

A View from the District (November 2011)

A libellous letter has been circulated about me following my last report. It accuses me of hypocrisy in claiming to be independent while allied with the Liberal Democrats. May I therefore make it clear that I have no links with any political party. I stood to represent the Village, not a party, and that is what I always endeavour to do.

The City is reassessing its waste services, and some Girton residents were startled to be telephoned by City officers with a questionnaire. This failure to understand the status of Girton make clear how important it is that the 'Girton Gap' which separates our village from the City is maintained and enhanced to clarify that we are not simply an extension to the City. I ensure that I have regular contact with officers from both the City and the District, mainly over the North-West Cambridge development, and have sent them detailed comments on the planning application.

Education is a County rather than a District issue, but is such an important part of the NW Cambridge Planning Application that I have held discussions officers at the County and the Head of Girton Glebe School, to guide my response to the proposals. These demonstrated to me the paucity of the figures informing the Application.

The Council had agreed to install Solar PV on the Council roof shortly before the Government's announced 50% reduction in the feed-in tariff, The Climate Change Working Group believes this would still be a value-for-money project, and we have urged the Council to go ahead. Quite apart from feed-in income, we stand to gain about £100,000 over 25 years in electricity costs.

The Group also discussed the Government's new Green Deal, a plan to offer loans for home improvements to reduce energy use. The 'golden rule' is that the financial savings made will more than cover the loan repayments. The Council could act as a provider or a partner in the scheme, but details are still a bit sketchy. We also discussed how to advertise what we are achieving: my own view (which seemed to be generally endorsed) is that articles in current village newspapers such as the *Girton Parish News* are much more likely to be read than a separate news sheet from SCDC. I'd be interested to know if you agree.

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