

A View from the District (October 2010)

Not much happens in August. And for the latter part of the month I was incapacitated due to some minor surgery on a toe. However, following the concerns I expressed about our Planning website which I discussed last month, I was invited to meet a senior SCDC officer. We had a long and very useful meeting, and I now understand much better the thinking behind the changes. Officers were apparently finding it increasingly difficult to keep our bespoke system up-to-date and were missing targets. A consultant was invited to appraise the situation, and recommended that we should switch to an off-the-peg solution. So we did. However, apart from various other technical issues which the officer could not explain, the huge unanswered question is why an off-the-peg solution does not *work*. And I discover to my distress that with this new system officers are *still* not able to keep the database up to date. I have asked the Acting Chief Executive for more information.

The Climate Change Working Group met recently and as usual meaty issues were on the agenda. Noting how much the national climate has changed (deliberate pun I'm afraid) we have approved changes to our terms of reference and will present them to the September Council meeting. In the light of this we agreed to push ahead with two specific projects: the first to identify energy waste and opportunities for savings in the Council offices at Cambourne; the second to produce specific plans for doing something similar in Rampton Drift. The latter was awarded funding (now slashed by half to about £750K) as part of the preparations for Northstowe; it will entail the development of an energy Visitor Centre and work on volunteer households to provide improvements ranging from draughtproofing to ground-source heat-pumps. We set up two very small sub-committees to work on the details; I am in the first (South Cambs Hall).

If you would like a fuller monthly report emailed to you please contact me at scdc@de-lacey.org and I shall add you to the list of recipients. If you have any District Council issues you would like to discuss please don't hesitate to ask me.

Douglas de Lacey
South Cambridgeshire District Councillor for Girton