



The Fenlander is a regular bulletin from Fenland District Council updating on council news, events and services.

Local elections are almost here

How would you feel if all decisions relating you your local area were taken without you? Should you choose not to vote in upcoming local elections that's the decision you're taking. **If you're not registered to vote, act now!** Only two days remain to register.

This month, in addition to preparing to support the county council and mayoral elections, we're, as always, continuing to deliver the services and support we're responsible for, both the statutory services, including things like bin collections, and the additional things our teams work on for local communities.

Among the additional services this month, we've supported the **Fenland Poet Laureate Awards** and seen new winners crowned. Groups of determined individuals have been helped to improve their health and wellbeing through the **Active Fenland programme of free and low-cost exercise and social activities**. And final preparations are now being made for this year's first Fenland Four Seasons event **St George's Fayre, in March**. Don't miss it!

Some of the efforts we've highlighted in recent weeks include the **clearance of a fly-tipping hotspot** and **action taken against owners of eyesore buildings**.

Remember, you can **witness the debates and details of the decisions** taken by Fenland District Council by watching live or catching up with our council meetings. And you can even bid to be a part of the work we do by looking out for **opportunities to work with us**.

Discover more details on all these things and more in this month's The Fenlander. And, if you find this monthly update informative and useful, please remember to tell others about it so they can benefit too. **Hit one of the share buttons** at the bottom of the newsletter to share it instantly on social media.



Photo above: They did it! Wisbech couch to 5k graduates after their final session, with, kneeling centre, coach Gary Bligh and, kneeling, right, Active Fenland's Dawn Goodley

Couch to 5k running class graduates never thought they'd be able to do it - but now they can and you could too!

A grandma who never thought she'd run again, and a brain tumour survivor battling back to health, were among the recent graduates from a free Fenland 'couch to 5k' running programme - and you could be in the next cohort.

A near-octogenarian seasoned marathon runner, who found the support and encouragement of a friendly sociable group motivating, was also among the Active Fenland group, many of whom never expected to progress from walking the route.

Bookings are now open for the next 12-week blocks of free couch to 5k weekly one-hour running sessions - available in March and Wisbech.

The sessions allow people to progress at their own pace, building up from gentle walking to, as is right for them, intermittent or sustained jogging or running.

Active Fenland is also offering family running sessions, as one-off sessions or a course, open to adults with children aged eight and above.

Be ready for elections on May 1

Elections will be held in Fenland on May 1 to appoint councillors to Cambridgeshire County Council, and a mayor to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

Anyone not yet registered to vote has until 11.59pm on Friday (April 11) to [register](#) in time to vote in May's election.

All voters are now required to show voter identification in order to vote at a polling station.

Further details on acceptable forms of photo ID and applying for a free Voter Authority Certificate if you have no suitable form of photographic identity can be found on our [Voter ID website page](#).

Please remember to opt in now if you'd like to [vote by post](#). You must submit your application by 5pm, 11 working days before polling day.

We recommend that postal votes are returned to us via Royal Mail, in the pre-paid envelope included with the ballot papers, as soon as possible before polling day. We can no longer accept postal votes left in the letterbox at the council offices



Council Meetings

Council committees meet regularly to discuss and decide upon issues in Fenland.

You can view a [calendar of the upcoming meetings](#) and agendas on our website and watch the meetings live [on YouTube](#).

<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/elections2025>

2025 Fenland Poet Laureate crowned

It was a night of celebration and literary excellence as the 2025 Fenland Poet Laureate Awards honoured the district's finest poetic talent.

With 71 entries across two age categories, this year proved to be one of the hardest to judge, reflecting the depth and quality of writers across Fenland.

But at the awards ceremony at March Town Hall on March 21, it was Felix Dawson who was unanimously crowned Fenland Poet Laureate, for his inspirational poem 'I know what the fizmer says'.

And in the Young Fenland Poet Laureate category it was Isla Jackson, from Wisbech Grammar School, who took the title with her poem 'When', which demonstrated skill and insight well beyond her 15 years.

Read all the winning and shortlisted entries at: [2025 Fenland Poet Laureate Awards](#)

Photos below, top left: 2025 Fenland Poet Laureate Felix Dawson. Top, right: Third prize winner Paul Dance and runner-up Toni Fell.

Bottom: Young Fenland Poet Laureate Isla Jackson (centre) with runner-up Meredith Killick (left) and third prize winner Tilly Myers (right).

Ceremony photos: Tim Chapman



Don't miss St George's Fayre on Sunday, April 27

A packed programme of fun and entertainment will unfold in March town centre with St George's Fayre on Sunday, April 27.

Everyone is welcome, 10am to 4pm, and much of the entertainment is free.

The event kicks off with a parade to the town centre, leaving from March Community Centre, Robingoodfellow's Lane, at 10am.

Market Place, Broad Street and West End Park will be filled with attractions on the day and closed to motorists. Activities will also be hosted inside March library, in City Road, and March Museum, in High Street.

Parking in the town centre is limited and visitors are encouraged to walk, cycle or travel by public transport where possible. March train station is a 15-minute walk from the event.

Some town centre roads will be closed from 5am to 7.30pm. Road closures will be advertised closer to the time.

Fenland District Council's City Road and Darthill Road car parks will be available for parking. Market Place and George Campbell Leisure Centre car park will be closed to motorists.



Photo above: Last year's March's St George's event



Jobs

Keep an eye on our **current vacancies** for opportunities to work with us and make a difference, with many roles offering flexible working arrangements.

Current vacancies include an opportunity to **join our community safety team**, perfect for an excellent communicator and problem solver, passionate about helping people and wanting to make a difference.

Fly-tipping hotspot cleared of lorry loads of waste

A fly-tipping hot spot has been cleared of the equivalent of around one-and-a-half bin lorries full of dumped household goods, furniture, commercial waste and other junk.

Fenland District Council cleared the site in South Brink, Wisbech, and put in place measures in a bid to deter more waste being dumped there, including a soil bund to make vehicle access more difficult for would-be fly-tippers.

A total of 15 tonnes of dumped rubbish was removed from the section of road that leads to the A47.

The council has taken 21 reports of fly tips in the area in the last six months. Attempts were made to clear rubbish on each occasion, but it wasn't always possible to get full access to clear everything.





Pictures, top: 'Before' Fly-tipping at South Brink, Wisbech. Bottom: 'After' Fly-tipping site cleared at South Brink, Wisbech.

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of rubbish or bulky items. It pollutes land and waterways and costs the taxpayer significant amounts of money to clear away.

The district council can issue a fixed penalty of up to £1,000 to those who fly-tip and, in more serious cases, can pursue prosecution at court. A fly-tipping prosecution can lead to an unlimited fine and a prison sentence.

Find information on reporting fly-tipping and on getting rid of waste responsibly at our [fly-tipping web page](#).



Active Fenland promotes and provides informal and fun sport and physical activity sessions in community settings in Fenland.

Sign up for adult weight loss and family running sessions

Don't miss the free Active for Health sessions for adults who want to lose weight, which have been added to the wide-ranging Active Fenland programme of free and low cost wellbeing and fitness classes.

Free family running sessions are also now underway.

The Active Fenland programme includes everything from fall prevention strength and balance classes for older people to gentle wellbeing walks.

Discover the details at: [Active Fenland latest activities](#)



fenland
forbusiness



Looking to start, grow or relocate your business? Our **Fenland for Business** team can offer free and impartial advice.



Business Premises

Starting or expanding your business? Looking for affordable offices or factory units? We can help. Our business premises and industrial units are ideal for small and start-up businesses.

- **The Boathouse Business Centre**
The Boathouse overlooks the marina in Wisbech. It is just a short walk from the town centre and is easily accessible from the A47.
- **South Fens Business Centre**
South Fens Business Centre, in Chatteris, is next to the A141 and A142 - offering easy access to Ely, March, Huntingdon, Cambridge and beyond.

Owner of eyesore property fined after council prosecution

A property owner who ignored a legal notice to clean up a derelict building has been ordered to pay over £1,700 in court fines and costs.

Nitesh Somani was prosecuted by Fenland District Council for failing to comply with a Section 215 Notice in relation to Strathmore House in Fridaybridge Road, Elm.

The Council served the notice on Mr Somani in March 2024 after investigating concerns from members of the public about the state of the property and the impact it was having on the community.

The notice required the owner to tidy up the overgrown vegetation, board up windows and doors in the building, remove waste from the land and secure the fencing across the front of the property to prevent trespassing.

Mr Somani failed to carry out any remedial works and legal proceedings began.

At Peterborough Magistrates' Court on March 12, the owner was found guilty in his absence of failing to comply with the Section 215 Notice and fined £660. He was also ordered to pay £800 costs and a victim surcharge of £264.

Mr Somani must still comply with the requirements of the notice and has been given a further six weeks to complete the required works. If the notice is still not complied with, a second prosecution may be considered depending on circumstances.

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, local authorities can issue Section 215 Notices to owners and occupiers requiring land and buildings to be cleaned up when their condition adversely affects the amenity of the area.

Listed building owner ordered to clean it up

The owner of Grade II listed former Franks butchers in Wisbech Market Place has been ordered to complete improvements within two months.

The front of the property, at 10 Market Place, is damaged and currently fenced off to protect the public from falling debris.

Fenland District Council has served a 'Section 215 Notice' requiring specific repairs including propping, repointing, cleaning of brickwork and gutter clearance.

Failure to comply with a Section 215 Notice can lead to prosecution.

The council also continues to work with the owners of the former Cashino slots store, at 5 Market Place, which was hit by fire. Whilst that building could be considered as having a similar impact on the area, works have and are being taken to remove the fire damaged sections of the building and shore the façade. Progress is continuing to be made with that building, whereas, there had been little, if any, progress on fixing 10 Market Place despite consent being granted.

Don't forget to Do It Online
The quickest and easiest way to apply, report, find or pay via Fenland District Council is usually our website. Available 24 hours a day whenever it's most convenient for you.



 Report  Apply  Find  Pay



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