

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN REYNOLDS 27th JULY

Summer Reading Challenge at Cambridgeshire Libraries

Cambridgeshire youngsters has been encouraged to take part in the Creepy House Summer Reading Challenge from Saturday 20 July. The national initiative encourages children of all ages to read six books during the summer holidays. The books can be anything from stories to audio books as long as they are borrowed from a library. Each week a scratch and sniff sticker can be collected if children have read at least one book and there is a certificate and medal for everyone that completes the challenge.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "The Summer Reading Challenge takes place every year, and this year there's a spooky theme. It's usually very popular, last year over 3,000 Cambridgeshire children took part and it's a great way to encourage a love of reading and perhaps help keep them occupied throughout the summer holidays."

APPLY FOR FREE CYCLE RACKS IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Organisations in Cambridgeshire can apply for free cycle racks to encourage people to arrive by bike, offering secure cycle parking and tackling cycle theft. Cambridgeshire County Council has funded the free bike stands through ParkThatBike, a social enterprise. Up to two stands are available per applicant and each holds two bikes securely. The scheme launched last September in Cambridgeshire and so far 75 stands have been installed across the county.

Eligible organisations include:

- * small businesses
- * surgeries, dentists and health centres
- * schools, colleges, youth clubs, scouts and guides
- * charities and community associations
- * sports clubs and swimming pools
- * parish halls, meeting rooms and community centres
- * churches and places of worship
- * allotments and open spaces

Applicants must be based in Cambridgeshire and are responsible for installing the cycle parking on their own premises, in an agreed location.

Eligible organisations can apply by visiting www.parkthatbike.info or calling 01594 564 344 and asking for an application form.

Cambridge has the highest percentage of people travelling to work by bike in England, according to the 2011 census. Across Cambridgeshire, 6% of all residents travel to work by bike. Unfortunately, Cambridge had just over 2,000 bikes stolen last year.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "Cycling is free, healthy, great for the environment and we have some of the best cycling facilities in the country, but unfortunately cycle theft is common. We want as many eligible organisations as possible to apply for funding and get secure cycle parking for staff and visitors."

The free cycle racks have been part-funded by central government through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. In Cambridgeshire, the funding will be used for a programme of measures aimed at making it easier for people to travel between home and work, and to other key destinations.

CAMBRIDGE'S NEW RAIL STATION

PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMITTED FOR CAMBRIDGE'S NEW RAIL STATION

Cambridgeshire County Council has submitted the planning application for the new Cambridge Science Park Station Interchange. A series of public exhibitions are being held to help people see the plans and make their views known.

The new station will transform train travel to one of Cambridge's main business areas, including the Science Park, St John's Innovation Centre and the Cambridge Business Park. This key project will create a transport hub which joins up rail, bus services, pedestrian and cycling facilities.

The new station will be on the main line between Cambridge and Ely and is expected to be served by direct trains running to London Kings Cross, Liverpool Street, Norwich and King's Lynn. As well as connecting into the national rail network, trains may also be available to Stansted Airport and Birmingham.

The scheme will include:

- a new station building, platforms, and other rail infrastructure to be used by around 3,000 passengers a day
 - the extension of the Busway from Milton Road to the station as well as linking to the new town of Northstowe
 - public space, pedestrian and cycle access routes
 - cycle parking for 1000 cycles
 - a taxi drop-off and pick-up area
 - a 450 space car park with disabled and short stay parking.

The new station building will have a green roof and use solar panels to generate electricity. The planning application details are available on the Council's website <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications/planning+proposals.htm>

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This new station will provide fantastic benefits for the people of Cambridgeshire, providing a transport interchange linked to the Busway. It will boost economic growth and improve access to the business area of Cambridge as well as the new Northstowe development. We would welcome your views on this new plan for the station."

The planning application is supported by a number of different documents which assess the proposals impact on the environment. The results of the applicants' assessment and the mitigation proposed are set out in the supporting Environmental Statement. This, and other supporting information, can be viewed on the County Council website, Council offices or at the public exhibitions.

All responses should be made to the County Council by 11 August. The Planning Application is due to be debated in October.

NEW FREE OF CHARGE WIFI NETWORK

Cambridgeshire Libraries has recently launched a new free of charge WIFI network. This fantastic new [service](#) is now available at 40 libraries and library access points for you all to use your WIFI enable devices to browse, download and enjoy online resources free of charge. Anyone with a WiFi enabled device (such as a smart phone or tablet) will be able to access the internet, select e-books, e-audio books or use the Sorcer Mobile library app (to search the catalogue, reserve or renew your items)..

It's free of charge and easy to use – you just access the service by connecting to the “CCC_Public” wireless network. If you are a library customer you will also benefit from upgraded computers enabling you to stay in touch, seek jobs and access online services.

The upgrades are now available in all Cambridgeshire libraries and provide modern software including Windows 7, Internet Explorer 9 and Firefox browsers.

If you're not already a customer – it's easy to join our library service - it's free and you can join [online here](#)

We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone that was involved with the public consultation on this project and those that provided feedback at the pilot sites. Your help was invaluable to us making these improvements to our service.

GET GOING IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE THIS SUMMER WITH CHANGE4LIFE

With the warm weather finally here, the County Council is backing a campaign which will try to ensure that everyone remembers the summer by improving their health and wellbeing. Summer is a great time for people to get active, and those with children will want to keep them busy over the school holidays too. The good news is that there are plenty of opportunities locally for families to 'get going' and keep active.

The national 'Get Going this Summer' campaign has been organised as part of the Government's Chang4life initiative. Events for children, young people and families, plus fun places to visit, will be listed on a website which can be accessed by local people to find out what is going on in their area. There is also loads of information about how children and their families can have fun keeping active.

Youngsters aged five to 16 need to do at least 60 minutes of physical activity that gets their heart beating faster than usual, and they need to do it every day to burn off calories and prevent them storing up excess fat in the body. It is also recommended that adults should make sure they are active 150 minutes a week.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "We're really pleased to be supporting Change4Life's Get Going campaign this year. Getting active is important for all the family. Summer holidays can often be a time where we sit on the sofa a bit too much, so if you want to get your family away from the screen, why not check out what's going on in Cambridgeshire and sign up to try a new activity locally."

To find out what's going on and to sign up for an activity, go to:

<http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx>

Cambridgeshire Libraries launches Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme

A new scheme has been launched in Cambridgeshire Libraries to help people suffering from conditions such as depression and anxiety. Reading Well Books on Prescription was launched nationally earlier this month. It's now being rolled out in libraries across the country and will enable GPs and other health professionals to recommend 30 self-help titles available to borrow.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said "Local health professionals attended a launch in Cambourne last week to learn more about the scheme, which nationally aims to bring healing benefits to six million people with anxiety and depression. There is growing evidence that shows that reading can positively help people with certain mental health conditions."

A14 IMPROVEMENTS WELCOMED

News that major improvements to the A14 are to be funded and start early has been welcomed by campaigning councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships across the East. The group of organisations, brought together by Cambridgeshire County Council, has been campaigning for the much needed improvements to the congested and accident blighted road.

The Government confirmed it would be bringing forward the £1.5 billion project to improve the A14 with a provisional start date of 2016. They said it was strategically important for jobs, housing and growth in the region. The group of Councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships is also helping to fund the scheme after offering a £100million finance package.

The A14 is a nationally and internationally important road and vital for the health of the local and UK economy. But traffic is often at a grinding halt, journey times are unreliable and accidents are common. This puts off businesses from growing or moving here and harms trade and job creation. The A14 is also vital to help bring forward major developments such as Northstowe.

The County Council has campaigned for many years for improvements to the road and has been instrumental in setting up the recent review of the road that has allowed this announcement to be made. The Government also announced that plans for the scheme will be moved forward with a provisional start date of 2016 rather than the previous target date 2018. This was called for by the group of Eastern Region organisations as a requirement of their financial contribution to the scheme.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This is fantastic news and I would like to thank all our partners and the Government for working so closely with us on bringing forward this scheme. Not long ago this was not even on the Government's agenda and it took hard work and lobbying by us and partners to put this back on the table. We now have a golden opportunity to sort out the problems on the A14 once and for all and get our local economy moving and reduce the appalling accident record.

We are very pleased that the Government has listened to our arguments about bringing forward the scheme to an earlier date. Moving people, data and goods around this County effectively is key to continuing our economic success. This announcement gives us light at the end of what has been a very long tunnel. We will now concentrate on working with Government to make sure the scheme is delivered as quickly and effectively as possible."

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COUNTY COUNCIL DOUBLES ITS MONEY FOR LOCAL HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The County Council is doubling the amount of money it makes available for local highway improvements in communities across Cambridgeshire. The Local Highway Improvement initiative (LHI) is a shared approach between the county council and local groups and organisations to improve the highway in their area for the benefit of the community. Parish Councils, community groups or charities are encouraged to submit a project up to the value of £10,000 whilst committing to fund at least 10% of the improvement. Last year more than 50 projects were approved and introduced across the county. Improvements included give way features, zebra crossings, parking restrictions, traffic calming, disabled parking places, interactive signs and reduced speed limits.

Following from last year's success, the County Council has now decided to double the amount of money it makes available for such community-requested schemes. This year £100,000 will be available for schemes in South Cambridgeshire. The total of £550,000 from county council resources will then be boosted by contributions from the local communities themselves.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "I am delighted that the County Council has been able to find extra money, double the amount from last year, from its stretched resources to meet the cost of these improvement schemes which will benefit the whole of Cambridgeshire

SUPERFAST BROADBAND

Connecting Cambridgeshire, BT and Openreach staff are working closely to plan the broadband roll-out.

Keeping you informed about the roll-out

The good news that the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme is on track with survey work in progress in some areas with the first cabinets due to go live before the end of the year has been welcomed as a sign that faster fibre broadband is on the way.

To reach our targets for every community to have access to better broadband by 2015, we have tasked BT with planning the roll-out in the most cost-effective way. Initially, this means targeting those premises that will require the least work to upgrade the infrastructure connecting them to faster broadband services, then expanding out from there.

Openreach's 'When and Where' postcode checker now shows whether a premise is covered by the intervention or the commercial roll-out. Virgin Media's postcode checker also covers some areas

The Connecting Cambridgeshire programme team can be contacted by email at contact@connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk if you have any further queries.

FAIR FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS ANNOUNCEMENT WELCOMED

Campaigners fighting for a fairer deal for Cambridgeshire's schools have welcomed the announcement by Chancellor George Osborne today that a fairer funding system will be in place for 2015-16. Cambridgeshire is currently the worst funded authority in the country for schools - and headteachers and MPs have been campaigning for years to secure a fairer system of funding so Cambridgeshire's schoolchildren do not lose out.

The Chancellor announced in his Spending Review today (June 26) that a national funding formula for schools would be in place for the year 2015-16.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "We are delighted that the continuing lobbying of the Cambridgeshire Schools' Forum, County Councillors and local MPs has finally resulted in a firm commitment to address the low funding issues that have faced Cambridgeshire's schools for far too long. Although we recognise there is still a long way to go for complete equity across the country, the move to introduce a national funding formula from 2015/16 provides some light at the end of the tunnel."

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