure that any cooled ash from log-burners, barbecues, fire-pits etc, or dust from vacuum cleaners, is contained within a sack before putting it in your black wheelie bin.

Clouds of loose ash and dust can blow into the air when bins are tipped, so

must be contained. If possible, dampen ash with water before disposal. Bins found to contain loose ash or dust will not be emptied. Wood ash will no longer be accepted in the green bin – all dust and ash should be bagged and placed in the black bin. Thank you!



# New community hub 'The Nest' set to transform community life in East Barnwell

A major new community space, The Nest, is set to open in East Barnwell in summer 2027. Operated by local charity Abbey People in partnership with Barnwell Library, it will create a visible, modern home for community life in the area, supporting residents of all ages and helping the neighbourhood thrive.

The Nest forms part of the

wider mixed-use development currently being delivered by Cambridge Investment Partnership, the equal partnership between Cambridge City Council and Hill. [See side panel]

Replacing the current ageing community centre, The Nest will bring together open public spaces, library services, and bookable meeting rooms and halls in

one welcoming building.

Residents will be able to join groups, get support, use the library, or celebrate special occasions there.

Nicky Shepard, CEO of Abbey People, said: "The Nest is more than a building. It's a space where connection, opportunity, and everyday life

come together. Our

strategy commits to helping people move from surviving to thriving, and The Nest will be central to that by offering welcoming public space, shared activities, and places to gather. We want everyone in East Barnwell to feel at home here and to experience the real benefits of community support and belonging."

"Community spaces like this play a proven role in improving wellbeing and reducing isolation, helping people feel more connected to their

## What's happening in East Barnwell?

The Nest will be found inside the prominent new building currently taking shape on the corner of Barnwell Road and Newmarket Road. As well as the new community centre, it will feature a new public library, a pre-school, open spaces and new council homes. When completed, the development as a whole, on both sides of Barnwell Road, will see 120 modern council homes built by Cambridge Investment Partnership plus new commercial units and community facilities.

neighbourhoods and to each other. Above all, The Nest is being created as a place where people feel comfortable, welcome, and truly at home in their community."

COMING SOON!



## Plans for new homes at Ekin Road taking shape

Plans to build 134 new homes on Ekin Road in Abbey ward are continuing to take shape after a planning application was submitted recently by Cambridge Investment Partnership, the equal homebuilding partnership between Cambridge City Council and the Hill Group.

Just around the corner from the East Barnwell redevelopment also featured on this page, 78 new council homes and 56 private homes at Ekin Road will replace existing homes on the former council estate, with a mix of

one- to five-bedroom homes, including the first five-bedroom council homes built in recent years, as well as four homes specifically designed for wheelchair users.

All of the council homes at Ekin Road will be designed to the 'Cam Standard' which ensures every new home has excellent insulation and airtight construction so homes stay warm and comfortable using very little energy.

The plans were shaped by feedback from residents during extensive consultation on the future of

the Ekin Road estate. It was identified as a site for possible redevelopment due to serious maintenance and

structural issues in some of the existing homes, which were originally built in the 1950s and 1960s.



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