

**Councillors' Report – for Milton and Landbeach PC, April 2020 , and additions for Waterbeach, May 2020**

**District Cllrs Hazel Smith, Judith Rippeth and County Cllr Anna Bradnam**

Looking back at March's report it's hard to believe it's only a few weeks since we could report quite normal activity. It's now 6 weeks since South Cambs Hall was closed to staff, and the council officers all started working from home. Luckily the Council had modernised over the last 6 months and staff had new laptops and Council Anywhere software, including a lot of cloud storage. Phones were due to move to VOIP so that the phone extensions could be retained when working from home – that project had not started but is now going ahead at pace. But many staff are using mobile phones to get around this problem.

The call centre is handling a lot of calls about council tax – the message is: If you are having trouble paying your **council tax or rent**, please contact the council and arrange a payment plan. There are contact details on the website. Otherwise call 03450 450 500. No-one will be penalised due to cash-flow issues outside their control, if they have made contact with the council and discussed a payment plan.

The staff you will have seen out working, the bin men, have been carrying on valiantly. They had been the only ones out and about – which had got to be safer for them! People have asked why they don't have masks. The medical advice is that cheap masks are more dangerous for them than no masks at all, and the bespoke masks are not available. They'd also have to be changed every 2 hours, and hand-to-face action is definitely to be avoided. They're adopting new working practices to try to avoid risk, keeping established crews together and having one driver plus one loader in the cab, to allow for social distancing.

**If you're ill, please double-bag any contaminated waste and store for 3 days before putting it out, to keep the bin men safe.**

And please thank them (from a safe distance!) when you see them. Some people have left out thankyou pictures and messages from their children. Green bin collections stopped but are now being introduced from 4th May with a guaranteed collection monthly and extra collection between when the numbers of staff allow that to happen. So we should put out the green bin with the blue one for collection.

Some officers in the Communities department started liaising with the various new village support groups in March, and through the District Councillors they built up a table of information: how well organised each village was, the phone and email, Facebook or website contacts. Our villages are pretty well organised, but the grass-roots activity has been very different in different villages. Some villages have a completely paper-based system, some have web-forms and shared spreadsheets, some based on the whole village, some immediately divided their area into zones. Village groups and neighbours are best placed to know who is going to need help in the current situation, and the best way to organise themselves. But everyone needs to work together within the community.

On 27th March as data controller for the ward, Hazel received the first data from the councils. Knowing that the national and County Council effort was taking some time to put in place, South Cambs had put together all the data they had: people with disabilities, assisted bin collections, and people over 70 and over 90 and so on. Normally this data is strictly controlled, but Matt Hancock MP made it quite clear that GDPR should not stand in place of identifying those most in need of help, so the data was being sent to villages responsibly. Further data followed: people who South Cambs Housing dept thought we could offer help to, and finally the Shielded people, identified by the NHS and GPs, now increasingly self referred. We have had 3 updates to that list so far.

In council housing areas officers are keeping in touch with tenants to try to give them the support they need. All vulnerable and older tenants have been contacted, and they are continuing to keep in touch with any they think need extra support.

The Communities team have created a new structure to support villages, dividing SCDC into 10 patches – we are in Patch 8. There is a team of 3 staff in charge of our patch, and their job is to liaise with the District Councillors and the village groups in their area and to try to fill any gaps. If a village was incapable of looking after itself, they were finding a neighbouring village with capacity to support them. There is now 100% secure coverage with capacity to cover extra demands if needed.

The County's **Local Resilience Forum** has set up a food hub at Alconbury, and Red Cross volunteers are working there boxing up food parcels. They are sent to those who request them from the Shielded list. People are required to reply to the letter from the government in order to get onto their list for support. We are worried that those most panicked by the situation and in the direst need will not do that. So proactive work in the villages is very important, so that everyone is supported.

**Milton Country Park** closed on Saturday evening 21st March because people were not observing social distancing and the staff could not keep them safe. A sunny Mother's Day on that Sunday could have brought far too many people into the park, and would have been a serious health risk. They have since reopened but only for people on foot. If you value the Park as a village resource, please support them via crowdfunding at this difficult time: with no income they will struggle to keep going. <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/support-milton-country-park>

**Waterbeach**

Waterbeach Mutual Aid was set up, and over 150 volunteers assigned to roads in the village. Judith is liaising with the Churches and gaining their valuable input to ensure that nobody is missed in what will most probably be many weeks of lockdown. She is also collaborating with the Mutual Aid group in the village and sharing ideas from the different ward schemes. Contact them on 01223 755066

### **Chittering**

Part of the Waterbeach scheme, but will generally be self-sufficient, organised by Caroline Ward.

### **Landbeach**

The Landbeach Covid Support Group have 20 volunteers signed up. Many residents who are self-isolating are welcoming the offers of shopping and collecting prescriptions. Anna is supporting the team and helping residents along the A10. If you are self-isolating or alone or unwell, contact them on 07724 047656 or [covidlandbeach@gmail.com](mailto:covidlandbeach@gmail.com)

### **Emmaus Community, Landbeach**

As a trustee, Judith is also working closely with Emmaus, who face financially uncertain times as the shop and cafe have now been closed since the beginning of lockdown, and are the main source of income. They are now in receipt of a Hospitality, Leisure and Retail grant administered by SCDC and along with fundraising campaigns and generous gifts of food from Fare Share Emmaus is managing fairly well for the time being. The eBay site is still operating remotely and currently delivery of orders can still take place. Clearly these times are also especially difficult emotionally for a vulnerable section of the community with the need to socially distance and sometimes socially isolate. The staff are doing a fantastic job with supporting the companions, as always, although some have been furloughed, to help in the fight against this virus.

### **Democracy**

All face-to-face meetings at South Cambs were cancelled from 23rd March. Although the Coronavirus Bill went through parliament, no instruction had been given to allow all our councils to take decisions via video links until Friday (enacted from 4th April). The Cabinet is meeting informally via Zoom twice a week. The Chief Executive has emergency powers to act while the Council processes are suspended. Planning meetings will resume using Teams from 13th May, with full public participation online. Planning site notices will be posted up by Building Control officers as they are out and about in the villages.

### **Community**

The upswelling of community spirit has been very heartening. However this is going to be a long process, and we must all continue to support those who find the isolation difficult. In particular those who have narrow social networks already.

### **Bins**

Keep an eye on bin collection days – they changed over Easter to accommodate the holiday (our bin men are working as normal) but nearly a third of them have been off sick or self-isolating. I am thanking them, along with our NHS staff, supermarket staff and delivery drivers every Thursday with a round of applause. You can find your bin days here <https://www.scams.gov.uk/bins/find-your-household-bin-collection-day/>

The resumption of the green bin collection has just started, for Waterbeach and Chittering please put both the blue and green bin out before 6.30am on Monday 11th May for emptying.

### **Business support**

The District Council set up a Business Covid19 Support Team and we have been sharing their information, advice and links with local businesses, sole traders and charities, many of whom are desperate to keep their businesses alive and their staff ticking over until the market recovers. If any business would like to receive this information, please email me at

[anna.bradnam@btinternet.com](mailto:anna.bradnam@btinternet.com) Information for businesses can be found here <https://www.scams.gov.uk/business/coronavirus-information-for-businesses/>

### **County Matters**

All Libraries closed on 23 March. Meantime:

- Overdue charges have been suspended and return dates have been extended throughout the closure period
- Reservations for stock will not be accepted at this time. Any existing reservations will be satisfied when libraries re-open.
- A number of digital services will be provided. To browse our eBooks, eMagazines, eNewspapers and three suppliers of eAudiobooks, visit our Online Library [webpage](#)
- To stay up to date with the latest Cambridgeshire County Council library news, sign up the our [e-newsletter](#)

### **Bus services**

Stagecoach have recently adjusted their timetables:

**Milton P&R** – has been suspended.

**Citi 2** - Monday – Friday buses will run every 30 minutes between 06:30 and 9:30 then hourly between 9:30 and 21:30.

Saturday buses will run hourly between 07:00 and 21:30.

Sunday buses will run hourly between 09:00 and 18:00 but will not go to Waterbeach

**Service 9** - Monday – Saturday buses will run between 06:30 and 19:00; hourly between Cambridge and Ely and every two hours on the Ely to Littleport and Ely town loop.  
Sunday – no service.

**Service 19** will remain unchanged.

### **Safeguarding**

Requiring families to ‘stay at home’ might be safest thing to do in terms of the Covid-19 but for many families with difficult relationships, this can be stressful and frightening.

There is a Report a Concern form from South Cambs (see their website).

### **Safeguarding Children**

If you are concerned that a child may be suffering physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect or is at risk of significant harm you should contact Children’s Services using one of the following: • Cambridgeshire children: 0345 045 5203

ReferralCentre.children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk • Peterborough children: 01733 864180 • Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT): 01733 234724 If you are a professional you can report a safeguarding concern using the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Referral Form. All telephone referrals will need to be followed up in writing within 24 hours by the referring professional.

### **Safeguarding Adults**

If you have concerns for an Adult, you should contact Adult Services using one of the following: Cambridgeshire County Council • Telephone: 0345 045 5202 • Email: referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Peterborough City Council • Telephone: 01733 747474 • Email: adultsocialcare@peterborough.gov.uk Between Monday to Thursday 5pm to 8am and Friday 4pm to Monday 8am, adult safeguarding concerns can be directed to the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) – 01733 234724

**We hope you are well and stay safe. Please don’t go out unless you really need to.**