

## **Monthly update for parish councils: June 2009**

The caution of last month was certainly justified but with hindsight unnecessary; I was re-elected so here is my first monthly report for this Council. However because Sue Gymer has also been elected we will alternate them in future.

### **County Council and Cabinet meetings**

There was a council meeting in June. It was unusual in that it was the annual meeting of the council and the first for a new council. Furthermore there had been no Cabinet meetings since the previous meeting so this one was just about 100% 'ceremonial'. However that does not mean that it was uninteresting.

There was the usual raft of changes to the constitution to approve and the Lib Dems took the opportunity to propose an amendment which would have resulted in Policy Development Groups being open. This amendment had been proposed 2 years ago and the arguments for and against have barely changed although given the recent scandals in Westminster there would seem to be more of a desire now on the part of the electorate for openness. Needless to say the Lib Dem amendment was voted down.

The Tory administration has however proposed to set up a 'Task and Finish' group to address constitutional reform. That's good news but unfortunately this group is being set up as a PDG so it will not meet in public!

### **Environment and Community Services**

At the most recent Guided Bus Forum (chaired by Sue) there was at last some agreement to look at better safety fencing for the stretch running across the back of Orchard Park.

The Transport Forum has held its final meetings and will be reporting 'in the summer'.

The Guided Bus is making good progress and should open late summer.

### **Children's Services**

The shortage of primary school places in the City has been confirmed. This year it is merely a single digit shortage but next year there will be real problems given that it's not easy to generate extra capacity at short notice

Orchard Park community school has seen the result of its recent OfStEd inspection. This is still confidential but staff and governors are said to be pleased.

### **Adult and Community Services**

It is expected that the Central Library will be completed 22 Sep 09.

### **Local issues**

Sue and I had meetings with several County officers for briefings on highways and traffic, cycling and buses which were immensely valuable. The cycling

meeting was especially interesting and it's clear that there is some joined up thinking going on and that the investment of Cycling Demonstration Town money can be the benefit of most road users, not just cyclists, and local residents.

We attended a site meeting with Officers and Cottenham parish councilors about plans for the Lambs Lane resurfacing. Earlier communications had been poor and raised justified worries but the meeting clarified the plans which make sense.

We also met Impington Parish Councillors and one District Councillor, to review options for improving recycling and waste management in the village, and Cottenham Parish Councillors to review traffic priorities. We also had a productive meeting with the Orchard Park developers (Gallaghers).

I joined a local PCSO on a Cambridge Road walkabout and shortly afterwards spoke on BBC Radio Cambridge about the HCV parking issue. The police are taking this seriously and we should shortly see an end to this unwanted practice. I have also spoken to premier Foods to ensure their support.

### **Forthcoming meetings and events**

2 Jul 09	CCC Cabinet meeting
9 Jul 09	CCC development control meeting
13 Jul 09	South Cambs AJC
14 Jul 09	Histon beat neighbourhood panel
21 Jul 09	County Council meeting
28 Jul 09	Parish Councils' JAG meeting

And finally ...in the middle of the month my wife and I took a short break in Assisi. We generally take such a break in Italy during the year and when we'd visited Assisi last time we had to make do with just 2 hours. This time we enjoyed 3 days in Assisi and its environs and got ourselves thoroughly immersed in matters Franciscan. We were fortunate in our tour guide for the basilica itself was an American Franciscan who spoke with such passion about its history and helped us to understand not just what was there but how it all related.

But I've been going to Italy now for 40 years or so and remember, especially in the 80s when I had lots of business there, the chaotic politics, the double digit inflation, the graffiti, the poorly maintained infrastructure, the strikes and the petty bureaucracy. 25 years on it's a complete change. Assisi itself has rebuilt after the earthquake, the fabric of the city is excellent, the Euro has brought economic stability and it's a pleasure to visit.

Both this monthly report, and the ones for previous months are on my website.

David Jenkins on behalf of Sue Gymer and David Jenkins  
County Councillors for Cottenham, Histon and Impington

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