

A View from the District (December 2012)

On 17 November Sustainable Girton held a Village Energy Day under the auspices of our Sustainable Parishes Energy Partnership, and it was a great success. I would like to thank Shane Holland and Christine Bromwich, as well as my SCDC officers Siobhan Mellon and Richard Hales, for making it so. The Sustainable Energy Committee, which meets on 14 December, will be discussing the establishment of a Green Deal partnership with local providers, and some eminently suitable candidates were much in evidence at the day.

At his Portfolio meeting on 22 November the Leader made clear his intention to cut virtually all arts grants including subsidies to the extremely successful experiment of Arts Development Managers in schools. The room was packed, largely with sixth formers who spoke eloquently against the plans. As the Leader noted that there would be a consultation before any action I asked what response might lead him to change his mind; the answer appears to be None.

Before the Council meeting two coachloads of Meldreth residents arrived with a petition against the re-opening of the Mettle Hill Traveller site. The Leader has now announced that SCDC will abandon its plans, leaving a great deal of uncertainty. There was not a lot on our agenda as the Chairman had already agreed to remove the item relating to the purchase of Mettle Hill. We voted what seems to me an insane budget to replace our Council furniture and gave ourselves a general dispensation to allow us, despite our personal interests in the matter, to discuss the level of Council Tax. A motion to resolve to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government objecting to proposed planning policy suffered an amendment removing the resolution, leaving just a tut-tutting over the policy.

On 23 Nov Girton Town Charity opened its almshouses at Centenary Court, and I was delighted to be present. The chairman of GTC, Robin Hiley, cut the ribbon and residents – all of whom have close Girton connections – should be installed in time for Christmas. It is a wonderful asset for the Village.

The EA issued a flood warning on 24 November after heavy rain but happily Beck Brook stayed where it should.

I have received a letter from The Post Office concerning the closure of Girton PO, but it gives no details about the longer term future. I am asking for clarification.

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