

PRESS RELEASE

Date: **25-Oct-2022**
For immediate use

First Warm Hubs now open in Cambridgeshire to help ease the burden of the cost-of-living crisis

The first Warm Hubs have opened their doors across Cambridgeshire this week – part of the new initiative designed to support communities in East and South Cambridgeshire this winter.

In East Cambridgeshire, Warm Hubs at Haddenham, Soham and Little Thetford were the first locations to open their doors. Hubs at Ely, Burwell and Stetchworth will shortly follow suit and more Warm Hubs in East Cambridgeshire will open their doors by the end of November.

In South Cambridgeshire, the first Warm Hubs have opened this week at Gamlingay and Caldecote. Hardwick, Cottenham and Comberton will be the next villages to see Warm Hubs open their doors, with more to follow later in November too.

Operated from community buildings across East and South Cambridgeshire, Warm Hubs are designed to support vulnerable and isolated people, as well as those on lower incomes; at a time when the cost of living is a significant challenge.

The new initiative has been developed by East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils and funded by NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, part of our local Integrated Care System. As an affiliated network, the Warm Hubs are coordinated by Cambridgeshire ACRE – the charity dedicated to supporting and strengthening rural communities across Cambridgeshire.

Operating at the heart of local communities, the Warm Hubs concept has been designed to offer warm, friendly and inclusive places with access to light refreshments. Hubs also provide residents with somewhere to socialise, take part in activities and receive information on how to

reduce bills, access financial support, and stay healthy and well. The activities and services available at Warm Hubs are operated by trained volunteers from within the local area; individuals who are uniquely positioned to understand the needs of the local communities.

Commenting on the launch of Warm Hubs, Julia Huffer, who chairs the Operational Services Committee at East Cambridgeshire District Council, said:

“The rising cost of living is having an impact on everyone and we understand that many residents may feel they are struggling to cope. We are really fortunate in East Cambs because we have strong partnerships in place which rally round to provide help as it’s needed.”

“The Warm Hubs which we are able to provide will offer residents somewhere to go that is safe, that is warm and where they can get advice and support to help them through the cost-of-living crisis.”

Continuing with views on the Warm Hubs launch, South Cambridgeshire District Council’s Lead Cabinet Member for Communities, Cllr Bill Handley, said:

“We are acutely aware of the challenges residents are facing as a result of the cost-of-living crisis and we want to do everything we can to help. These Warm Hubs will give South Cambridgeshire residents, especially those who are vulnerable or isolated, somewhere warm to visit during the colder months when we’ll all be feeling the strain of higher energy prices. There will also be places where residents can access support and advice to help people reduce their bills, ensure they are claiming all the financial support they are entitled to and getting helpful tips on staying active.”

“We would encourage anyone who would find it helpful to access these Hubs and the support and activities they offer. We’re grateful to the funding provided by the NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System which has allowed us to make this happen.”

Commenting on Cambridgeshire ACRE’s role in facilitating the development of Warm Hubs, its Chief Executive, Kirsten Bennett, said:

“As a membership organisation, Cambridgeshire ACRE represents a growing number of community groups across Cambridgeshire and we're delighted that so many of these community groups have stepped forward to open up their local spaces and offer Warm Hub volunteers. We're expecting up to 100 volunteers to be part of the Warm Hubs network when it's fully operational; all trained and supported by the Cambridgeshire ACRE team.”

Overall funding has been provided by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System. Speaking of the Warm Hubs initiative, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS), Kit Connick, Chief Officer Strategy and Partnerships of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System, said:

“Helping people to stay well this winter is a priority for us all this year, which is why we are pleased to support Warm Hubs across East and South Cambridgeshire and beyond.

“Working together, with our council and voluntary sector partners, these hubs will be spaces for people to come together; not just as a warm space this winter, but to provide support and advice on a range of matters, including advice on their health and wellbeing, in a welcoming, friendly community atmosphere.”

Warm Hubs are running from November 2022 to support local residents during the winter and will be open until the end of March 2023. The initiative forms part of a wider package of measures from East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils to help residents with the cost-of-living crisis.

Residents can visit the new Warm Hubs Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/WarmHubsCams>) to see the full list of current and future Warm Hub locations and their hours of operation. For wider community support, residents can also contact East Cambridgeshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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Notes to Editors overleaf

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1. About Warm Hubs

Warm Hubs is a collaborative initiative designed to support residents across East and South Cambridgeshire this winter.

Run within existing community spaces, local residents can visit a safe, warm and friendly environment to enjoy refreshments and social activity, obtain information and advice, and delight in the company of others. The network of Warm Hubs is truly community-led; coordinated and hosted by trained volunteers within the heart of local communities.

<https://www.cambsacre.org.uk/what-we-do-cambridgeshire-acre/warms-hubs/>

2. About East Cambridgeshire District Council

East Cambridgeshire District Council is supporting the development of Warm Hubs in East Cambridgeshire from funds provided by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System. Further advice and information is also available here: [Cost of Living | East Cambridgeshire District Council \(eastcambs.gov.uk\)](#)

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk>

3. About South Cambridgeshire District Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council continues to highlight to residents the support available from the Council itself, and further afield, to help them cope with the rising cost of living. South Cambridgeshire District Council's four Business Plan priorities are:

- Growing local businesses and economies. We will support businesses of all sizes, including rural enterprise and farming, to help create new jobs and opportunities near to where people live and support the local economy to recover post-pandemic.
- Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in. We will build vibrant communities in locations where people have good access to facilities and transport links, so they can genuinely afford to lead a happy and healthy life.
- Being green to our core. We will create a cleaner, greener and zero-carbon future for our communities.

- A modern and caring Council. We will provide our customers with high-quality services, strive to reduce costs, build on what we are good at to generate our own income and make decisions in a transparent, open and inclusive way.

South Cambridgeshire District Council is supporting the development of Warm Hubs in South Cambridgeshire from funds provided by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk>

4. About Cambridgeshire ACRE

Cambridgeshire ACRE is an independent organisation and a registered charity that's part of the national ACRE Network of 38 similar organisations in England. With its vision to see thriving rural communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the aim of Cambridgeshire ACRE is to help rural communities seize opportunities and drive their projects forward, which includes improving their access to services, information and funding.

Cambridgeshire ACRE has been awarded the contract to deliver Warm Hubs in East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire by East Cambridgeshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

<http://www.cambsacre.org.uk>

5. About Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS)

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS) is working together to improve the health and wellbeing of our local people throughout their lives.

We bring together health and care organisations, including NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, as well as local councils, alongside Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations to make a real difference to the lives of local people and communities.

<https://www.cpics.org.uk>