

Lib Dem Altered Motion to Agenda Item 10a: Proposed by Councillor Hauk, Seconded by Councillor Payne.

This alteration includes both the Labour and Green proposed amendments to the Motion.

Changes can be seen in colour.

Council notes:

That many residents move into new developments expecting to become part of established communities yet can spend many years living with unresolved issues such as roads awaiting new markings or safety features, waiting for adequate street lighting, lack of facilities and upkeep of open spaces, play areas, drainage, signage and other community infrastructure such as health provision, community spaces and libraries.

That responsibility for such infrastructure is often divided between developers, management companies, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and other public bodies. As a result, residents can face considerable difficulty in identifying who owns or maintains particular assets, who is responsible for resolving issues, whether infrastructure is intended for adoption, and what barriers remain to adoption.

Council recognises that adoption of highways, open spaces and other infrastructure can only occur where the relevant standards have been met and the responsible authority is satisfied that legal and technical requirements have been fulfilled.

That lengthy periods of uncertainty and unclear accountability can delay the resolution of problems, reduce confidence in the stewardship of developments and undermine trust in the planning and delivery of new communities.

That Cambridge City Council already works with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council and local ward councillors to help resolve issues where appropriate, recognising that statutory responsibilities remain with the relevant landowner, developer, management company or adopting authority.

That not all infrastructure is intended to be adopted by a public authority and, in some developments, the long-term management of open spaces and communal infrastructure by management companies or trusts is an intended outcome secured through the planning process. In such cases, transparency over ownership, maintenance responsibilities and resident engagement is particularly important.

Council believes:

That residents should be able to understand who is responsible for the places in which they live, how issues can be reported, and what progress is being made towards long-term management and adoption arrangements.

That improving transparency, accountability and communication on existing developments will help build public confidence in the delivery and stewardship of future developments and demonstrate that growth is accompanied by clear responsibilities and effective community engagement.

That the City Council's powers in relation to privately managed developments are limited and many responsibilities rest with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, statutory undertakers and other public bodies. The Council's role is therefore to influence, coordinate and advocate where appropriate rather than to direct or assume responsibility for infrastructure owned or managed by others.

That residents living on existing developments should benefit from improved transparency and communication now, using the powers, partnerships and information already available to the City Council and its partner organisations, rather than waiting for future governance arrangements to be established.

That Cambridge is a growing city that will continue to see significant housing and infrastructure development in the coming years, and in future that this is proposed to be the responsibility of a Development Corporation.

Council therefore requests that the Leader works with relevant officers to make clear and timely representations to the Cambridge Growth Company Development Corporation on behalf of the council, as the Dev Co establishes itself and its role in larger developments, to request that any proposals include:

1. Working with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, and the Cambridge City Council Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to improve, for residents, transparency, accountability and coordination between the relevant responsible organisations.

2. Exploring the establishment of a code of engagement for developers and management companies operating occupied developments within the city;
3. Considering mechanisms to ensure residents have access to clear and publicly accessible information on:
 - o ownership and maintenance responsibilities for community infrastructure;
 - o adoption intentions and adoption status;
 - o clear signposting to routes for addressing issues;
 - o barriers preventing adoption or transfer to public or private bodies;
 - o expected timescales for resolution where known, and
 - Property Management Company governance models which make estate management providers directly accountable to residents for performance against specified services, standards and agreed budgets.
4. Exploring mechanisms to improve visibility of progress on issues, including response and progress monitoring, making use of existing reporting systems wherever possible.
5. Exploring the creation of a publicly accessible source of information for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available, information on ownership, maintenance responsibilities, adoption status, reporting routes and the organisations responsible for resolving issues.
6. Considering how successful elements of any code could be incorporated into future planning policy, planning conditions, management arrangements or **future** Local Plan policies for major developments.

In addition, in the near term, Council requests that the Leader works with **planning** officers, and with relevant cross party ~~ward and planning~~ members to:

1. Identify opportunities **working with relevant partners** to reduce unnecessary delays in the current adoption of infrastructure by the relevant public and private bodies and to highlight any barriers that may require further action by local government, developers or management companies;

2. To remind developers and management companies of their responsibilities to maintain positive engagement throughout the development of new sites and once these are established;
3. To consider whether existing planning guidance, supplementary planning guidance and conditions could be strengthened to bring this forward;

4. Within existing resources and in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, developers and management companies, explore the establishment of a publicly accessible information resource for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available from the relevant responsible organisations listing:

- who is responsible for maintaining key infrastructure;
- whether roads, open spaces and drainage are intended for adoption;
- the current stage of any adoption process;
- how residents can report issues; and
- the organisation responsible for responding.

Consider how the stewardship of open spaces, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems can be strengthened during the period between occupation of developments and formal adoption or transfer, including:

- ensuring public open spaces are maintained to an appropriate environmental standard before transfer;
- protecting biodiversity features and ecological enhancements during the period before adoption; and
- ensuring sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure are properly maintained and monitored throughout the transition from developer responsibility to the adopting body.

5. To report back to the relevant scrutiny committee ~~Council~~ within six months with an update on progress on all of the above.

Green altered motion incorporating Liberal Democrat and Labour amendments to Agenda Item 10b: Proposed by Councillor Toye-Scott, Seconded by Councillor Nicmanis
Existing text struck through, additional text highlighted in colour

~~1 — Introduction (not part of active motion)~~

~~The Green Group proposes the following motion to address resident concerns over the state of our rivers and chalk stream—~~

~~We regard the river as an integral part of the life of our city. Threats to our rivers are threats to us all.~~

~~The purpose of this motion is to:~~

- ~~• state our city's aspirations for our river and chalk streams ("the declaration of the Rights of the River Cam")~~
- ~~• petition the organisations responsible for our river to improve their performance to help save our river and its tributaries.~~
- ~~• recognise the limits placed by the critically depleted state of our river on future growth in buildings and infrastructure.~~
- ~~• publicise the immediacy of the water crisis, creating awareness of the need to reduce water use.~~

Active Motion

1 Declaration of the Rights of the River Cam

This council declares that the River Cam and its tributaries should have the following rights arising from their existence in nature:

- The right to flow and be free from over-abstraction
- The right to perform essential functions of flooding, moving sediment, recharging groundwater and sustaining biodiversity
- The right to be free from pollution
- The right to feed and be fed by sustainable aquifers
- The right to native biodiversity
- The right to restoration
- The right to maintain connections with other streams and rivers

~~This council undertakes to assess the impact of all its decisions on the health of the river and ensure that all its decisions support these rights.~~

~~This Council calls on all residents and organisations to act as guardians of the River Cam and engage with the river in a relationship of respect and stewardship.~~

This Council recognises the River Cam and its tributaries as vital environmental, ecological, recreational and cultural assets and so will continue to have regard to the impact of its decisions on the health of the river, consistent with its statutory duties, powers and responsibilities.

Cambridge City Council is a significant riverbank landowner and undertakes riverbank management, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage, flood resilience, public access management, river infrastructure projects and partnership working to improve the River Cam.

2 Responsibility

This Council notes that ~~the responsible bodies are:~~ responsibility for the health of the River Cam is shared between:

- the Environment Agency – general oversight, including preventing environmental damage to water and associated biodiversity
- Cambridge Water – ensuring adequate water supply
- Anglian Water – management and treatment of sewage
- the Conservators of the River Cam - the statutory navigation authority for the river, responsible for the locks, weirs and sluices that hold up the water level of the Cam
- Natural England
- the University of Cambridge and its Colleges
- riverbank landowners including the City Council
- and local communities.

The Council proposes to write to all three of these bodies to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

~~The Council further notes that there are other bodies and institutions whose actions have significant impacts on the health of the river, and particularly highlights the importance of:~~

~~• The University of Cambridge and its associated colleges, through the maintenance of their assets and the management of their activities~~

~~The Cambridge Development Corporation~~

~~The Council proposes to write to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and the Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.~~

The Council further notes that the Cambridge Development Corporation – through its influence over the scale, location and water efficiency of new development, ~~there are other bodies and institutions whose actions~~ will have significant impacts on the health of the river, and ~~particularly highlights the importance of:~~

~~— The University of Cambridge and its associated colleges, through the maintenance of their assets and the management of their activities—
The Cambridge Development Corporation—~~

So ~~the Council proposes to write to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and the Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.~~

3. Interaction with the Council's own actions and the growth of the city

~~The Council proposes to set up a small cross-party group to draw up a plan for the actions that it can specifically undertake to contribute to protection of the river. This will include:~~

- ~~— considering the impact of future growth in buildings and infrastructure in the city on the depleted state of our river—~~
- ~~— recognising the limits that may be necessary to respect the rights of the river—~~
- ~~— reporting back to full Council preferably prior to updating the Local Plan.~~

requests an officer report to be presented to one of the council's overview and scrutiny committees to review current Council activity, partnership arrangements, opportunities for improvement and alignment with the Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy and Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

The group **Officers** will consult with the various environmental organisations currently actively involved in working for the improved health of the river. For the avoidance of doubt, it is intended that this group will supplement rather than displace the work of existing scrutiny committees.

Council notes the extensive evidence prepared to support the Greater Cambridge Local Plan on water scarcity, abstraction reduction and sustainable growth. These matters have been considered throughout the

Local Plan process and will be reported to scrutiny committee and to Full Council as part of the Submission Local Plan. All future development should continue to be informed by evidence demonstrating sustainable water supplies, reduced abstraction, water efficiency and environmental capacity.

~~The Council proposes to initiate a publicity campaign to create wide awareness of the current water crisis and the urgent need to address both the increasing over-abstraction of water and the decreasing quality of water.~~ supports continued collaboration through the Cambridge Water Scarcity Group, Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project, Water Resources East, the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water and the Conservators of the River Cam and will work to promote all communication campaigns regarding water quality and scarcity using the council's media channels and press releases.

The Council will actively publicise the Environment Agency's recommendations to take early action (e.g, water companies to reduce leakage as a priority, and initiate actions required under their drought plans), and encourage the public to do all it can to use water wisely.

4 What the River Cam needs

This Council believes that the aspirations set out in Section 1 must be matched by action.

4.1 Water in the river

This Council notes that Cambridge Water introduced a temporary hosepipe ban on 9 July 2026, enforceable from 17 July - the first in over thirty years; that the Environment Agency declared the Cam and Ely Ouse catchment to be in prolonged dry weather on 22 June 2026; and that new supply for the Cambridge area is not expected from the Grafham Water transfer until 2032, or from the Fens Reservoir until the mid-2030s.

This Council further notes that the emerging Local Plan phases new development against the arrival of that infrastructure, but that no equivalent plan exists to improve water efficiency in the years before it arrives. This Council therefore resolves to:

- request a report to the relevant committee on water efficiency within the Council's own estate and its council housing retrofit programme, so that homes retrofitted for carbon are also retrofitted for water;
- support Cambridge Water's programme to reduce leakage and demand, and press for the Grafham Water transfer to be brought forward wherever possible;
- work with Cambridgeshire County Council on over-abstraction and on the restoration of the chalk streams of the Cam catchment.

4.2 Sewage out of the river

This Council notes that consent for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant was granted in April 2025 but the funding for the escalation costs for it was withdrawn in August 2025, with no funded alternative brought forward by the government since; and that the emerging Local Plan, and the scrutiny committees of both councils, identify wastewater treatment capacity as the principal unresolved risk to the health of the river. No local plan, however carefully prepared, can build a treatment works with a withdrawn cheque. This Council therefore resolves to:

- call on Anglian Water to resolve the uncertainty it has created, and to fund a treatment solution for Greater Cambridge;
- press Anglian Water for a published timetable for the upgrade of the Haslingfield Water Recycling Centre, and for the reduction of storm overflow discharges into the Cam and its tributaries;
- use the water quality data from the Designated Bathing Area at Sheep's Green to demand action.

4.3 Locks that work

This Council notes that Baits Bite Lock and Jesus Green Lock were closed in June 2024 because of the risk of structural failure; that Baits Bite has since been stabilised following a £500,000 grant led by the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, which met around one third of the cost, with the Conservators meeting the rest from their own reserves; that Jesus Green Lock remains at risk and full reconstruction is estimated at over £5 million per lock; and that the Conservators, funded principally through navigation charges, have stated that they do not have the money. Comparable navigations elsewhere in England receive government funding for their infrastructure. The River Cam receives none. This Council therefore resolves to:

- write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs seeking a sustainable, long-term funding settlement for the Conservators of the River Cam, and asking the Government to set out how navigation infrastructure of national significance is to be funded where it sits outside the Environment Agency and Canal & River Trust estates;
- write to the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to welcome the funding secured for Baits Bite Lock and to seek his support in securing the future of Jesus Green Lock;
- request a report on this Council's powers under the legislation governing the Conservators to contribute to their funding, and on the

liability arrangements preventing the recruitment of new
Conservators;

~~End of Active Motion~~

~~-~~

~~Background Notes (not part of active motion):~~

~~-~~

~~1. In late 2025 the Environment Agency announced (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drought-prospects-for-spring-2026/executive-summary-and-acknowledgements-drought-prospects-for-spring-2026>) that, unless we have average rainfall or more this winter, there will again be drought this year, with the area including Cambridge highlighted as being particularly vulnerable.~~

~~-~~

~~2. On 22 June 2026, the Environment Agency announced that the Cam and Ely Ouse catchment has been declared in an area of Prolonged Dry Weather, after East Anglia received only 37% of the long-term average rainfall over the past three months.~~

~~-~~

~~3. On Midsummer's Day in 2021, Friends of the River Cam made the first public declaration in the UK of the rights of the River at Jesus Green, linked to the Universal Declaration of River Rights: <https://www.rightsofrivers.org>~~

~~-~~

~~4. The declaration is repeated on Midsummer's Day each year and is repeated in the text of this motion.~~

~~-~~

~~5. The declaration of rights is supported by many of our local environmental and community groups including CPRE, FeCRA, Cambridge Friends of the Earth, Save Honey Hill, Keep Waterbeach Rural, Friends of Logan's Meadow, Friends of Cherry Hinton and Coldhams Brooks, and many others.~~

~~-~~

~~6. In 2023 Lewes District Council passed a Rights of Rivers Motion to protect the River Ouse in East Sussex. Momentum has been growing globally to extend legal rights to nature and in some cases specifically to rivers.~~

~~<https://democracy.leweseastbourne.gov.uk/documents/s27490/Motion%20-%20Rights%20of%20the%20River.pdf>~~

-
~~Councillors Toye-Scott and Nicmanis wish to thank the Friends of the River Cam and representatives from a number of local environmental groups for their help in putting this motion together. Any errors or omissions are of course our own.~~

This page is intentionally left blank

Cllr Baigent altered motion incorporating Labour Amendment highlighted in red to Agenda Item 10d: Proposed by Councillor Baigent, Seconded by Councillor TBC

This Council commits ~~resolves that in line with its aspirations~~ to keep building more council homes to achieve the highest quality and affordability ~~most affordable homes in Cambridge,~~ in order to help tackle the housing crisis in Cambridge and to reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation or on the housing register. From the date of this resolution being agreed that no residential development in which the Council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role shall proceed unless it achieves the following standards

- ~~on across~~ all sites, as per the Portfolio Strategy of 10 or more dwellings that at least ~~40%~~ 50% of the homes shall be affordable homes, with rents set as follows:
 - 10% at social rent: 40% - ~~45%~~ of the median market rent
 - 65% at affordable rent: 60% of the median market rent
 - 25% at intermediate rent: 80% of the median market rent

This Council notes that the Labour government has now prioritised funding for social rents, so for schemes being built with grant funding from Homes England - this tenure mix will be changed to 60% of council homes for social rent (45% of market rent) and 40% at intermediate rent (80% of market rent).

Furthermore, this Council resolves that on any development that this council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role:

1. All homes shall be developed to the ~~highest recognised sustainability standard at the time that they are built.~~ Council's Sustainable Housing Design Guide which targets CamStandard for council homes being built now and to net zero standard from 2030.
2. ~~No single aspect homes shall be built.~~ Layouts must prioritise providing dual aspect homes and avoid single aspect where possible, whilst also ensuring for a maximum number of council homes to be built
3. As per current planning policy all sites shall have disabled parking, by right.
4. Subject to the provision of disabled parking, all developments shall be designed following the Cambridge sustainable housing design guide with a target of 0.5 car parking spaces per home. ~~as car free by default.~~
Where possible, car parking ~~is considered necessary,~~ it shall be provided in a separate stand-alone car park (so that in due course this can gradually be used for building more homes).
5. Any ~~No~~ council land, or property, ~~shall be that is due to be sold without the approval of the full Council~~ will be done so, as per the Council's constitution.