

**TITLE: ANNUAL REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 26 June 2026

Author: Democratic Services and Elections Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Report number: AB34

Contact officer: Jane Webb, Democratic Services and Elections Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer

[jane.webb@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:jane.webb@eastcambs.gov.uk), 01353 616278, Room No. 214B, The Grange, Ely

### **Issues**

1. This report receives the annual reports from Council representatives on outside bodies within the Finance and Assets Committee's remit.

### **Recommendations**

2. That the annual reports from the Council representatives on Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee be noted (Appendix 2).
3. That the list of Outside Bodies currently within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee, as set out in Appendix 1, including any requested changes to representatives for the new municipal year, is approved.

### **Background**

4. The Council's Constitution, as set out in the Terms of Reference for the Finance & Assets Committee, requires the Committee to appoint representatives to Outside Bodies within its remit from the broader Council membership for up to 4 years. In practice, appointments are made at the first meeting after the elections and are reviewed only between elections if circumstances change. A complete list of appointments was compiled following the May 2023 elections and has been reviewed as needed since then.
5. All representatives on outside bodies are requested to submit an annual report detailing the organisation's activities and the continued relevance of appointing a Council representative. These reports have been compiled and are included in Appendix 2.

### **Conclusions**

6. Receipt of the annual reports demonstrates the organisation's work and its relevance to the Council's work.

## Additional Implications Assessment

<b>Financial Implications</b> None	<b>Legal Implications</b> None	<b>Human Resources (HR) Implications</b> None
<b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</b> Not required	<b>Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)</b> Not required	<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)</b> Not required

## Appendices

7. Appendix 1: Representation on outside bodies within the remit of the Finance and Assets Committee
8. Appendix 2 - Reports from representatives for Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance and Assets Committee.

## Background documents

9. None

**FINANCE AND ASSETS COMMITTEE**  
**OUTSIDE BODIES REPRESENTATIVES 2026-27**

<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>REQUIRED REPRESENTATIVES</b>	<b>APPOINTMENT(S)</b>	<b>ECDC CONTACT OFFICER</b>
A10 Ely to A14 Improvements Scheme	2	Cllr Lee Denney Cllr Bill Hunt	Director Community: Sally Bonnett
East Cambridgeshire Community Land Trust	1	Cllr Anna Bailey	Director Community: Sally Bonnett
East of England Local Government Association	1	Leader of Council: Cllr Anna Bailey	Chief Executive: Emma Grimma
Local Government Association	1	Cllr Lucuis Vellacott	Chief Executive: Emma Grimma
Local Government Association – District Councils Network	1	Leader of Council: Cllr Anna Bailey	Chief Executive: Emma Grimma
Rural Services Network	2	Keith Horgan Julia Huffer	Director Community: Sally Bonnett
<b>INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD</b>	<b>REQUIRED REPRESENTATIVES</b>	<b>APPOINTMENT(S)</b>	<b>ECDC CONTACT OFFICER</b>
Burnt Fen Internal Drainage Board	2	Cllr Martin Goodearl Derrick Beckett	Director Finance: Jude Antony
Cawdle Fen Internal Drainage Board	7	Cllr Christine Colbert Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann Cllr Christine Whelan Vacancy x 2  Rupert Moss-Eccardt Rebecca Denness	Director Finance: Jude Antony

**Agenda Item 16 - Appendix 1**

Haddenham Level Internal Drainage Board	2	Cllr Gareth Wilson Steve Cheetham	Director Finance: Jude Antony
Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board	6	Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith Cllr Lorna Dupré Cllr Martin Goodearl Cllr David Miller  Andrew Butcher Mark Taylor	Director Finance: Jude Antony
Middle Fen & Mere Internal Drainage Board	5	Cllr Ian Bovingdon Cllr Mark Goldsack Cllr Keith Horgan Cllr Lucius Vellacott  Alec Jones	Director Finance: Jude Antony
Padnal & Waterden Internal Drainage Board	7	Cllr Alison Whelan  Clive Webber Lis Every  Vacancy (x4)	Director Finance: Jude Antony
Swaffham Internal Drainage Board	4	Cllr David Brown Cllr Lavinia Edwards Cllr Alan Sharp Cllr John Trapp	Director Finance: Jude Antony
Waterbeach Level Internal Drainage Board	1	Lucius Vellacott	Director Finance: Jude Antony

# EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



## REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES WITHIN THE REMIT OF THE FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE

2026-27

(Including reports from representatives for 2025-26)

# Contents

## Organisations (including 2025-26 reports, if applicable)

	Page no.
A10 Ely to A14 Improvements Scheme .....	2
East Cambridgeshire Community Land Trust .....	3
East of England Local Government Association .....	5
Local Government Association .....	6
Local Government Association – District Councils Network .....	7
Rural Services Network .....	8
<u>Internal Drainage Boards (including 2025-26 reports)</u> .....	9

### **PRIORITY CATEGORY OF OFFICER SUPPORT**

1. Nominated officers to provide Members with regular support on a proactive basis, and attend meetings where appropriate (including those outside bodies where officers attend at present).
2. Nominated officers to provide ad hoc support on specific agenda issues and act as a contact for feedback and implementation of action points. The onus will be on the Member to contact the nominated officer to facilitate these arrangements.
3. Members should liaise directly with Democratic Services.

## **A10 ELY TO A14 IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME**

### **AIMS AND ACTIVITIES**

- Member Working Group established by resolution of Cambridgeshire County Council Highways and Transport Committee (12/7/22);
- Members will receive information regarding the scheme as it develops;
- Members can discuss and express their views but it is not a decision-making body.

<b>Representation:</b>	Two Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Representatives of ECDC
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	To be decided at the first meeting
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	No
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	1
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Director Community, Sally Bonnett

<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Lee Denney
	Cllr Bill Hunt

### **REPORT FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr Bill Hunt

*(not received)*

Cllr Ian Bovingdon.

*(not received)*

# **EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST**

## **AIMS AND ACTIVITIES**

East Cambs Community Land Trust is incorporated to enable affordable homes to be owned and managed by an independent locally-run body that enables people to live and work locally. It is an “umbrella” Community Land Trust (CLT) and therefore covers a wider area or region than a local CLT and takes a complementary, supportive, role to any local CLTs.

Its purpose is to carry on, for the benefit of people in need (whether by virtue of poverty, financial hardship, age, physical or mental disability or ill health), in East Cambridgeshire:

- The business of providing and managing housing (including social housing) and facilitating the provision and management of such housing;
- The provision of, and facilitating the provision of, information, advice, assistance, training, support, facilities, amenities and services incidental to the provision and promotion of housing;
- The promotion of regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation in such ways as may be thought fit by the Trustees;
- Any other charitable object that can be carried out from time to time by a community land trust and which the Trustees consider would further the social, economic and environmental interest of the community in the area of benefit.

**Representation:** Up to three Members (total of one vote irrespective of number of Members.)

**Status of Member:** Custodian Nominee Trustee

**No. meetings per year:** 3-4

**Expenses paid by organisation:** No

**Insurance provision:** Yes

**Category of Officer Support (see p. 1):** 3

**Contact Officer:** Director Community, Sally Bonnett

**Representative for 2026/27:** Cllr Anna Bailey

## **REPORT FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr Anna Bailey (attended all 4 meetings)

ECCLT is a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society, run by volunteers. The Trust was established in November 2017 as an umbrella Community Land Trust (CLT) for the whole of East Cambridgeshire. ECCLT supports the work of the Council in promoting Community Land Trust development in the district and in securing affordable homes that help to enable people with ties to the area to live and work locally.

ECCLT owns and manages two affordable homes within Montgomery House that were part of the East Cambs Trading Company's Kings Row development in Barton Road, Ely which are occupied by local people. ECCLT also manages the Montgomery House building.

ECCLT owns the freehold of 14 shared ownership affordable homes on at Simeon Close in Ely which it continues to manage, having sold its 100% freehold interest in the fifteenth property it previously owned. Tenants living in the properties are selected using the Trust's local allocations policy, meaning those eligible people with the strongest ties to the community are benefiting.

The Trust held its AGMs in September 2025 and May 2026.

Continued representation on this outside body is very important – the District Council has Custodian Member status and has responsibilities to the Trust in that regard. Membership also helps to pursue the stated Corporate Plan housing objectives of the Council.

This organisation facilitates the delivery of affordable homes and supports the outcomes of the Council's Corporate Plan.

## **EAST OF ENGLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

### **AIMS AND ACTIVITIES**

- To represent the interests of local authorities in the region;
- To formulate sound policies for the development of local government in the region;
- To promote the policies of the East of England LGA and provide information/advice on local government issues to the public and partner organisations;
- To enable Councillors to exercise their democratic accountability and leadership effectively;
- To support innovation and excellence that enables local authorities and their partnerships to meet the needs of their communities and meet future challenges.

<b>Representation:</b>	Leader of Council
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Representative of ECDC
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	1
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 1):</b>	1
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Chief Executive, Emma Grimmer
<b>Representative for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Anna Bailey

### **REPORT FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr Anna Bailey

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

### **AIMS AND ACTIVITIES**

To support, promote and improve local government in England and Wales.

To support Councillors in their role as democratically elected local representatives.

<b>Representation:</b>	One Member
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Representative of ECDC (voting Member)
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	1
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	Yes (attendance only, not travel)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	No
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	1
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Chief Executive, Emma Grimma

**Representative for 2026/27:** Cllr Lucius Vellacott

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr Julia Huffer/Cllr Lucius Vellacott

## **LGA – DISTRICT COUNCILS NETWORK**

### **AIMS AND ACTIVITIES**

- To lobby and negotiate directly with senior members of national political parties on district-specific needs and issues – the “localism” agenda;
- To inform and influence national agencies, government departments and other local authority agencies on things that matter, such as resources and allocation;
- To get the Network’s unique message across to the audiences that matter – people, Government, partners, regulators;
- Help each other to remain effective and share learning/good practice.

<b>Representation:</b>	Leader of Council
<b>Status of Member:</b>	ECDC representative
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	4
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	No
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	1
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Chief Executive, Emma Grimma

**Representative for 2026/27:** Cllr Anna Bailey

### **REPORT FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr Anna Bailey (attended 6 of 6 meetings).

In recognition of the changes being made to local government throughout the country, the District Councils’ Network has rebranded this year and is now known as the Local Councils’ Network (LCN). LCN is a cross-party member led network of councils. It is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association (LGA), and provides a single voice for councils within the Local Government Association. Its membership is currently largely made up of District Councils and Borough Councils.

Being a member of the network supports the work of the Council and the organisation, provides valuable information and data to the Council and facilitates networking, helping the Council to lobby Government and fulfil its statutory and non-statutory activities.

Topics vary and cover most aspects of the functions of District Councils. This year topics have focussed on the local government funding settlement and local government reorganisation.

This organisation has been an incredibly effective conduit for District Councils and central Government, particularly in relation to dealings with the MHCLG; it has meant that District Councils have had a strong and united voice and this is proving to be particularly important in relation to Local Government Reorganisation and devolution.

## **RURAL SERVICES NETWORK.**

### **AIMS AND ACTIVITIES**

- A membership organisation championing rural services. It campaigns for fair funding for rural areas and aims to share best practice across the membership.

<b>Representation:</b>	Two Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	12
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	No
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Director Community, Sally Bonnett

<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Keith Horgan Julia Huffer
-------------------------------------	------------------------------

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr Keith Horgan (attended 5 of 8 meetings)

ECDC's Corporate Plan lays out our objectives of sound financial management, a cleaner and greener East Cambridgeshire and the priorities for a sustainable community. The topics discussed by the RSN address all these areas.

The RSN are a key lobby group to central government for the benefit of rural communities such as ours.

This year the RSN have delivered online sessions covering matters such as rural transport problems, the challenges of rural telecommunication coverage, the rural housing, rural health service provision and rural net zero. Of particular importance in this last year was the analysis by the RSN of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement where it highlighted the ongoing decline of fair funding by central government to rural areas such as East Cambridgeshire.

Julia Huffer

*(Not Received.)*

## **INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARDS**

	Page no.
Burnt Fen .....	10
Cawdle Fen.....	11
Haddenham Level.....	14
Littleport and Downham .....	16
Middle Fen and Mere .....	19
Padnal and Waterden .....	21
Swaffham .....	24
Waterbeach Level.....	26

Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) are public bodies that manage water levels in areas where there is a special need for drainage. They reduce flood risk to people and property and they manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs. IDBs are funded by a combination of drainage rates levied on the owners of farmland, and special levies on District and Unitary Councils. District Councils appoint representatives to IDBs, the number of representatives being determined by the IDBs by consideration of the percentage of the Board's income being paid by each Council.

Haddenham Level IDB is part of the Middle Level Commissioners, all other IDBs on which ECDC is represented are part of the Ely Group of Internal Drainage Boards.

Appointment of ECDC representatives to Internal Drainage Boards has been discussed at various Council and Committee meetings<sup>1</sup> and the following process has been agreed:

1. Nominations should be invited from the Members of Council.
2. If vacancies cannot all be filled from within the District Council then;
  - a. former District Councillors who are willing to continue in their IDB role could be nominated as a layperson, and;
  - b. the relevant Parish Council(s) should be invited to submit nominations.

If there are more nominations than vacancies then consideration should be given to the candidates' prior knowledge and experience of both the geographical area and the issues relevant to IDBs. In all cases, the final decision on each appointment rests with the Finance & Assets Committee.

---

<sup>1</sup> Resources & Finance Committee: 29 March 2018 (Agenda Item 11, Minute 94); 26 July 2018 (Agenda Item 12, Minute 35).  
Council: 19 April 2018 (Agenda Item 10, Minute 89).  
Finance & Assets Committee: 20 June 2019 (Agenda Item 13, Minute 17); 26 September 2019 (Agenda Item 18, Minute 56).

## **BURNT FEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Ely North Littleport
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	City of Ely Council Littleport Parish Council
<b>Representation:</b>	Two Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by the Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony
<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Martin Goodearl Derrick Beckett

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr Martin Goodearl

*(Not received.)*

Derrick Beckett (lay member)

*(Not received.)*

## **CAWDLE FEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Ely West
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	City of Ely Council
<b>Representation:</b>	Seven Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony

<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Christine Colbert
	Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann
	Cllr Caroline Shepard
	Cllr Christine Whelan
	Rupert Moss-Eccardt
	Rebecca Denness

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr Christine Colbert

*(Not received.)*

Cllr Christine Whelan (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

#### **Cawdle Fen Internal Drainage Board 2025–26**

The maintenance and operational activity of Cawdle Fen Internal Drainage Board during 2025–26 remains central to the Board’s purpose of managing water levels, maintaining drainage capacity and reducing flood risk within its district. Cawdle Fen is a small but strategically important drainage area on the south-eastern fringe of Ely. Although compact in size, the district contains low-lying land, key local infrastructure, commercial development, transport corridors and land that relies on effective pumped drainage.

The Board is responsible for maintaining a network of drainage channels which convey water towards Cawdle Fen Pumping Station. These drains form an essential part of the local flood-risk management system. Their proper maintenance ensures that surface water and land drainage flows can be managed effectively, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall or high river levels. In a pumped catchment such as Cawdle Fen, operational reliability is

especially important because water cannot always discharge naturally by gravity and may need to be lifted into the Ely Ouse.

Routine maintenance activity includes managing vegetation, clearing obstructions, maintaining channel capacity and ensuring that watercourses remain able to perform their drainage function. Weed growth, silt accumulation, debris and encroachment can all reduce flow capacity if not managed. Regular inspection and maintenance therefore help to prevent localised flooding, protect land and property, and support the wider drainage system serving this part of Ely.

The Board's published maintenance programme confirms that works are carried out in accordance with its Conservation Statement. This is important because drainage maintenance must balance operational need with environmental responsibility.

Watercourses are not simply engineering assets; they can also provide habitat for plants, invertebrates, birds and other wildlife. Maintenance must therefore be planned and delivered in a way that preserves drainage capacity while having proper regard to biodiversity, conservation and landscape considerations.

East Cambridgeshire District Council representation on the Board is important because the work of the Internal Drainage Board has direct implications for local communities, planning, infrastructure and council finances. ECDC-appointed members provide a democratic link between the Board and the wider district council, helping to ensure that drainage issues affecting residents, businesses and public infrastructure are properly understood. Their involvement is also important where development, highways, commercial growth or changes in land use may increase surface water run-off or place additional pressure on the drainage system.

This representation allows ECDC to maintain oversight of local flood-risk issues and to ensure that drainage considerations are not treated in isolation from planning and community impacts. It also helps the district council understand the practical reasons for Internal Drainage Board levies and the importance of continued investment in drainage maintenance. In an area such as Cawdle Fen, where drainage depends on active management and pumping, effective communication between the Board and the district council is essential.

The operational context for Cawdle Fen is also affected by development pressure. Parts of the drainage district include or adjoin commercial, highway and railway infrastructure. Increased impermeable surfaces from development can increase the speed and volume of surface water run-off. This places greater importance on ensuring that drainage systems are properly designed, maintained and, where necessary, improved. The Board therefore has an important role in commenting on drainage implications associated with development and ensuring that new works do not increase flood risk for existing landowners, businesses or residents.

For 2025–26, the key operational priority is the continued reliability of the pumped drainage system. This includes keeping the Board's maintained watercourses in good condition, ensuring that flows to the pumping station are not impeded, and maintaining awareness of any changes within the catchment that may affect drainage demand. As climate change increases the likelihood of more intense rainfall events, the resilience of small pumped catchments such as Cawdle Fen becomes increasingly significant.

Overall, the Board's maintenance and operational activity is essential to the protection of this low-lying part of Ely. Continued planned maintenance, timely inspection, environmental care, effective ECDC representation and careful scrutiny of development impacts will remain necessary to ensure that the drainage system continues to function effectively throughout 2025–26 and beyond.

Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann

*(Not received.)*

Rupert Moss-Eccardt (attended 8 of 8 meetings)

Things continue to be much as previous years:

Water management continues to be essential to support food production, protect property and underpin the local economy:-

The CPIER report alluded to significant GVA benefit from flood protection schemes. A modelling exercise for the Great Ouse Fens predicts 7-10 £bn of damage in the event of a significant flood control failure.

Many planning applications are only successful because, even though they are in Flood Zone 3, the site is protected by flood defences.

SUDSs only work if there is somewhere for the final outflow to go. IDBs move that water from catchwater drains through to the main river.

Finally, if the IDBs didn't provide a path for water to be abstracted, the local agricultural economy would fail.

So the work of the IDB is essential for the continued existence of East Cambs.

As this is a body that raises a levy against ECDC it is incumbent on ECDC to utilise its scrutiny and management power to meet its obligations to ensure the money is spent properly.

The Special Levy has again been increased this year.

The engineering issue with the culvert that runs along The Dock continues. Estimates place the expected costs as over £550k for remediation. Alternatives are being sought. If the suggested remediation is the only answer and there is no Grant-In-Aid available then the Special Levy could increase by £36k/annum. DEFRA have changed their funding mechanisms so a further application for capital funding has been made.

I am grateful to be appointed by ECDC as I find chairing Cawdle Fen IDB to be very rewarding.

The "Ely Group" of IDBs is exploring amalgamation. The driver for this is to give a critical mass to the resulting IDB to have greater influence locally and nationally. It was also reduce the number of meetings that the clerks would need to service by up to 10th

Cllr Caroline Shepard

*(Not received.)*

Rebecca Denness

*(Not received.)*

## **HADDENHAM LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Haddenham Stretham Sutton
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	Haddenham Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Sutton Parish Council Wentworth Parish Council Wilburton Parish Council
<b>Representation:</b>	Two Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony
<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Gareth Wilson  Parish Cllr Steve Cheetham

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr Gareth Wilson

*(Not received.)*

Parish Cllr Steve Cheetham (attended 1 of 1 meetings)

ECDC are committed to ensuring that East Cambridgeshire continues to be a district where people want to live, work and visit and ensuring flood defences are maintained is a critical element of this commitment.

Continued work on the monitoring of the construction of irrigation reservation reservoirs at Willow Hall Farm. The HIDB continue to monitor and control the de-watering activities year-round and monitoring continues

HIDB are also extremely concerned about the proliferation of 'SUDS' on new housing developments which is not a sustainable drainage solution and is increasing run off into HIDB drainage area.

This is a precepting body with the duty of protecting the Haddenham & Aldreth area from flooding and providing irrigation for agriculture and the meetings give a real insight into issues affecting farming and agriculture. The 2025/2026 winter and spring has seen exceptional low levels of rainfall and it continues to be critical that the knowledge of the issues and detail from the HIDB are understood by ECDC.

## **LITTLEPORT & DOWNHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Downham Villages Ely North Littleport Stretham Sutton
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	Coveney Parish Council Little Downham Parish Council Little Thetford Parish Council Littleport Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Wentworth Parish Council Wilburton Parish Council Witchford Parish Council
<b>Representation:</b>	Six Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony
<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith Cllr Lorna Dupré Cllr Martin Goodearl Cllr David Miller Parish Cllr Andrew Butcher Mark Taylor

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

#### **Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith**

I am currently one of the four District Councilor representatives of East Cambs District Council, appointed to sit on the above board. Numbers of representatives may include some members nominated by Parish Councils in order to maintain the number of places allocated.

Meetings are held quarterly, with other board members representing the local farming community, payers of the appropriate drainage rates in respect of land farmed.

The board elects a Chair and Vice Chair holding this position for one year and who may well be re-elected in subsequent years, from amongst their ranks. Other board members attending these quarterly meetings are the Engineer, the Working Foreman, & The Clerk.

Meetings follow the standard practice of announcements, the Engineers report, a report from the Working Foreman and the Clerk. Most recently a presentation was given by our Health & Safety Consultant who regularly works with the board to maintain up to date practices.

There may be presentations from other professionals as required, and agenda items include follow up reports from previous meetings and new matters for discussion & decision making.

During this year of 2025/26, steady progress has been made in working up and carrying out a pattern of annual maintenance of the water courses and identifying the need for how often the various areas require attention. The Working Foreman is making steady progress on this, and is able to justify the decisions made.

The replacement and maintenance of the large machinery owned and used by the board is carefully monitored and decisions taken regarding the need for replacements or otherwise.

Much work has been carried out on pumping engines and sluice gates which can be extremely difficult and expensive but are of course essential. Grant finance may be available and awarded for some projects.

Recent erratic rainfall measurements are being closely monitored, affecting work patterns.

Local planning applications, of which this board is a statutory consultee, have been discussed, and the necessity of robust responses noted.

A subject under close scrutiny is the possibility of boards amalgamating into larger groups potentially for efficiency and financial savings. This board is keeping this option under consideration.

Proposals for a string of smaller farm-based reservoirs in order to assist with better water management are being closely watched for developments.

Our Clerk, Jean Heading, is retiring shortly following many years of service. At our most recent meeting, Jean was thanked for her long, excellent and efficient service, with Board Members offering their good wishes to Jean for her retirement.

Cllr Lorna Dupré (attended 3 of 4 meetings)

Flood and water management are key issues facing East Cambridgeshire and representation on—and good relations with—the Internal Drainage Boards are therefore important.

For this reason, continued representation on this outside body is worthwhile.

The Board continues to discuss the management of water and drainage in the area served by the local authority.

Cllr Martin Goodearl

*(Not received.)*

Cllr David Miller

*(Not received.)*

Parish Cllr Andrew Butcher

*(Not received.)*

Mark Taylor

*(Not received.)*

## **MIDDLE FEN & MERE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Ely East Ely North Fordham & Isleham Soham North Soham South
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	City of Ely Council Fordham Parish Council Isleham Parish Council Soham Town Council Wicken Parish Council
<b>Representation:</b>	Five Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony
<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Ian Bovingdon Cllr Mark Goldsack Cllr Keith Horgan Cllr Lucius Vellacott Alec Jones

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr Ian Bovingdon

*(Not received.)*

Cllr Mark Goldsack

*(Not received.)*

Cllr Keith Horgan (attended 3 of 3 meetings)

All drainage boards provide a much needed service to our community by the effective management of our local waterways. A key tenet of our Corporate Action Plan is to enhance the natural environment and to build on our sustainability goals. The work done by Middle Fen & Mere IDB exemplifies the best practices of a sustainable business.

Continued representation on this Outside Body is more than just worthwhile it is essential. East Anglia water level swing between feast and famine very year and this will only get more challenging due to climate change. Keeping in touch with the work carried out by this IDB, the challenges they face, and the precarious nature of their funding arrangements will help us meet the obligations we have in ensuring our waterways are managed effectively and efficiently.

The main three 'hot' topics regularly discussed are finances, water supply (and removal) and the impacts of climate change. All these have a major impact not only on the operational obligations of the IDB but also the funding contribution of ECDC, the support for local farmers and other residents through strong water management and the ability of ECDC to meet its own climate change commitments.

Cllr Lucius N Vellacott (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

The work of the Internal Drainage Boards is of paramount importance to the District. It helps to sustain the District Council's Corporate Objective to support businesses (farms) to thrive and improve local infrastructure. Though the work of the IDB is often overlooked by residents, agriculture and local development in East Cambs could not be sustained without it. They further retain an important role in the determination of planning applications to prevent flooding in the District, which is specifically relevant to the District Council.

Funding remains a significant issue for local flood authorities. The Special Levy required by the IDB may reach an unsustainable level for the District Council to maintain whilst keeping to its Corporate Objective to raise Council Tax only as a last resort. The IDBs and the District Council must engage to ensure the medium-term financial sustainability of their role via other means in addition to the Special Levy.

I recommend that the Council continue to appoint representatives to all Internal Drainage Boards in its jurisdiction.

Alec Jones

*(Not received.)*

## **PADNAL & WATERDEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Ely North Littleport
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	City of Ely Council Littleport Parish Council
<b>Representation:</b>	Seven Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony

<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr Alison Whelan Cllr Lis Every Parish Cllr Clive Webber tbc tbc tbc tbc
-------------------------------------	--

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

Cllr Alison Whelan (attended 1 of 3 meetings)

The Board's core work is the management of water levels, drainage infrastructure, pumping stations and watercourses within its district. This is directly relevant to flood risk management, climate resilience, land drainage, water supply, agricultural productivity, and the protection of homes, businesses and infrastructure. The minutes show regular discussion of drain maintenance, pumping station refurbishment, telemetry, weed clearance, water levels, abstraction, and the condition of pumping stations.

The Board's work also supports sustainable development. It considers planning applications, consents for discharge, surface water arrangements, developer contributions and the impact of new development on the drainage system. This is

directly relevant to ECDC's planning and infrastructure responsibilities, especially where growth creates additional surface water pressures.

The Board also has a significant financial relationship with ECDC. For 2026/27, the Board agreed a Special Levy on East Cambridgeshire District Council of **£109,208.32**, representing **72.23%** of the Board's expenditure. This makes continued engagement important from both a service-delivery and financial-governance perspective.

The Board is considering matters that are directly relevant to ECDC residents, council finances, planning, infrastructure and climate resilience. ECDC is responsible for paying a substantial Special Levy, so representation helps ensure democratic oversight and awareness of decisions that affect council resources.

There are also direct links with development management. The Board has adopted a revised Development Control Charges and Fees Policy, including developer contributions for discharges into the district. This is highly relevant to ECDC as local planning authority and CIL charging/spending authority.

Continued attendance would allow ECDC to monitor flood-risk infrastructure, challenge where appropriate, understand future capital liabilities, and maintain a clear link between planning decisions, drainage capacity and public expenditure. Special Levy and financial impact:

The February 2026 budget meeting agreed a Special Levy on ECDC of £109,208.32 for 2026/27. The Board also discussed maintaining reserves for future pump refurbishment schemes.

**Padnal No. 2 Pumping Station:**

The Board discussed a £100,000 Outline Business Case for the potential refurbishment of Padnal No. 2 Pumping Station. The minutes record that refurbishment costs may be affected by Fens 2100+ requirements and possible fish-friendly pump requirements, which could add significant costs. The Board also discussed a potential back-raking weedscreen, which may be eligible for CIL funding as a new or improvement project.

**CIL and developer contributions:**

The Board noted that IDBs cannot claim CIL directly, but can apply to ECDC for a CIL grant of up to 30% for new or improvement projects. The Board has also introduced a policy to charge developer contributions for consents and discharges into the district, including developments discharging at or below greenfield run-off rates.

**Planning and consents:**

The Board considered planning applications and consents, including discharge of surface and foul water from development at Brick Kiln Farm, Lynn Road, Chettisham, and Cambridgeshire County Council's diversion of an existing surface water system discharging into the Padnal Catchwater at Sandhill, Littleport.

**Drain maintenance and vegetation clearance:**

The minutes refer to maintenance of drains, vegetation clearance at Padnal Drove Catchwater and Clayway Catchwater, works at Thistle Corner, and the approved

drain maintenance programme. These matters are relevant to flood prevention and environmental management.

Water supply and abstraction:

The Board discussed water supply, abstraction restrictions, winter fill licences, reservoir filling, and water levels in the Padnal No. 2 catchment. These issues are relevant to climate resilience, agriculture, environmental sustainability and water-resource management.

Fens 2100+:

The Board discussed the Fens 2100+ project and its implications for pumping-station refurbishment and pump capacity. This is relevant to long-term flood resilience and infrastructure planning across the district.

Amalgamation of drainage boards:

The Board discussed options for amalgamation, including potential impacts on rates, differential rating, district council contributions, representation, and the future structure of local drainage governance. This is highly relevant to ECDC because any change in structure may affect future levies, accountability and local influence.

Governance, audit and transparency:

The Board considered its internal audit, Local Government Transparency Code compliance, IT and Email Policy, financial controls, fidelity guarantee insurance and risk assessment. These are relevant to public accountability and confidence in the use of levy-funded resources.

Board membership remains an issue, with vacancies continuing to be reported. This may become more significant if the Board faces increasing technical, financial and governance pressures.

Given the financial importance of the Special Levy, the possible future costs of pump refurbishment, and the implications of amalgamation, ECDC should maintain active representation.

Cllr Lis Every

*(Not received)*

Parish Cllr Clive Webber

*(Not received)*

## **SWAFFHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Bottisham Burwell Fordham & Isleham Soham South
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	Bottisham Parish Council Burwell Parish Council Fordham Parish Council Lode Parish Council Reach Parish Council Swaffham Bulbeck Parish Council Swaffham Prior Parish Council Wicken Parish Council
<b>Representation:</b>	Four <sup>2</sup> Members
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony
<b>Representatives for 2026/27:</b>	Cllr David Brown Cllr Lavinia Edwards Cllr Alan Sharp Cllr John Trapp

### **REPORTS FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVES**

#### **Cllr David Brown (attended 2 of 3 meetings)**

The work of the IDBs is essential to many of ECDC's Corporate Objectives in making the District a safe and good place to live and work. Given the precepting powers of IDBs it is essential that ECDC has continued, and full, representation on IDBs, including Swaffham. With ongoing discussions about amalgamation of IDBs, continued representation at this time is very important.

---

<sup>2</sup> Four Members plus one nominee jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). SCDC makes the joint appointment by reciprocal agreement of June 1990 whereby ECDC makes the joint appointment to Waterbeach Level IDB. Appointments are for 3 years.

Cllr Lavinia Edwards (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

Swaffham Internal Drainage Board fits in with ECDC's Corporate Objectives by maintaining the drainage network in the district.

There is a large agricultural element with much employment in the area who rely on the drainage system.

The drainage board is also a consultee for planning applications.

I think continues representation on the Outside Body is worthwhile because IDBs are in receipt of public funds and it is important that ECDC is involved in any financial decision. Specific items discussed and considered to be relevant to ECDC include budget and precept setting, climate change and management of the agricultural area which we are in.

Cllr Alan Sharp (attended 3 of 3 meetings)

The work of Swaffham Drainage Board, as with all of the Drainage Board is a very important part of the water management of the district.

This is especially so with the work being done by the Local Government Association Special Interest Group, which is lobbying Government to change the way that the Drainage Board levy is funded.

Cllr John Trapp

*(Not received.)*

## **WATERBEACH LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

<b>District Wards covered:</b>	Stretham Soham South
<b>Parish Councils covered:</b>	Little Thetford Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Wicken Parish Council
<b>Representation:</b>	One <sup>3</sup> Member
<b>Status of Member:</b>	Board Member
<b>No. meetings per year:</b>	3
<b>Expenses paid by organisation:</b>	No (paid by Council)
<b>Insurance provision:</b>	Yes
<b>Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):</b>	3
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Finance Manager, Jude Antony
<b>Representative for 2026/27:</b>	Lucius Vellacott

### **REPORT FROM 2025/26 REPRESENTATIVE**

#### Cllr Lucius Vellacott (attended 1 of 3 meetings)

The work of all Internal Drainage Boards, including Waterbeach Level, is essential to a cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire and the protection of our communities and farms from flooding. Their work is vital to this effort. The funding model of IDBs is damaged, however, and it is therefore positive that IDBs and the Council have fed into the Government's review of the process.

Continued representation on the IDBs is essential. The oversight and learning of members appointed to IDBs is of the utmost importance. However, it would be good if we could fill all vacancies with District Council representatives in the first instance.

The drainage rates of Waterbeach Level IDB were frozen this year and remain at a considerably lower level than other IDBs in the Group. This means the Special Levy for the Board on ECDC was unaffected from the previous year. The Board primarily covers areas in South Cambridgeshire District, so this year, no specific matters to East Cambridgeshire were raised other than this.

Please note that, as I was appointed mid-year, I only attended one meeting this municipal year. I thank David Chaplin for his many years of service.

---

<sup>3</sup> One Member jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). ECDC makes the joint appointment by reciprocal agreement of June 1990 whereby SCDC makes the joint appointment to Swaffham IDB. Appointments are for 3 years.

