Cllr Lorna Dupré

MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2026

FULL COUNCIL

The non-aligned Independent on the council (elected as Reform in 2025, later became Independent, briefly joined Advance UK, then returned to being Independent) has now joined the Conservative Group. The council's current composition is therefore

Liberal Democrat and Independent	33
Conservative	11
Reform UK	9
Labour	5
Green	3

The next meeting of the full county council is on Tuesday 13 October.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

We continue to wait.

ADULTS & HEALTH

Unpaid carers invited to share their experience

Unpaid carers across Cambridgeshire are being invited to share their experiences to help shape the future of support services in the county.

Cambridgeshire County Council is bringing together unpaid carers, people with lived experience, local organisations and others with an interest in supporting carers to design future Adult Carers Support Services.

The council is keen to hear from people who provide care for family members, friends or neighbours, as well as young adult carers and others with experience of caring. Their insights will help ensure future services reflect the needs of carers and the people they support.

A series of workshops will take place between September 2026 and March 2027, giving participants the opportunity to help develop future service priorities, shape how services are delivered and contribute to wider commissioning plans. There is no expectation that people attend every session, with all involvement welcomed based on individual availability and interests.

The workshops will build on feedback already shared by carers and provide another opportunity for people to influence how support is delivered in future.

Anyone interested in taking part, or who would like more information, can contact **Commissioning.FPTeam@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**

Shaping the future of adult social care

People across Cambridgeshire are being encouraged to have their say on the future of adult social care as part of a national public engagement programme launched by Baroness Louise Casey.

The Big Conversation on Care, launched on 29 July, aims to give people across England a direct opportunity to influence the future development of a National Care Service and how care and support will be provided for years to come.

The commission is seeking views from the public on a range of issues, including who should be eligible for support, what role families should play in caring for loved ones, and how care should be funded in a fair and sustainable way.

The programme will run until April 2027 in two phases. The first phase, running from July to November, focuses on the values and principles people expect from the care system and who should receive support. The second phase will look at funding, delivery and long-term reform of adult social care.

Find out more and take part at **www.caseycommission.co.uk/bigconversation**

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Rackham School planning application CCC/25/129/FUL

The County Council planning service has not yet (at the time of writing) determined the application for extension and alterations to Rackham School.

County Council fostering service

I have put the County Council fostering service in touch with the Coop to enable them to apply for a pop-up stand outside the Sutton Coop, encouraging people to consider applying to become much needed foster carers.

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY AND INCLUSION

Homelessness and temporary accommodation in rural areas

The County Councils Network (CCN) has published new analysis on homelessness and temporary accommodation in county and rural areas, showing that it is not just a big city problem.

- In March this year 23,186 children in county and rural areas were in temporary accommodation—74 per cent more than six years ago, almost double the national increase, and five times the increase in London.
- In March 2026 there were 22,230 households in temporary accommodation in county and rural areas, an increase of almost 80 per cent over the last six years. Almost one in five of these households are based in expensive 'nightly paid' private accommodation.
- Councils in county areas spent £124M on temporary accommodation in 2019/20, rising to £373M in 2024/25. This trebling of spend is a faster rate than anywhere else in England.
- Homelessness is also continuing to rise across county and rural areas, with local authority costs soaring in response: in 2019/20 councils in county areas budgeted £161M for homelessness, but this increased to £447M this year.

ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN INVESTMENT

Minerals and Waste local plan

Consultation on this stage of the plan is still open and closes on 10 October.
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/mwlp-review

New biodigester application in Mepal (CCC/26/083/FUL)

An application for a new biodigester and use of existing access has been submitted near the existing biodigester at the Block Fen roundabout.

As a waste and minerals application this will be determined by the county council. The access road is in East Cambridgeshire, using the Mick George and Lee's Packhouse entrance off the A142, but the site itself is in Fenland.

(The diagram is my own, based on the map in the planning application papers, as I wanted to show more clearly the relationship to the existing biodigester, and the district council's crematorium.)

Holme Fen fire

The recent serious fires in several parts of the country, including at Holme Fen, demonstrate how vulnerable we are to the changing climate and extreme weather patterns. The county council worked with partners at the height of the recent heatwave to help manage these fires and reduce the risk of others.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Gully clearance in Little Downham

Council contractors were able to clean around 90 per cent of the gullies in Little Downham parish at the beginning of August. A small number of gullies could not be completed during the visit, including the one outside Feoffees School. The team is planning to return to this one before 27 November.

Rights of Way improvement plan

The County Council has now begun its review of its Rights of Way Improvement Plan and is seeking comments from parish councils and other stakeholders.

Comments are now invited on key questions about our local rights of way network, and the priorities residents would like to see in a revised Plan. Comments can be made at **https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/place-and-sustainability/95349146/**

The deadline for responses is Sunday 11th October. If you have any questions about completing the questionnaire, please write to **Rowip2026@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**

Coveney and Wardy Hill bus ridership

Use of the Tiger on Demand bus service from Coveney and Wardy Hill continues to climb, according to Combined Authority figures comparing usage before and after the 1 January 2026 service changes.

The Combined Authority, which is the public transport authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, says it is now seeing a strong upward trend in usage from Coveney and Wardy Hill, particularly since March, with each month breaking the previous month's record.

In particular, says the Combined Authority, it's witnessing high usage of the service to Ely Market on Thursday mornings, and a 'notable increase' in commuter-time travel to Little Downham for work or school. At a time when so many bus services in Cambridgeshire are hanging by a thread, it's good to see usage in these villages doing well.

Notice of forthcoming works

I took up a complaint from a resident that work on the road at the top of Mepal Road in Sutton outside their home had not been notified to neighbours by letter in advance. This is not the first time in recent months that this has happened in Sutton, in breach of the contractor's permit (a different contractor in each case).

I have taken this up at Director level to ask the council to consider alternative arrangements for ensuring residents are notified, as the present system does not seem to be working.

20MPH programme review

The first-year evaluation of eight 20MPH schemes introduced across Cambridgeshire since early 2024 indicates that the programme has been effective in reducing vehicle speeds. All eight locations recorded statistically significant reductions in average speeds, generally exceeding the background reductions seen elsewhere in Cambridgeshire. Speed reductions ranged from 6 per cent to 16 per cent, with the strongest performance seen in locations where pre-scheme speeds were highest.

Early evidence on collision outcomes is encouraging but remains inconclusive due to the relatively short monitoring period and low collision numbers in many settlements.

Following the speed limit reduction in Ely, average speeds (main routes only) reduced from by three miles per hour. The majority of vehicles were travelling below 33.3MPH before the speed limit reduction and this reduced to 29.6MPH afterwards.

A more specific analysis of Downham Road Ely showed average speeds reducing by over three miles per hour in each direction. The reduction in vehicle speeds in Ely shows a statistical significance which suggests that the reduction is a result of a material change rather than fluctuation or chance. The scale of the reduction in Ely exceeds the scale of speed reduction across Cambridgeshire.

Before the speed limit change, there were an average of 15.6 road traffic collisions per year in Ely, based on the seven years of data since 2017. Following the speed limit change, there were eight collisionsThis is a notable reduction compared to the scale of collision reduction across Cambridgeshire more generally.

In conclusion, there is evidence of a statistically significant reduction in speeds and collisions following the speed limit reduction in Ely, but additional years of data will be required to substantiate this. It is therefore too early to say what the long-term impact of the speed limit reduction has been, but initial signs are encouraging.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

Sutton surgery

Cllr Mark Inskip and I hold our monthly surgery at Joy Bistro 65 High Street Sutton. Forthcoming dates are Monday 7 September and Monday 5 October, 6:30-7:30PM.

Subject to diary changes, I hope to be at

- Witchford coffee morning on Wednesday 2 September at 10:00AM
- Sutton Timebank coffee morning on Tuesday 15 September at 10:00AM
- Nellie's coffee morning (Sutton) on Friday 25 September at 12:45PM
- Coveney coffee morning on Wednesday 30 September at 10:30AM
- Little Downham Community Hub on Wednesday 30 September at 2:00PM

I can also be contacted ...

- by email at lorna@lornadupre.org.uk
- on Facebook
- by phone on 07930 337596

Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton division