

**MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Full Council**

**Date: 2 August 2021**

**Item: PC063/21a)**

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Good afternoon!

I trust this finds you well and enjoying the heat.

I write regarding a conversation I had with a neighbour on Vicarage Close regarding the community project in Swaffham Prior and potential use of a farmer's land near Dry Drayton to provide GSHP infrastructure for their communities.

In a bid to reduce emissions and make it slightly more economically viable for people to switch from fuel oil to a more sustainable ground source heat pump system, larger areas (e.g. farmland) are being dug up to lay pipes for ground source heat pumps, and interested local residents are chipping in to cover costs, but at a reduced level compared to the £25-£35,000 that is standard for individual, private GSHPs.

I wondered if Melbourn Parish Council, being as active and proactive as it is, might consider plans for such things here, including obtaining government funding that might allow such a project to take place (as has been the case in Swaffham Prior)? I realise that Swaffham Prior and Dry Drayton are smaller villages by area and population, and that it is largely a desire to change from fuel oil that is driving their projects, but even a limited scheme (or several limited schemes) might prove beneficial here.

Aside from some of the surrounding farmland, which might be usable if suitable fields are being left fallow as part of crop rotation, I wondered if the field spaces at Melbourn Primary School and Melbourn Village College might also be of some use? I suspect that The Moor would be a very different proposition, and Stockbridge Meadows would be out of the questions, but I thought I would at least raise the question!

With all best wishes,

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**Extract from Swaffham Prior's Heat Network website -**

<https://heatingswaffhamprior.co.uk/about/>

**Swaffham Prior's Heat Network is breaking ground this summer!!**

Residents in the village are now being offered a pre-construction survey of their, to plan their potential connection to our rural heat network. [Please click here to book a pre-construction survey.](#)

**For further up-to-date information on the project see our [new website.](#)**

The village's 100% renewable heat network, reliant on air source and ground source heat pumps, with electric boiler back-up, has been under development since 2017. In 2020, it achieved planning permission, and has since been awarded grant funding to bring the project to fruition.

Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust and Cambridgeshire County Council have been working together to offer this **green heating alternative to oil, on which the village is currently dependant\***. The Heating Swaffham Prior project had two core aims, get off oil, and tackle fuel poverty. Swaffham Prior is a step ahead, of plans to remove oil and gas boilers in the UK, setting the future standard for 10,000 homes in Cambridgeshire that are also reliant on oil.

Updated July 2021

[\*my emphasis]

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## **Extract from CCC website:**

Swaffham Prior, a village of around 300 homes in East Cambridgeshire, is to become one of the first villages in the UK to install a heating network into an existing community.

Swaffham Prior isn't connected to the gas grid and 70% of homes rely on burning oil for heating. We consider this method to be environmentally unsustainable, very expensive and prices often fluctuate.

We have been working with Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust on a project to bring renewable energy to the village. The ambition is to:

- End fuel poverty
- Reduce dependence on oil
- Provide cheaper, renewable heating to as many homes as possible

Following a series of technical studies, we decided to use a Ground Source Heat Pump to provide thermal energy, pumped through a community network, into homes in Swaffham Prior.

Over half the village have already outlined their intention to join the Heat Network, recognising the need for change and the Government's plans to phase out gas and oil boilers.

Once we have built the [Energy Centre](#) and laid the heating network pipes in the village, we will connect homes over time. Our role then becomes that of the Energy Supplier.

Along with our technical partner Bouygues Energy Services, we are responsible for signing up customers to the Heat Network, managing the supply of hot water to the connected customers, reading their heat meters, issuing quarterly invoices for their energy usage and providing customer services.

We anticipate connecting the first homes in March 2022.

## **Find out more about Heating Swaffham Prior Network**

[How the Heat Network works](#)  
[Energy source and location](#)

[How to join the Swaffham Prior Heat Network](#)  
[The steps involved](#)

[Book an engineer survey](#)  
[Can we connect your home?](#)

[Heat Supply Agreement](#)  
[Review the contract and sign up](#)

[Connection works](#)  
[How we connect your home to the network and costs](#)

[Tariffs and charges](#)  
[How much you pay annually](#)

[Customer Services](#)  
[How to contact us](#)

[Live energy data](#)  
[Data for different property types](#)

[Network news](#)  
[Latest news on the project](#)

### **Project funding and support**

We have provided funding and support for this project, together with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).