

Corporate Plan 2025-2030



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Foreword

by Council Leader,
Cllr Bridget Smith



I am delighted to introduce our new and very ambitious Corporate Plan - a clear roadmap for building an even fairer, kinder, and greener South Cambridgeshire.

When I became Leader of the Council in 2018, I could never have imagined the scale of change and challenge we would face in the years ahead. From the cost-of-living crisis to the COVID-19 pandemic, from the soaring cost of housing to the urgent need for better social and community infrastructure, all our communities have shown remarkable resilience whilst sharing our ambitions. Yet, even in the face of all these challenges have come huge opportunities - to support one another, to strengthen our local economy, and to shape a much more sustainable and inclusive future which improves the quality of life of all our residents and businesses.

This plan sets out our vision for South Cambridgeshire and the five key priorities that will drive us forward. We will shape healthy and supported communities, deliver sustainable homes and vibrant places, deepen our commitment to be green to our core, promote South Cambridgeshire as a place where businesses thrive, whilst ensuring that our Council remains financially secure and ever more fit for the future.

These priorities are not just words on a page. They will underpin everything we do as a Council and represent our commitment to action, to partnership, and to delivering real, positive change for everyone who lives and works here.

As we embark on this next chapter in our district's history, we do so with renewed ambition and energy. By working together - with our residents, businesses, and partners - we will continue to make South Cambridgeshire a fantastic place for everyone to live, work, and grow.



Our vision

for South Cambridgeshire

Our vision is for a fairer, kinder, and greener South Cambridgeshire, where all residents will be equal partners in their communities.

We aspire to create a better district to the benefit of everyone in our communities. We recognise the many challenges that face the district and will continue to work to overcome these to help realise its full potential.

Our priorities are:

Healthy and supported communities



Sustainable homes and vibrant places



Being green to our core



Helping businesses to thrive in South Cambridgeshire



Financially secure and fit for the future



Challenges

facing South Cambridgeshire

Over the next five years our communities and residents will face a range of challenges, which we will seek to address through this Corporate Plan.

Our area faces significant issues associated with **rural isolation**.



As a **nationally significant area for growth**, we need to plan for the delivery of additional floorspace for employment.



We are experiencing a national **housing crisis**, which is being felt acutely in South Cambridgeshire.



We are currently facing an **ecological crisis**, and we must protect and enhance nature and biodiversity across the district.



As a Council we have committed to support the district in halving emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050 as part of our commitment to tackling **climate change**.



We must be prepared to handle the uncertainties around proposed **local government reorganisation** to ensure residents continue to receive high quality services.



As our local economy grows our **businesses need a skilled workforce**, ready to make the most of future opportunities.



Our residents experience above average **income inequality** compared with the rest of England.



Local Authorities across the country must be resilient to **financial challenges** such as the Fair Funding Review and reductions in central government funding.



Greater Cambridge faces significant challenges with **water scarcity**, which threatens both our precious environment and the ability to deliver much-needed housing.





What we will do



- We will help our residents, including older, disabled and vulnerable people, to live safely in their own homes.
- We will collaborate with partners and work to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, and environmental health issues, promoting a safe and healthy community.
- We will support the improved health and wellbeing of residents and work with community groups, the voluntary sector and individuals to help to tackle issues within their communities.
- We will support the most vulnerable people in our communities to ensure they have access to the resources and opportunities needed to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.



What we will do



- We will continue to deliver new, high quality council homes and work with partners to improve the availability and affordability of housing stock across the district
- We will work closely with partners and local communities to ensure that new homes are delivered alongside supporting infrastructure and amenities.
- We will invest in our housing stock and improve the energy and cost efficiency of housing across the district - ensuring homes meet modern standards.
- We will work with partners to support healthy and connected communities, with access to green space.



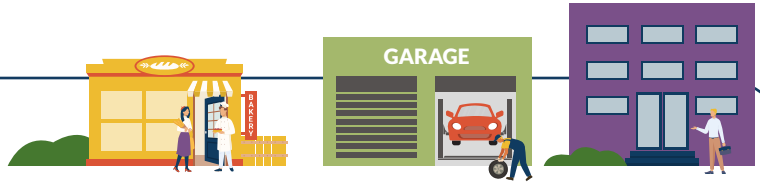
What we will do



- We will work with partners to ensure that proposed development plans safeguard and where possible enhance the local environment and nature.
- By 2030 we will reduce emissions from the Council's estate and operations by 75% from 2018-19 levels.
- We will support households and businesses to reduce consumption and waste, while promoting reuse and recycling.
- We will support others (including parish councils, local communities and businesses) to respond to the climate and ecological emergencies, with the ambition of halving emissions by 2030, putting us on the path to net zero by 2050.



What we will do



- We will provide support to help businesses to start up and grow within South Cambridgeshire.
- We will work with partners to promote apprenticeships and support the economically inactive back into work.
- We will work with partners to promote the vibrancy and health of South Cambridgeshire high streets, markets and commercial areas.
- We will work with partner organisations and through the planning service to make South Cambridgeshire an even more attractive place to do business.



What we will do



- We will ensure our services are delivered smoothly, focussing on ease of access for our customers, making it easier to engage with decision-making, and making best use of technology to provide 24/7 services.
- We will be an employer of choice, attracting and retaining the best talent and investing in the development of our staff and councillors.
- We will continue to explore ways of increasing income to help support services.
- We will make best use of Council resources, including through the identification of fraud and error.





Life expectancy

82.65 (Males)

2nd highest of 6 CPCA authority areas;
vs 79.30 for England (2022)

84.60 (Females)

Highest of 6 CPCA authority areas;
vs 83.15 for England (2022)



£38,887

Annual Gross Value Added (GVA) per person

2nd highest of the 6 CPCA authority areas, vs £33,976 for England (2021)



17%

Settlement funding as a proportion of core spending power

(a lower % indicates greater resilience to further cuts to settlement funding)
Lowest of the 6 CPCA authority areas (2023-24)



£1,327

Average monthly private rental cost

vs £1,203 for East of England (Dec 2024)



404.5 kg

Total waste per household

(combined figure for Greater Cambridge)
3rd of 5 CPCA authority areas (out of 5 due to Shared Waste Service covering South Cambs and Cambridge), vs 508.8 kg for England (2022-23)



6.4%

Households with solar PV

Highest of 6 CPCA authority areas, vs 2.1% for England (November 2024)



81%

Employment rate

(% of working-age population, including employees, self-employed, voluntary and family workers)
3rd highest of the 6 CPCA authority areas (2022-23)



£19,951,000

Unallocated financial reserves

(2023-24)



890

Total fly-tipping incidents

10th lowest of 16 similar English District Councils (CIPFA nearest neighbours) (2022-23 financial year)



8.41 tonnes

Greenhouse gas emissions per person

3rd lowest of 6 CPCA authority areas, vs 5.47 for England (2021)



£370,000

Average price paid by first-time buyers

vs £284,581 for East of England (Nov 2024)



3.3 tonnes

Carbon emissions per person from transport in the district

2nd highest of 6 CPCA authority areas, vs 2.1 for England (2022)



£25,860,000

SCDC net revenue expenditure

(2023-24)



4.91

Households threatened with homelessness per 1,000

5th highest of 16 similar English District Councils (CIPFA nearest neighbours) (2023-24 financial year)



55.67%

Business 3 year survival rate

3rd highest of the 6 CPCA authority areas (2022)



3.21

Income inequality

(ratio between the highest-earning 20% earn compared to the lowest-earning 20% - higher is less equal)
2nd highest of 6 CPCA authority areas, vs 3.01 for England (2018)



59.6%

Residents using active travel 3+ times per week

2nd highest of 6 CPCA authority areas, vs 46.4% for England (2023)



683

Total number of full-time equivalent employees

(Sep 2024)



7.6%

Land with tree canopy cover

vs 7.1% for the CPCA area (2024)



73%

16-64 year olds with a Level 3+ qualification

2nd highest of the 6 CPCA authority areas (2023)



7.41

Life satisfaction score (1-10)

3rd highest of the 6 CPCA authority areas (2023)



1,667

Apprenticeship participation per 100,000 people

2nd lowest of the 6 CPCA authority areas, vs 2,113 for England (2022-23)



£103

Core spending power per person

(total Council revenue funding excluding most ring-fenced grants) (2023-24)



2,553 m

Median distance to nearest park or public garden

3rd highest of 6 CPCA authority areas (2020)



2.4%

Households with a heat pump

Highest of 6 CPCA authority areas; vs 0.6% for England (November 2024)



44.49

Total criminal offences per 1,000

(excluding fraud)
2nd lowest of 6 CPCA authority areas (12 months ending 2024 Q2)



46.9%

Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting

(combined figure for Greater Cambridge)
3rd of 5 CPCA authority areas (out of 5 due to Shared Waste Service covering South Cambs and Cambridge), vs 41.7% for England (2022-23)



70%

Council Tax income as a proportion of net revenue expenditure

(2023-24)



8.4%

Land classed as 'nature rich'

vs 8.5% for the CPCA area (2024)



1.69 million sq.m.

Total commercial floorspace

3rd highest of the 6 CPCA authority areas (2023)

Healthy and supported communities

Supporting and engaging with our communities is key to tackling the challenges we face as a district. Our diversity is our strength and helping everyone live freely and independently is essential to promoting healthy and supported communities.

Our ambition

We want to create a district where people feel safe, supported, and confident in their communities. Together, we'll focus on what delivers for residents, enabling healthier, more independent lives for everyone.





What we will do

- We will help our residents, including older, disabled and vulnerable people, to live safely in their own homes.
- We will collaborate with partners and work to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, and environmental health issues, promoting a safe and healthy community.
- We will support the improved health and wellbeing of residents and work with community groups, the voluntary sector and individuals to help to tackle issues within their communities.
- We will support the most vulnerable people in our communities to ensure they have access to the resources and opportunities needed to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Key areas of council activity

- Housing visitor support
- Input into Community Safety Partnership
- Support for refugees
- Environmental health compliance work
- Fly-tip disruption and response work
- Community support (including emergency response) and engagement
- Health and wellbeing programmes and funding
- Support programmes for vulnerable residents (including cost-of-living)

Key strategies and documents

- Homelessness Strategy
- Communities Offer
- Equality Scheme
- Local Plan
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Plan Toolkit
- Greater Cambridge Air Quality Strategy
- Taxi Licensing Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Key partnerships

- Cambs Home Improvement Agency
- South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System
- Cambridgeshire Constabulary
- UK Health Security
- Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
- Community Groups
- Town and Parish Councils

Sustainable homes and vibrant places

A home is more than a roof over your head, it is the foundation on which people build their lives. An affordable home is essential for people to live happy, fulfilling lives. In light of the housing crisis, we are committed to strengthening our communities by delivering sustainable, affordable homes and vibrant places to live.

Our ambition

Building environmentally sustainable places is fundamental to our work - helping people live near their work, shops, schools, leisure, and healthcare, with affordable and reliable public transport. High-quality, affordable housing in the right places is essential. We'll continue increasing our council housing stock and bringing empty homes back into use to ensure everyone has a place to call home.





What we will do

- We will continue to deliver new, high quality council homes and work with partners to improve the availability and affordability of housing stock across the district.
- We will work closely with partners and local communities to ensure that new homes are delivered alongside supporting infrastructure and amenities.
- We will invest in our housing stock and improve the energy and cost efficiency of housing across the district - ensuring homes meet modern standards.
- We will work with partners to support healthy and connected communities, with access to green space.

Key areas of council activity

- New Build council housing programme
- Development of Joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge
- Community Liaison meetings and forums
- Strategic sites work
- Council housing energy efficiency works
- Promotion of schemes to support energy efficiency works to non-Council owned housing.
- Providing input to key partnerships to influence improved public transport, active travel and access of green spaces

Key strategies and documents

- New Build Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents and Area Action Plans
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Plan Toolkits

Key partnerships

- Cambridge City Council
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service
- Cambridge Delivery Group
- Greater Cambridge Partnership
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Town and Parish Councils
- Homes England

Being green to our core

Being green is at the heart of everything we do. We're tackling the climate and ecological crises head-on, ensuring our district is ready for the challenges of climate change.

Our ambition

We will consistently promote a cleaner, greener, zero carbon future for our communities. We recognise the climate and ecological emergencies and are playing our part by achieving 75% operational emissions reduction by 2030 and supporting the district to halve emission by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. We must safeguard and enhance the natural world for future generations and help our communities do the same. We shall strive to be among the most sustainable places to live and work in the country.





What we will do

- We will work with partners to ensure that proposed development plans safeguard and where possible enhance the local environment and nature.
- By 2030 we will reduce emissions from the Council’s estate and operations by 75% from 2018-19 levels.
- We will support households and businesses to reduce consumption and waste, while promoting reuse and recycling.
- We will support others (including parish councils, local communities and businesses) to respond to the climate and ecological emergencies, with the ambition of halving emissions by 2030, putting us on the path to net zero by 2050.

Key areas of council activity

- Oversight of Biodiversity Net Gain processes.
- Providing input to key partnerships to address water scarcity in the area.
- Work to reduce carbon emissions from the Council’s estate and operations.
- Waste reduction and recycling activities and campaigns
- Support to our communities to reduce emissions and increase nature

Key strategies and documents

- Climate and Nature Strategy
- Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents and Area Action Plans
- National Waste Strategy
- The Local Area Energy Plan
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Procurement Strategy

Key partnerships

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service
- Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP)
- Cambridge Water Scarcity Group
- Water Resources East
- Zero Carbon Communities

Helping businesses to thrive in South Cambridgeshire

Already recognised as a nationally significant area for development, helping local businesses thrive is key to the development of our district - bringing new jobs and opportunities into people's communities.

Our ambition

We will support local businesses as they start up and grow and as we transition towards a sustainable economy. Working with partners we are helping our residents develop the skills they need to take full advantage of local opportunities. Our area is already truly world leading and we will work to strengthen this position, whilst being mindful of the inequalities that exist and which access to work will go some way to address.





What we will do

- We will provide support to help businesses to start up and grow within South Cambridgeshire.
- We will work with partners to promote apprenticeships and support the economically inactive back into work.
- We will work with partners to promote the vibrancy and health of South Cambridgeshire high streets, markets and commercial areas.
- We will work with partner organisations and through the planning service to make South Cambridgeshire an even more attractive place to do business.

Key areas of council activity

- Renting of space for businesses
- Provision of business support, including highlighting funding opportunities
- Partnership work to promote skills development and apprenticeships
- Support for and promotion of high streets, commercial areas and markets
- Development of Joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge

Key strategies and documents

- CPCA Employment and Skills Strategy
- Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents and Area Action Plans
- Local Growth Plan
- National Industrial Strategy
- CPCA Visitor Economy and Tourism Strategy
- Greater Cambridge Destination Management Plan

Key partnerships

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)
- JobCentre Plus
- Local Schools and Colleges
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Cambridge Growth Company
- Cambridge Ahead
- Parish and Town Councils
- Other Local Authorities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- Ox-Cam Supercluster

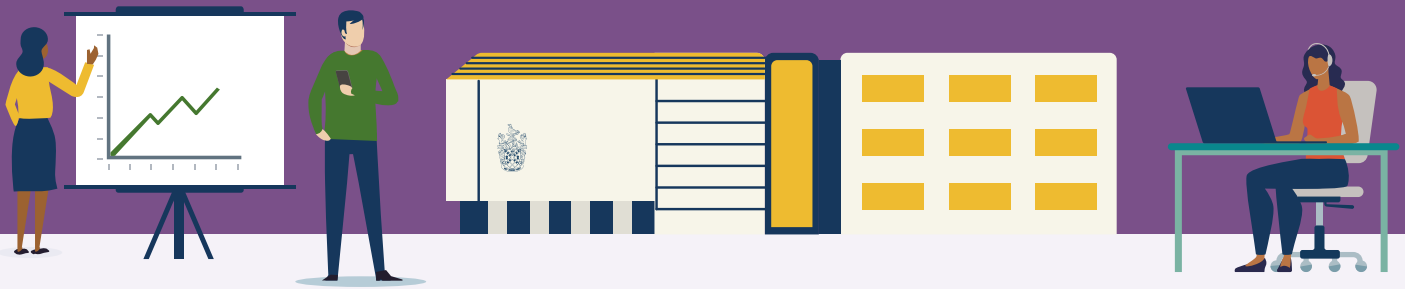
Financially secure and fit for the future

We have a duty to provide high quality cost-efficient services. Being open, transparent, and inclusive and letting evidence guide our decisions is critical to putting residents first.

Our ambition

We will make it easier for residents to engage with our services and democratic processes. We will make smart financial decisions to safeguard our services for the future and invest in our staff to ensure they remain equipped to deliver for our district's needs. Tackling fraud and continuing to deliver good value for money are both essential to the continued sound financial management of the council.





What we will do

- We will ensure our services are delivered smoothly, focussing on ease of access for our customers, making it easier to engage with decision-making, and making best use of technology to provide 24/7 services.
- We will be an employer of choice, attracting and retaining the best talent and investing in the development of our staff and councillors.
- We will continue to explore ways of increasing income to help support services.
- We will make best use of Council resources, including through the identification of fraud and error.

Key areas of council activity

- Service review and digital programmes
- Work to ensure that the Council continues to develop staff and Members, and to be seen as an attractive employer
- Income generation activity
- Fraud prevention and identification
- Continued development of approaches to making the best use of data and intelligence

Key strategies and documents

- Transformation Strategy
- Technology Strategy
- Continuous Improvement Strategy
- People and Organisational Development Strategy
- Learning and Development Strategy
- Performance and Reward Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Investment Strategy
- Fraud Strategy
- Capital Assets Strategy
- Procurement Strategy

Key partnerships

- 3C and 2C Shared Services
- Cambridgeshire County Fraud Initiative
- Local Government Association
- District Councils' Network
- External Auditors



Sources

CPCA State of the Region Dashboard;
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs;
LG Inform;
MCS Data Dashboard;
Office for National Statistics.

