Agenda item: 1125.106

Alconbury Brook Flood Group

Project report end of October 2025

Phosphate reduction trials on three farms

Wheat plant: 2 leaf stage

Alconbury Brook suffers from high phosphATE levels which comes from a number of sources and is damaging to freshwater life.

Part of our recent funding for creating freshwater flood mitigation ponds in earmarked for experiments designed to look at phosphATE run-off from soil

Phosphorus is necessary for plants. It enables growth and allows plants to transfer energy from glucose to many of the chemical reactions plant cells need to do.

Alconbury catchment soils contain a lot of phosphATE but plants find it difficult to use it because well over 95% is attached to minerals in the soil.

As a result farmers spend a fortune on applying additional phosphATE fertiliser much of which is subsequently locked up or washed away which is very costly.

If crop plants have larger roots they can take up more phosphATE and are more drought resistant.

If an additive called phosphITE is added in tiny quantities to crop plants early in their lives it induces larger roots.

Bacteria called Phosphate solubilising bacteria make phosphate more available to plants.

Several farms in the Alconbury Brook catchment are using phosphite. Three farms are kindly allowing us to collect material. Volunteers have already started collecting samples.

a) Water from ditches to measure phosphate run-off near fields treated with phosphite and fields not treated
b) Soil from fields from within and beside crop rows to test for phosphate and phosphate solubilising bacteria
c) Sample wheat plants to measure roots (Our AI programme can measure root length, area, number of branches etc from photographs)

And in Summer 2026 we will be looking at crop yields and overall returns.

Agenda item: 1125.107.

Cllr Ian Gardener

Monthly Report November 25

Local Government Reorganisation

The initial three proposals for Local government reorganisation in Cambridgeshire were to create two unitary authorities, which would undertake all the services currently provided by the County & District Councils and the Peterborough unitary.

The Proposals are

Proposal A – Unitary 1 - Peterboro City, Huntingdonshire & Fenland

Unitary 2 – Cambridge City, South Cambs and East Cambs

Proposal B - Unitary 1 – Peterboro City, Huntingdonshire, Fenland and East Cambs

Unitary 2 – Cambridge City & South Cambs

Proposal C - Unitary 1 – Peterborough City, Fenland & East Cambs

Unitary 2 – Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire & South Cambs

There are now Proposals D & E which would split Cambridgeshire & Peterborough into 3 unitary councils which are :

Proposal D - Unitary 1 – Greater Peterborough - Peterborough City & North Hunts including the Alconbury Ward

Unitary 2 - Mid Cambs – Fenland, East Cambs and South Hunts including St Neots, Godmanchester, St Ives & Ramsey

Unitary 3 – Cambridge – Cambridge City & South Cambs

Proposal D sees Huntingdonshire split in two

Huntingdonshire is now proposing an Option E which would be again 3 Unitaries with Huntingdonshire as a Unitary Authority in its own right.

Proposal E - Unitary 1 – Huntingdonshire

Unitary 2 – Peterborough City, Fenland & East Cambs

Unitary 3 - Cambridge City & South Cambs

So, far the various councils are supporting these options –

County Council – Option A

Peterborough City & Fenland – Option D

Cambridge City, South Cambs & East Cambs – Option B

Huntingdonshire Full Council & Cabinet voted to support Option E, which makes Huntingdonshire a Unitary council.

Only those options supported by the Councils and sent to government can be considered by the government.

So now it is Options A, B & D and E that government will have to consider.

The Seven Authorities in Cambridgeshire must put their proposals to Government by the End of November.

Consultation on the proposals will be undertaken between Jan26 and post May 26 elections. Government will then announce its proposal for LGR in Cambridgeshire before the Summer recess, with the necessary legislation being put before Parliament to approve after the Summer 26 recess. With Elections to the new Shadow unitary Authorities taking place in May 27. The new Unitary Authorities will take over running all services in April 28.

Highways

A New Highways reporting system went live on 22nd September

The new system known as Aurora reporting system introduces several improvements that will enhance the customer experience.

All Highways defects should be reported on the County Councils Highways Report It tool so that all faults are logged and can be processed according to severity.

LHI Bids for 26/27 will open on 10th November 25 and close on 16th January 26. Feasibility studies will be undertaken between Feb and May 26 on the bids. With the panel meetings and decision date to be confirmed.

20mph scheme applications will open on 26 January 26 and close on 27th March 26. With the prioritization programme being undertaken between April and July 26. With the successful schemes going for approval at the October 26 Committee meeting.

Stay Safe, warm and Well this Winter

As temperatures begin to drop the County Council has relaunched its #BeWinterWise campaign.

The CC will be sharing practical advice, local support and simple actions that help everyone keep safe, warm and healthy this winter, from winter safety and health advice to cost of living support.

You can follow the campaign on Facebook, Linkedin and Instagram by searching #BeWinterWise. You can keep up to date with the latest travel and traffic updates by following @Cambs_Traffic on X

District Council

Christmas and New Year Collection Services

Please note over the Christmas and New Year Period your waste and recycling collection dates will change. A revised collection calendar can be downloaded from www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins

Regarding Christmas Tree recycling options, you can place in your green bin, providing it fits in the bin. If its too large it will need to be taken to one of the County Council's recycling centres. The centres will close at 1pm on Christmas Eve and will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day

Regarding Weekly Food Waste Collections, these will be starting in April 26. Each household will receive a 7 litre kitchen caddy for food waste storage indoors and a 23 litre external grey food waste caddy for weekly kerbside collection.

You can put all food waste into your kitchen caddy which includes Cooked and Raw Meat and Bones, Dairy products, Eggshells, Fruit and Vegetables, Tea Bags and coffee grounds.

For residents with Communal Waste collections, each household will receive a 7 litre kitchen caddy and you will have access to a shared communal food waste bin which will be emptied weekly.

Local Plan

Regarding HDC's Local Plan update, the Preferred Options Draft of the Local Plan is now out for its 6-week Consultation period which will last until 17th December.

HDC are holding exhibitions across the district, your nearest is in Sawtry at The Old School House, 37 Green End Road, Sawtry PE28 5UY on 3rd December between 2pm & 8pm

In the Draft Preferred Options plan there are 2 sites currently allocated for Alconbury

Brampton Cross is a site within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity, but it is not proposed for allocation within this plan see page 228. However, on the same page the new Local Plan states that Brampton Cross Employment Park could help to assist delivery of the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster.

CIL Funding Round 2 will open on 27th October 25 and close on 19th December 25 with outcomes being known in March 2026. Funding through this route is orientated towards growth.

The District Council Elections next year will be held on Thursday May 7th 2026.

As a result, the District Council is holding a Be a Councillor Event on Tuesday 9th December @7pm in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon. For anyone interested in becoming a councillor.

Cllr Ian Gardener – CCC Alconbury & Kimbolton Division, HDC – Alconbury Ward

Alconbury Parish Council

Prepared by: Alison Brown (Clerk& RFO) Date: 10th November 2025

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: Cllr Tracy Gilbert (Chair) Date: 25th November 2025

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 31/10/2025			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2025			76,745.24
	ADD			
	Receipts 01/04/2025 - 31/10/2025			49,943.18
				126,688.42
	SUBTRACT			
	Payments 01/04/2025 - 31/10/2025			32,731.36
A	**Cash in Hand 31/10/2025** (per Cash Book)			**93,957.06**
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	31/10/2025	0.00	
	Unity Trust Bank Current T1	31/10/2025	56,348.11	
	Unity Trust Bank Instant Access	31/10/2025	37,608.95	
				93,957.06
	Less unpresented payments			
				93,957.06
	Plus unpresented receipts			
B	**Adjusted Bank Balance**			**93,957.06**
	A = B Checks out OK			

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