

Parish e-bulletin: Issue 1 – 1 September 2015

Welcome to the first edition of our parish e-bulletin. It includes information and news from across Cambridgeshire County Council that you may want to discuss and pass on to your residents. Please also feel free to pass this onto editors of your village newsletter.

1. The Home Front: Cambridgeshire Commemorates

Cambridgeshire has been commemorating the 70th anniversary of end of World War II this summer with events and activities taking place across the county giving residents an opportunity to learn and reminisce about war time Britain. The Home Front: Cambridgeshire Commemorates the End of World War II, is being coordinated by us alongside Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Council's. Find out more at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ww2

There will be an exhibition touring the county, displaying memories and images collected through projects run by us, the Museum of Cambridge and Age UK Cambridgeshire. The exhibition will be displayed in museums and libraries across Cambridgeshire from September 2015 to February 2016.

2. Save money this Autumn with the Cambridgeshire energy switch

The Cambridgeshire Energy Switch launches for the fifth time this autumn, giving you the chance to save money on your energy bills.

It uses the collective bargaining power of residents to bid for better gas and electricity prices. Unlike 'comparison websites', it is totally independent with no vested interests. It is open to all Cambridgeshire residents, including those on either credit or pre-payment meters.

Registration will be open from Tuesday 1 September until midnight on Monday 12 October. Registration is free and without obligation. Following registration, energy suppliers will be given the opportunity to compete for business and provide their best tariffs for electricity and/or gas, for the collective group of residents registered with the scheme.

To register, residents will need to know their current energy supplier, their current tariff found on their bill and their household's annual gas and/or electricity usage. Registering does not commit households to switching supplier; residents can choose not to switch once they have received their offer. Residents who have previously registered, can renew their registration and participate if their contract is now complete.

Visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/switch for more or contact 01223 703874, energy.switch@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

3. Free eNewspapers, eAudio books and eMagazine from Cambridgeshire Libraries

Did you know you can read thousands of free eNewspapers without leaving your home? Our eNewspaper collection brings many national daily (Daily Express, Daily Mail, The Independent etc) international and local newspapers right to your doorstep. All are available to read using your PC, phone or tablet.

Our free eAudio book collection has grown too with two brand new services available from BorrowBox and Ulverscroft. That means that, along with our OneClick Digital catalogue, there are over 2500 free eAudio books to download and enjoy!

If that's not enough, you can also download and read free eMagazines. There are over 40 to choose from including BBC Good Food, BBC Gardeners' World, Cycling Weekly, Good Housekeeping, What Car? and many more.

All you need to access these fantastic services is a free library card. To get yours or to start reading, visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library

4. New Covenant Fund means communities can help local armed forces

Local organisations can do their bit to help the armed forces community with the launch of a new fund worth £10 million by the Ministry of Defence.

As part of the national Covenant Fund, small grants worth £20,000 and larger ones up to £500,000 will be available for projects to help service personnel, veterans and anyone with a connection to the armed forces living around Cambridgeshire.

For more details and to apply see www.gov.uk/government/publications/covenant-fund-guidance-on-how-to-apply

5. Scams

Last month officers from our Supporting Businesses and Communities service took part in the national Scam Awareness Month. The campaign aimed to raise awareness of scams and prevent residents from becoming a victim. You can read more about scams on our website here www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20113/scams or for further advice contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06.

Officers are also supporting Home Instead, a Cambridge care company, with a scams awareness event they are organising. It's due to take place on 30 September at Queen Edith Chapel on Wulfstan Way, Cambridge and is aimed at anyone who comes into contact or who looks out for elderly and vulnerable people. For more information contact mike.francis@homeinstead.co.uk

6. Gas Safety Week – October

The 14-20 October is Gas Safety Week. The aim is to raise awareness of gas safety in the home. It's important that you have your gas appliances safety checked every year and serviced regularly. Unsafe gas appliances put you at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, gas leaks, fires and explosions. Always use a Gas Safe registered engineer (ask for their ID card and check it – you can check that they are registered at www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

7. Cambridgeshire Timebanking – Exchanging Time, Connecting Lives

What is Timebanking? People exchange time and skills (not money) within their community (this could be gardening or IT support for example) and it is part of the increasingly popular 'sharing economy'. There are currently five Timebanks in Cambridgeshire, with over 12,000 hours exchanged and almost 500 individual members.

The Cambridgeshire Timebanking Partnership is holding a free event on Thursday 27 October 7-9m at Newnham College as part of Cambridge University Festival of Ideas programme for people to find out more. It's sponsored by Mills and Reeve LLP. Book your place today by visiting www.eventbrite.co.uk and search 'Cambridgeshire Timebanking' or email zoe.davidson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk, phone on 01223 699672 or follow us on Twitter @TimebankCambs to keep up to date on our activities.

8. Natural Cambridgeshire

Natural Cambridgeshire, the Local Nature Partnership, for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is developing a pilot project that aims to demonstrate the benefits of being physically active in the natural environment. As part of this we are carrying out a 'mapping' exercise to see if there are already any naturally active projects happening in the county. This could include health walks, gardening or allotment activities, practical conservation activities, cycling schemes or other activities based on a nature reserve, park or green space. We would be very interested in what's happening in your Parish. For more information or to send in details contact phil.clark@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or nutan.patel@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk